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Integrating the Mission and Identity of Catholic Universities: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Academic Lay Leaders

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INTEGRATING THE MISSION AND IDENTITY OF CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES:
AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF
ACADEMIC LAY LEADERS

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, Varkey✝and Alleykutty. They are my inspirations of resilience and faith.

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This interpretative phenomenological study explored the mission and identity integration experiences of nine academic lay leaders of diverse religious affiliations across the three Catholic universities of San Antonio, Texas, United States: Our Lady of the Lake University, St. Mary's University, and the University of the Incarnate Word. I employed a purposive sampling strategy to select the participants and collected data through two semi-structured in-depth interviews with each participant. In analyzing the findings, I applied an integrated theoretical framework consisting of theories on virtue ethics (Aristotle, trans. 1980; MacIntyre, 1981), organizational assimilation (Jablin, 1982; 2001), reflective practice (Dewey, 1933; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983), person-organization fit (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996; Pervin, 1968), and servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2003).

Six conclusions emerged from the study: (a) Interactive stages of mission integration: The academic lay leaders' experience of mission and identity integration of the Catholic university was a progressive, lifelong journey that involved multiple and interactive stages, angles, and layers. (b) Critical reflective practice: The participants' life strategy of reviewing, reflecting on, and critically analyzing their behaviors deepened their experience of mission and identity integration. (c) Ongoing renewal of compelling purpose: The academic lay leaders' engagement with the Catholic university's mission is strongly related to their ongoing search for

meaning and purpose beyond themselves. (d) Relationality and relationship building: Building relationships and the experience of a sense of community were integral to the mission and identity integration of academic lay leaders. (e) Servant leadership: The behaviors of the academic lay leaders who integrate the mission and identity of a Catholic university align with the servant leadership model's behavioral competencies. (f) Commitment to the mission: Academic lay leaders across diverse religious affiliations sustain and strengthen the following mission aspects of a Catholic university: advocating social justice, open-mindedness and respect for diversity, willingness to serve, support for Catholic intellectual tradition, support for Catholic social teaching, respect for the dignity of the human person, the expression of Catholic identity in the curriculum, and permeation of mission and identity in research initiatives.

The study contributed to the discourse on lay leadership in Catholic higher education. The findings of the study are insightful for institutions of Catholic higher education to strengthen the existing and introduce new processes that aim to institutionalize mission engagement, impart mission-centered education, hire for the mission, develop new leaders, and foster ecclesial lay ministry. The conclusions imply that Catholic universities and colleges should develop a strong community of committed lay leaders across various faith traditions to support and enhance its mission and identity. This will also require significant changes in the ways in which the mission and identity of Catholic colleges and universities are sustained, strengthened, and transmitted.

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Chapter 1: The Rise of Lay Leadership in Catholic Higher Education

The United States of America, with only 6% of the world's Catholic population in it, is home to one-sixth of all Catholic colleges and universities in the world (Heft, 2012). Ever since the foundation of Georgetown College in 1789 Catholic institutions of higher education have been an integral part of post-secondary education in the United States. According to data available with the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) there are 247 degree-granting Catholic institutions in the United States that enroll more than 900,000 students (Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, 2018). Catholic institutions of higher education outnumber institutions affiliated with any other religious denomination in the United States, and their student enrollment has been on the increase (ACCU, 2018a). Catholic higher education (CHE), certainly has a pivotal role in the higher education landscape of the United States.

Many changes have occurred during the over 200 years of CHE in the United States. From the second half of the 20th century, the most significant change concerning leadership within Catholic institutions of higher education in the U.S. has been the emergence of lay leadership. As per ACCU's (2018b) data of the academic year 2017–2018, 140 out of the 196 (71%) presidents of Catholic colleges and universities in the United States were laymen and women. Declining number of priest and religious members of founding congregations or dioceses has necessitated the emergence of lay leadership in CHE. If priests and religious are a minority in the executive leadership positions of CHE, there is hardly any religious or priest at the academic level leadership such as deans and chairs of departments. Laypersons from diverse backgrounds and belief systems have almost entirely taken over the academic leadership responsibilities in Catholic institutions of higher education in the United States (Gallin, 2000;

Rittof, 2001). The increasing prominence of lay leadership at various levels of CHE in the United States is the context for this study.

In spite of their prominent role in leading Catholic institutions of higher education, many of the lay leaders may not have had the requisite understanding of the mission and identity of the institute as they received little to no formal training in Catholic theology or on the charism of the founder (Cernera, 2005; Hellwig, 2000; Morey & Holtschneider, 2005; Morey & Piderit, 2006). However, without much formal training and formation in mission and identity, there are laypeople who align well with the mission and identity of the institutes they lead (Gardner, 2006; Lyon, Beaty, & Mixon, 2002; Petriccione, 2009). With the background of my professional experience of teaching and leadership in CHE, I was intrigued by the question, "How do some lay leaders get it while the others do not?" In this context, through an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), I explored the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders who serve in the three Catholic universities of San Antonio, Texas: Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU), St. Mary's University (St. Mary's U.), and University of the Incarnate Word (UIW). This research assumed a relationship between an individual's personal life experiences and her/his integration of the mission and identity of the Catholic institutions of higher education that she/he is part of. The study generated insights in the area of lay leadership in CHE that inform leadership praxis, development, and research at Catholic colleges and universities.

Functional Definition of Key Terms

Academic leaders/midlevel leaders. Academic leaders/midlevel leaders are terms used interchangeably in this study. Some definitions of midlevel leaders (e.g., Bryman, 2008; Inman, 2011) exclude deans and begin from the position of associate deans downwards in the leadership

hierarchy of higher education while others (e.g., Pamela, Mitchell, & Marilyn, 2016) begin with deans in the midlevel leadership. In this study, academic leader/midlevel leadership refers to leadership from the position of deans downwards in the leadership hierarchy of higher education. This includes deans, associate deans, directors, chairs, heads, and coordinators of academic units in higher education (Bryman, 2008; Inman, 2011; Pamela et al., 2016).

Charism. The term *charism* as used in Catholic context refers to a unique vision or a core driving force that the Holy Spirit inspires in a founder of a religious order. It is a unique orientation that makes one religious order different from the others. These charisms relate to the signs of the times and the founder's response to the needs of people. The members of the religious order profess to turn the founder's vision into reality. For example, for the members of the Franciscan religious order, simplicity of life and identifying with the poorest is their charism. Furthermore, those religious engaged in the ministry of education may claim teaching and caring for the youth as their charism (Charism, 2003).

Ex Corde Ecclesiae. Translated as "from the heart of the Church," *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, is a papal document by Pope John Paul II on Catholic colleges and universities and classified as an Apostolic Constitution. It was promulgated on August 15, 1990. Part I of the document describes a philosophy of CHE. And part II contains a set of norms that apply to Catholic colleges and universities.

Laity. The Second Vatican Council defines Catholic laity "to mean all the faithful except those in holy orders and those in the state of religious life specially approved by the Church" (Paul VI, 1964, no. 31). However, for this study, I broaden the definition of *lay/laity* to include not only the non-cleric and non-religious members of the Catholic Church but all other faith traditions as well. This broad definition of the term is necessitated firstly because the academic

leadership at Catholic universities today includes men and women of various religions and faith traditions; and secondly, the scope of the study covers the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders from diverse religious affiliations.

Mission and identity. The term mission in the context of this study refers to what a university or college intends to do in teaching, research, community service, and campus life. Identity denotes the way a university or college expresses its affiliation and how it relates to the Catholic culture, traditions, community, and hierarchy. Mission and identity are terms frequently used by Catholic colleges and universities in reference to expressing and maintaining the Catholic character and vision envisaged by the respective religious congregations or bishops in the founding of the institutions (Currie, 2011; Mission and identity, 2003).

Religious/professed. The term religious/professed refers to the Catholic men and women who have professed religious vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience in a religious order or congregation in the Catholic Church. For example, the religious order or congregation of the Society of Jesus, also known as the Jesuits, was founded by Ignatius of Loyola in 1534 in Spain. With over 16,000 members worldwide, the Jesuits today form the largest male religious order in the Catholic Church (The Jesuits, n.d.).

The Second Vatican Council. The Second Vatican Council, also called Vatican II, was a gathering of the Catholic Bishops of the world held between 1962 and 1965, to address the relationship between the Catholic Church and the modern world. The Council issued 16 authoritative documents for the Catholic Church worldwide. The documents that most concern CHE are the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)*, the *Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People (Apostolicam Actuositatem)*, and the *Declaration on Christian Education (Gravissimum Educationis)*. These three documents also detail the

theological and practical significance of the responsibilities of the laity in the affairs of both the Church and society at large (Vatican II, 2003).

Research Context and Need

I establish the research context and need of the study through the following six areas: (a) autobiographical reasons, (b) prominence of lay leadership in CHE and challenges of mission integration, (c) redefining the apostolate of laity by Vatican II, (d) critical role of academic leadership in higher education, (e) importance of mission and identity integration, and (f) lack of empirical studies on midlevel lay leadership in CHE. Figure 1 depicts the research context and need.
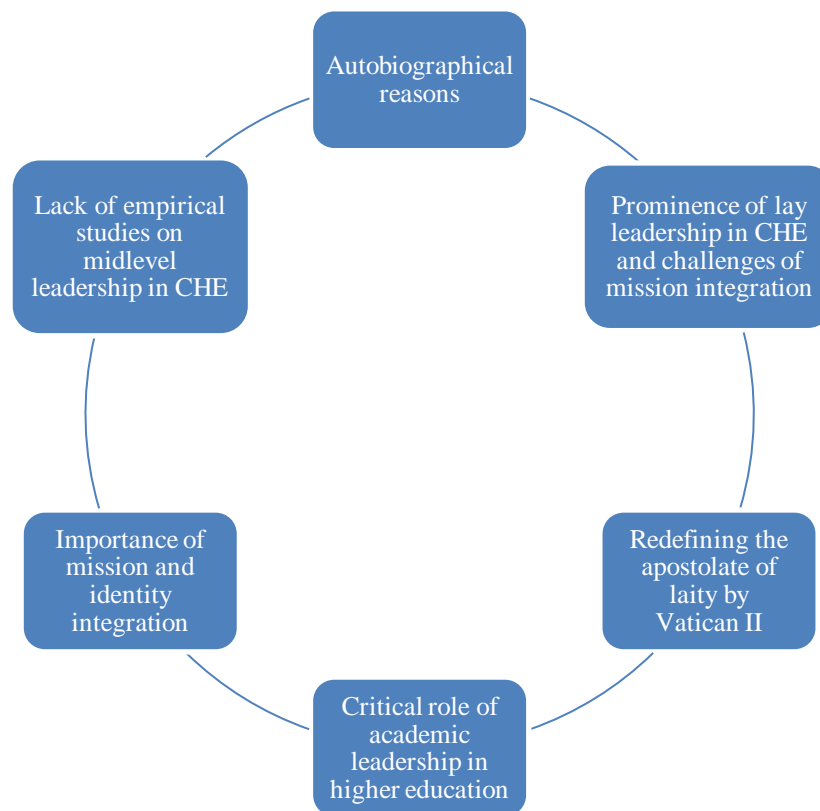
Figure 1. Diagram depicting the research context and need.

Autobiographical reasons. I have personal and professional reasons to do this phenomenological research study with academic lay leaders in CHE. I have been a Catholic

religious priest for over two decades. The first half of my priestly ministry was spent mostly in forming seminarians for priesthood and in the internal administrative works of my religious order, the Claretian Missionaries in India. The second half of my ministry in India was in CHE, first as faculty and then in administration, leading an undergraduate school that my religious order had opened in 2005 in a semi-urban demographic context in India.

To this day, the most challenging of the ministries I have been involved in was the leadership of an institution of higher education in its growing stages. The institute being a new one, in addition to the daily matters of running the school, I faced the challenges of putting structures and policies in place, finding resources, promoting the school, and hiring the right people for faculty and administrative positions. Despite all the challenges, I found the work to be personally very fulfilling. I have witnessed how education could transform an individual, a family, and a generation. Most of our students hailed from low-income families and were first-generation college learners. I could quickly identify myself with their challenges as I was a first-generation college learner myself. In the eyes of those parents, I could read the fears, anxieties that my parents had about the future of their children. My personal experiences have deepened my belief in CHE which develops the whole person in a learning environment rooted in Catholic intellectual tradition.

Being a priest and the leader of a Catholic college, one question that lingered in my mind was regarding the espoused mission of the institute: Are we doing what we are saying we are doing? A Catholic institution of higher education, according to *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, should be driven by the values of the Gospel (John Paul II, 1990). My introspective queries were many: How different are we from secular institutes? What is uniquely Catholic about what we are offering? Does our institute spark a fire in the hearts of the young people we serve? What

changes do we bring into their lives? What more does a graduate from our institute take home than a degree certificate? In the concrete context of India, where most students, faculty, and staff are from non-Catholic and non-Christian faith traditions, how do we serve the mission and identity of a Catholic institution? How do we define Catholic identity in a religiously, culturally, and socially diverse place such as India?

I consider myself to be an introspective person, engaging in meditative reflection and internal conversation about my calling and its meaning. The meaningfulness of my work and its relationship to my personal calling has been a prominent area of my reflection. In other words, I question whether there has been a real connection between my calling and the work I do. I feel that ministry in higher education, to a great extent, answered my exploration of what made meaning in my vocational journey. It was like an epiphany of what I wanted to do. Among the different things that I had done thus far, working for the youth, nurturing their future, teaching, and influencing their lives appealed to me the most. I found it to be the most effective way to give back to the community. Even while I was a seminarian, I had enjoyed teaching value education classes in high schools. I also enjoyed teaching in the minor seminary in the early part of my priestly ministry. Then as a leader in higher education, the various roles—serving, guiding, innovating, mentoring mentors, and preparing faculty and staff for various responsibilities—were all fascinating to me. I also consider myself to be a lifelong learner with some intellectual quest to explore and discover. So, in the ministry of higher education I could sense the puzzle pieces falling in place: my love for teaching and influencing young minds, my intellectual quests, and finding meaning in exercising leadership. After 6 years of ministry of leadership in higher education, I left for the United States to pursue a PhD in 2015.

Now, after 4 years of my learning in organizational leadership, reflecting on my own leadership experiences in higher education, I understand how valuable it is to have leaders at all levels that have value alignment with the organization. At times I had experienced difficulties as a leader in higher education in India in helping others—faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds of faith, cultures, and worldviews—to understand and assimilate the mission, identity, and culture of a Catholic college. Our hiring policies had not paid much attention to the essential element of person-organization fit. We focused on hiring faculty with brilliant resumes and academic achievement, but without paying much attention to the fundamental personal philosophy of those individuals. Many of them had no idea of the philosophical underpinnings of the institution. Some of the tangible behaviors of deficiency in integration included lack of enthusiasm and involvement in social justice and community service initiatives, lack of a sense of belonging to the college community, failure to integrate the larger vision of the institution, and lack of appreciation for the traditions of the institution. Moreover, eventually, these men and women would be leading departments, and be members of college-wide committees, and even be part of search committees for new faculty members. When the leaders fail in mission compatibility with the organization, there is grave danger of losing the soul of the institution (Chen, Sparrow, & Cooper, 2016; Morley, 2007).

At the same time, as a leader, I have also seen exemplary leaders at every level: administrators, heads, and coordinators of departments, faculty, staff, and maintenance workers. I was very impressed with many lay people who manifested a deep faith in what their institution stood for. Their fidelity and self-efficacy were exemplary. They lived the espoused mission and philosophy of the institution. For example, they play significant roles in creating a campus culture that has friendly and respectful relationships, and cares for the well-being of everyone.

They are actively involved in issues of social justice, peace, and outreach to the needy. They pay attention to the least gifted and to the most talented students. They are sensitive to and appreciate diversities of ethnicity, culture, belief systems, and worldviews. Many of them were not Catholics and yet were able to embrace in fullness the vision of the college. I was intrigued to find out how these get what some others do not. How did they integrate the mission of the institute? To me, on a personal level, my passion for higher education was very much connected to my understanding of my calling. Therefore, this inquiry for me is both an intellectual puzzle and a personal quest to discover new ideas. This study was an attempt at exploring the lived experiences of academic lay leaders at the Catholic universities of San Antonio who have integrated and continue to integrate the mission and identity of the university they belong to. The study was also an attempt to make visible the tangible and intangible benefits of doing so.

Prominence of lay leadership in CHE and challenges of mission integration. The increasing prominence of lay leadership at various levels in CHE in the United States is the context for this research. The following data are very revealing regarding the laicization phenomenon in CHE. The number of diocesan priests in the United States went down from 30,607 in 2000 to 25,757 in 2017, and the number of non-diocesan religious priests decreased from 15,092 to 11,424. During this period, the number of religious Sisters declined drastically from 79,814 in 2000 to 45,605; and religious brothers from 5,662 to 4,007 (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 2018). Profiling the presidents of 196 Catholic universities/colleges in the academic year 2017–2018, ACCU (2018b) found that only 56 presidents (29%) were priests or religious, indicating a significant decline from 2011when 35% were priests or religious.

In this context of declining number of qualified priests and religious and increasing leadership role for lay people in Catholic institutions of higher education, there is a growing concern among the supporters of American CHE about losing the Catholic identity among Catholic colleges and universities (Morey & Holtschneider, 2005; Morey & Piderit, 2006). The big question is: How do these institutes sustain and nurture their identity amid rapid leadership changes? (Rittof, 2001). A significant concern is the lack of preparation for identity and mission leadership for lay leaders before or during the leadership transition (Morey & Holtschneider, 2005). In Morey and Holtschneider's (2005) study, 77% of lay presidents of Catholic universities and colleges said that in their leadership practice, the heritage and mission elements were self-taught. The study also found that even when the lay leaders cared deeply about the mission and identity of the Catholic institution of higher education, they had no idea how to go about building a Catholic culture. It is evident that the future of CHE is in the hands of faith-filled and committed lay men and women. Furthermore, it is thus imperative to provide a more precise portrait of the emerging pattern of lay leadership in CHE, and prepare for that transition and future (Gallin, 2000; Morey & Holtschneider, 2005).

Redefining the apostolate of the laity by Vatican II. The Second Vatican Council that began in 1962 revolutionized the Church's thinking and practice regarding the role of the laity. The increased role of the laity has been a widely proclaimed vision of the II Vatican Council (Paul VI, 1964; 1965a). *Lumen Gentium*, the dogmatic constitution on the Church speaks of the critical role of the laity in the following words:

> They [laity] live in the world, that is, in each and all of the secular professions and occupations. They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life, from which the very web of their existence is woven. They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel, they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as a leaven. (Paul VI, 1964, no. 31)

The Church would scarcely exist and function without the laity. The laity fulfills the Church's mission by conforming their lives to their faith, observing fraternal charity, and engaging in various forms of apostolates. Since the historic Council, laymen and women have been more involved in guiding the mission of the Church than before. In the United States, a specific area that the Church identifies for greater lay participation and involvement is in the ministry of education (Morey & Holtschneider, 2005). For example, while establishing Sacred Heart University in 1963, Most Reverend Walter W. Curtis, then bishop of Bridgeport, insisted that laypeople should lead it (Gallin, 2000). The continuing decline in the numbers of priests and religious men and women presents an excellent opportunity to provide the laity with significant leadership responsibilities in the education ministry of the Church. Thus, lay leadership in CHE becomes part of the Church's larger design to enhance the engagement of laity in its ministries. For greater involvement of laity in roles as leaders, administrators, faculty, and staff, it requires understanding and aligning with the mission and identity of the university/college they are part of (Abelman & Dalessandro, 2008; Borrego, 2001).

Critical role of academic leadership in higher education. In the context of higher education, the academic leaders' role is critical in sustaining and nurturing the mission and identity of the institute. The midlevel leaders usually come from diverse faith traditions, cultural, ethnic, and racial compositions. They bring varied perspectives, diverse identities, and orientations to the organization. Midlevel leaders are responsible for day-to-day operations and are more in touch with the faculty, staff, and students than the top-level leadership. They offer stability to institutions because in many cases, they serve longer than top-level leaders. The average tenure for presidents, for example, is only five to seven years (Pamela et al., 2016).

Among other things, the midlevel leaders execute institutional strategic plans, and could even determine the effectiveness of top leadership. They are continually challenged to make ethical decisions as they carry out policies and navigate student and faculty issues (Pamela et al., 2016; Pepper & Giles, 2015). They have a powerful influence on how the mission, vision, and identity of the institute is understood and made accessible to the grassroots levels. Cole (2013) calls them the "lifeblood" (p. 13) of the institutional mission. When these leaders from diverse backgrounds, belief systems, and orientations integrate and align with the mission and identity of a Catholic university/college they make distinctively valuable contributions to the organizational success (Heft, 2012; Tosti, 2007).

Importance of mission and identity integration. In a study by Morey and Holtschneider (2005), the presidents of 222 Catholic colleges and universities of the United States were asked what in their perception interfered with their ability to lead the Catholic character, mission, and identity of their institute and presented the most difficult challenges in this area. Top on the list of responses was the impact of unsupportive faculty and staff to the mission, vision, and identity of the institute. Twenty-two percent of lay presidents and 40% of religious presidents reported the difficulties they encountered with faculty and staff who were illiterate about the traditions; uninterested, or even hostile towards the identity of the institution in which they were employed. Some of them paid attention only to academic excellence, wanting no reference to any religious perspective or the mission of the institute (Morey & Holtschneider, 2005).

Similarly, in a survey conducted among 124 administrators of 33 Catholic colleges and universities, the participants agreed that faculty and others were illiterate about traditions; some were hostile towards the Catholic identity of the institute while others were uninterested and thus

impeded the fostering of the institution's Catholic identity (Morey & Piderit, 2006). Additionally, a good number of midlevel leaders, faculty, and staff who come into Catholic institutes may not have had an experience in CHE as they received their degrees from non-Catholic institutions (Hellwig, 2000; Morey & Piderit, 2006). The prominence of lay leadership in CHE, while increasing the lay engagement in the Church's mission, also presents the institutes with the responsibility to form and prepare the lay leaders towards person-organization mission congruence (Chen et al., 2016; Morley, 2007).

Lack of empirical studies on midlevel lay leadership in CHE. The extant literature on lay leadership in CHE is mostly on the top leadership. As Franco (2016) observes, the focus of the "first wave" of leadership research in CHE was understandably on top-level leadership, such as presidents and trustees as the priority has been on dealing with the tensions and complexities of the transition of power from priests and religious to lay leaders at the executive levels of the organization. There is hardly any in-depth study done on the mission and identity integration experiences of the lay leaders at the midlevel. There is now the felt need for a "second wave" of leadership research that focuses on midlevel, lower-level, and non-executive leadership within CHE (Franco, 2016). This gap in the literature presented me the opportunity to make an in-depth study of how academic lay leaders in CHE have developed a mission and identity orientation.

To sum up this section on context and need, this study relates to leadership and organizational studies in general and academic lay leadership in CHE in particular. The research context is the felt need for alignment and value congruence between a leader's calling and the institutional mission, values, and identity. The future of organizational leadership of CHE is with the laity (Gallin, 2000); and in this context, lay leaders' alignment with the mission and identity of Catholic institutions of higher education is very critical to institutional sustainability.

Research Purpose and Vision

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of the three Catholic universities in San Antonio who integrate the mission and identity of the university they are part of. In other words, this explorative study focused on the life stories and experiences of the participants that contributed to the development of the mission and identity orientation of the Catholic university. At the interpretative level, the participants and the researcher together attempted to make sense of the participants' experiences.

The purpose of the study was elaborated at three levels:

At the theoretical level:

- To add to empirical knowledge in the following areas: (a) lay leadership in CHE, (b) mission, identity, and culture of CHE, and (c) phenomenological approaches to leadership research in CHE.

- To extend the existing research on lay leadership in CHE beyond the executive levels to the midlevel in order to develop a comprehensive leadership model in CHE.

At the practical level:

- To draw insights from the lived experiences of the present academic lay leaders of Catholic universities, which will inform future leadership praxis, development, and research at Catholic universities.

- To positively respond to the Church's appeal to engage lay leadership in its ministries by generating a solid knowledge base for lay engagement.

At the personal level:

- To understand at an in-depth level, the personal experiences of exemplary academic lay leadership and the trajectory of the development of mission and identity orientation in their lives in order to draw insights and inspirations for my edification.

- To deeply explore in the process of inquiry, my vocational journey and search for greater meaning and fulfillment in the ministry of higher education.

The study, at its successful completion, was envisioned to produce the following outcomes:

Expect to see:

- Adding substantial, empirical knowledge to leadership literature, particularly relating to lay mid-level leadership in CHE.

- Identifying, through the study, the characteristics of exemplary lay leaders who integrate within themselves the mission and identity of Catholic universities. This, in turn, was expected to help in developing concrete strategies for hiring personnel with the right mission orientation.

- Generating foundational knowledge that could guide the development of training programs for both existing and future leaders at different levels in higher education, particularly in CHE in the light of the findings.

- Generating foundational knowledge that would contribute to leadership succession planning and to development of a leadership model for future leaders in CHE.

Like to see:

- The emergence of a team of lay leaders who would integrate the Catholic social and moral teachings in a way that would impact the campus culture, policies, and curriculum of Catholic universities.

- Continued discourse by lay leaders on the distinctive mission and identity of Catholic universities at a time when these institutions are grappling with mission and identity issues on account of both internal and external influences.

- Development of a mission-centered approach to CHE that directs all campus activities such as faculty and staff hiring, curriculum development, student enrolment, community involvement, scholarships, and other procedures of the university.

Love to see:

- Enhanced involvement of lay leadership in the mission of the Church through its ministry of higher education, and thus developing specific identity and roles for laity as envisaged by Vatican II.

- Committed lay leadership for Catholic universities with strong social justice orientation according to the social teaching of the Church, and Gospel values such as equality, inclusion, human rights, respect for individuality, and the dignity of the human person.

Nature of the Study

I found a phenomenological approach suitable for this study because the nature of the research question required rich and thick details of the phenomena experienced by the participants (Creswell, 2013). I employed an IPA approach to explore the lived experiences of nine academic lay leaders from the three Catholic universities of San Antonio, who integrate the mission and identity of the Catholic university they are part of. IPA, one of the several approaches to qualitative phenomenological research, has an idiographic focus, meaning that it explores the experiences of participants from their contexts and perspectives (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). IPA provided the vital and critical reflective space for the participants to make

meaning from their experiences and for me as a researcher to co-construct knowledge in the analytical phase of the study. The interview questions explored the participants' lived experiences of the phenomenon of mission and identity integration and the meanings the participants assigned to their experiences (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2004; 2008).

I employed the IPA methodology recommended by Smith et al. (2009) in the development of this study. I used purposive sampling to recruit participants, collected data through semi-structured in-depth interviews, audio-taped the interviews, transcribed them, and analyzed the data with the help of qualitative research software, Dedoose. The analysis involved an iterative, inductive cycle of visiting and revisiting the data, collecting new data, and an ongoing examination (Polkinghorne, 2005; Smith, 2007). I used the six-step procedure suggested by Smith et al. (2009) in IPA data analysis. I conducted member checking interviews with two randomly picked participants to validate the findings. The analysis involved several steps such as reading and re-reading, making descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments, coding, clustering codes into themes, and developing emergent themes into superordinate themes. After the analysis, I examined the findings with an integrated theoretical framework of five theories: (a) virtue ethics (Aristotle, trans. 1980; MacIntyre, 1981); (b) organizational assimilation (Jablin, 1982; 2001); (c) reflective practice (Dewey, 1933; Kolb, 1984; Schön,1983); (d) person-organization fit (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996; Pervin, 1968); and servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2003).

Research Question and Sub-questions

The following overarching question guided the research: What are the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities of San Antonio who integrate the mission and identity of the university they are part of?

The following sub-questions guided the development of the study:

1. What are the life-affirming experiences of participants in the process of integrating the mission and identity of the university?

2. What are the challenging experiences, if any, the participants encountered in the process of integrating the mission and identity of the university?

3. How have the participants responded to the challenges encountered in the process of integrating the mission and identity of the university?

4. How do the lived experiences of the participants interconnect their calling and their commitment to the university's mission and identity?

5. What meanings do participants ascribe to their lived experiences that have influenced the integration of the mission and identity of the university?

Assumptions

A constructivist worldview, where people construct meaning from their experiences and situations (Crotty, 1998), guided the study. In Geertz's (1973) words, "What we call our data are our constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (p. 9). Realities, considered in the study, were local, specific, and socially constructed, and they could vary, depending on the environment of the actors involved (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). An inductive, interpretivist paradigm was used in this study. By its nature, inductive reasoning is open-ended and exploratory. Interpretive researchers attempt to understand the world by accessing the subjective meanings participants assign to them (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991). In qualitative studies the researcher is an insider in the socially constructed and subjective world. Being an insider, I did not assume a value-neutral stance, as I was implicated in the phenomena being studied. The study was framed with the following epistemological assumptions (Larkin &

Thompson, 2012; Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Polkinghorne, 2005; Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005):

- That an understanding of the participants' world called for an understanding of their lived experiences.

- That knowledge was co-constructed by both the participants and the researcher.

- That the participants were able to articulate their thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

- That there was an interconnection between the inner calling of the participants and the mission and identity of the university they belong to.

- That the participants had insights into the mission and identity integration experiences and could ascribe personal meanings to those experiences.

- That the participants were open and were willing to talk and disclose their experiences freely.

- That the participants were honest in narrating their experiences.

Organization of the Study

I have organized this study in six chapters. In this chapter, I introduced the research context and need, and related it to my personal and professional backgrounds. Research purpose, vision, nature, research questions, and assumptions were also discussed. In the second chapter, I provide a review of the literature to situate the study within the existing knowledge and justify the scope of the study. The third chapter details the methodology used in the study. I present a detailed discussion on IPA, its methodological fitness for the study, and the process involved in data analysis. In the fourth chapter, I present the two sets of IPA findings: (a) a six-stage model of progressive mission and identity integration referred to as superordinate themes, along with their themes and narrative evidences and (b) the five key behavioral competencies that emerged

from further analysis of the six superordinate themes of the stage model. In chapter 5, I present the relevant details of the integrated theoretical framework consisting of theories on virtue ethics, organizational assimilation, reflective practice, person-organization fit, and servant leadership, which will be used to interpret the findings. The sixth and the final chapter presents discussions on the findings, the implications of the findings, and suggestions for future research. The chapter concludes with a brief personal reflection on the impact of this study on me as the researcher.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

The purpose of this review of the literature is to situate the study in the context of the existing scholarship. Analyzing the key terms in the research question, I zeroed in on two broader themes for this review of the literature: (a) mission and identity in American CHE and (b) lay leadership in American CHE. Detailed discussion on these two themes and empirical research findings relevant to the themes form this review of the literature. The chapter concludes with a summary of findings from the review, and an articulation of the gap in the literature, which affirms the scope of this study.

The Literature Search Strategy

I searched the following databases: Education Resource Information Center (ERIC), EBSCO, ProQuest, and Google Scholar using key search words: Catholic higher education, lay leadership in Catholic higher education, mission of Catholic higher education, identity of Catholic higher education, integration of mission in Catholic higher education, mission integration experience of lay educational leaders, lived experience of Catholic higher education leaders, virtue ethics, organizational assimilation, reflective practice, person-organization fit theory, and servant leadership. Additionally, I used a snowballing strategy of examining the reference list of all retrieved articles to find more literature. In the process of my search for the literature, I identified the following Catholic journals for a focused search on the topic under study: *Journal of Catholic Higher Education, Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice, Catholic Social Science Review,* and *U.S. Catholic Historian.* I searched all the 38 volumes up to Winter 2019 of *Journal of Catholic Higher Education* published by ACCU and found very relevant articles on Catholic mission and identity and lay leadership in CHE. Regarding papal and magisterial teachings of the Church related to CHE, the relevant documents

of Vatican II, later documents such as Land O' Lakes Statement of 1967, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* of 1990, and the teachings of Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis are discussed. The prominent writers on Catholic mission and identity and lay leadership that figure in the review of the literature include Gallin (1996; 2000); Hesburgh (1990; 1994); Morey and Holtschneider (2005); and Morey and Piderit (2006).

Mission and Identity in American Catholic Higher Education

Mission and identity are two very critical elements in any organization. In a healthy organization, its mission derives from its identity. The mission relates to what the organization does, while identity defines what the organization is (Morey & Piderit, 2006). What constitutes the mission and identity of CHE has been a long-discussed topic. Despite commendable attempts from the magisterium of the Church, from the bishop's conferences, and from many authors, there has not been a consensus on the constituent elements of Catholic mission and identity. In the following sections, I present a summary of discussions on the mission and identity in CHE in a chronological order of its development, dividing it into five subsections: (a) early history of CHE in the United States, (b) World War II and aftermath, (c) Vatican II and beyond, (d) *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, and (e) post *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

Early history of CHE in the United States. The first Catholic settlers from Europe arrived in Maryland and Pennsylvania in the late 1600s. By 1800 the Catholic population in the United States rose to 50,000 (Garrett, 2006; Dosen, 2012). The first-ever Catholic institution of higher education in the United States, Georgetown College, Washington, DC, was founded by Bishop John Carrol in 1789 with the primary purpose of preparing Catholic boys to enter seminary (Dosen, 2012). By the year 1850, there were 42 Catholic colleges, preparing the next generation of leaders for the Church and offering education to underserved men from the

neighborhoods (Garrett, 2006; Rizzi, 2018). These colleges were staffed almost exclusively by resident priests and members of religious congregations. The Catholic population rapidly increased from 2,000,000 in 1850 to 6,000,000 in 1880; and it surged to 12,000,000 by 1900, owing to the influx of immigrants (Garrett, 2006).

The first institution to open its door to women for a 4-year bachelor's degree was Notre Dame College of Maryland in 1895 (Oates, 1988). Towards the end of the 19th century, Catholic colleges evolved from centers of training for aspiring priests to educating men with more secular and professional interests (Garrett, 2006). The Catholic community emerged from the lower ranks of labor to skilled laborers and urban employees, and they sought collegiate education in large numbers by the 1860s (Garret, 2006). In the colleges, the priests and religious were supplemented by lay expert faculty, although by a small number. Along with the increase of the Catholic population, the student enrollment increased, and the number of institutions proliferated (Garrett, 2006; Rizzi, 2018). During the latter part of the 19th century, separate seminaries were created for forming candidates to priesthood; the original hold that the bishops had over colleges decreased by this time; and colleges had turned to be centers of secular and professional education for young men (Gleason, 1997; Rittof, 2001).

By the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the curricular structure in Catholic colleges began to accommodate the needs of industrial expansion, providing skill-based and scientific education. "Catholic schools broadened their curriculum, expanded their definitions of the student population, and modified the purposes of higher learning" (Garrett, 2006, p. 232). Thus far, in general, American Catholics believed that research was contrary to their faith. The founding of the Catholic University of America in 1887, jointly by Pope Leo XIII and the U.S. bishops as a national institute of learning to integrate faith and

science along the research-oriented model of secular higher education was a significant step to respond to the ideological challenges of the times (Rittof, 2001). In the first half of the 20th century, 53 new Catholic colleges were founded, and student enrolments in Catholic institutions of higher education reached 162,000 by 1940 (Rittof, 2001). The biggest challenge faced by Catholic colleges during this time was getting accredited. Standardization of curriculums and accreditation, which began in the late 19th century, put Catholic institutions under pressure to conform to national norms of higher education (Gleason, 1997). The curricular requirements for accreditation often conflicted with the declared mission of the Catholic colleges of preparing good Catholics. In 1913, the University of Notre Dame was the only Catholic institution of higher learning accredited by the North Central Accrediting Association. Leahy (1991) reports that about 60% of Catholic colleges did not qualify for membership in the regional accrediting association in 1930. However, yielding to the pressure, 76% of Catholic institutions of higher education were regionally accredited by 1938.

The conflict between the Church hierarchy and college administration also surfaced in the first part of the 20th century as the colleges seemed to be moving away from the hierarchy's hold. Bishops refused financial support and asked for a guarantee of conformity to religious orthodoxy and academic quality (Leahy, 1991). During the 19th and early 20th centuries, there were no questions about the Catholic identity of these colleges, all of which had priests and members of the founding religious order almost entirely in leadership and faculty. The Catholic worldview influenced the curriculum; the chapel was at the heart of everything that happened in the institution; and Catholic iconography filled the campus, hallways, and classrooms (Dosen, 2012). Even after the student profile transition from being predominantly a place to form aspiring men for priesthood to educating laymen and women for secular professions, the Catholic

mission and identity were taken for granted because of the overwhelming presence of priests and religious on the campuses.

World War II and aftermath. After the end of the II World War, dramatic changes took place in American higher education in general and CHE in particular. In 1944, the Congress passed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, also known as the GI Bill, opening the door for returning veterans to attend colleges. Spurred by the GI Bill, the prewar enrolment figures were doubled postwar in many Catholic colleges. While it brought increased revenue, the infrastructural growth requirements also increased. Catholic institutions, lacking in financial resources, sought funding from the federal government; the funds came but at the cost of the religious identity of the institutions (Dosen, 2012). Moreover, there were not enough qualified priests and religious to meet the increased requirements of faculty positions. Many new faculty members who were unfamiliar with the Catholic ethos and culture were hired from public, private, and non-Catholic institutions. Now, for the first time, with the ever-growing presence of lay faculty members who were largely unfamiliar with Catholic traditions, culture, and worldviews, the issues of preserving and promoting the Catholic character, mission, and identity of these colleges emerged.

There were other related issues too. The 1960s was a decade of revolutionary social, cultural, and political changes in the United States. The 1960s marked the counterculture movements, civil rights, and demand for equality of women among other changes (Dosen, 2012). The Church and its institutions were not exempt from the impacts of these changes. Before 1960, the Catholic colleges generally had a common culture, owned a sense of campus community, and education was mostly in liberal arts, adhering to the Christian worldview (Gallin, 2000). The Catholic identity was evident, and the curriculum reflected the teachings of the Church (Garrett,

2006). Now, with an increasing number of Catholics assimilating into mainstream American culture, it has become hard to distinguish the attitudes of Catholics from those of other Americans, whether it is about new age spirituality or the rate of divorce. Although many Catholics disapproved of abortion, they still supported the idea that it should be the person's choice. The institutions of CHE continued to grow to a stage where the dwindling number of priests and religious could not manage the administration. The board of trustees, which used to be only priests and religious until then, has now both lay and religious members. Compared to four decades ago, many students, faculty, staff, and administrators who claimed to be Catholics had very little understanding of their faith and traditions. Furthermore, with a sharp decline in new vocations resulting in the shrinking presence of religious in the campuses, a laicizing of authority took place at every level with faculty, administration, student affairs (Appleyard & Gray, 2000). Competing with the secular universities, ambitious Catholic universities emphasized specialized credentials for faculty, professionalized administration, and introduced evaluation of faculty mostly on research and scholarly output. Positively, Catholic universities grew in prestige to be among the leading universities in the eighties and nineties. But, negatively, by hiring faculty, staff, and administrators without consideration for the mission-fit, the institutional identity suffered (Appleyard & Gray, 2000).

Vatican II and beyond. The II Vatican Council (1962–1965) convened by Pope John XXIII was "the Catholic Church's own experience of sixties upheaval" (Appleyard & Gray, 2000, p. 5). The most significant among the dogmatic changes the Council made was the idea that the Catholic Church has no exclusive claim on truth. The Church opened its doors to the modern world, provided a more significant role to laypeople, encouraged ecumenism, and introduced the idea of religious freedom. The Church began its journey out of its isolation into

contemporary culture. On the one hand, the Council transformed the Church from being an exclusive institution to a more inclusive one. On the other, there was considerable backlash from the conservatives, who idealized the pre-conciliar Church as a lost paradise. In the United States, Vatican II also coincided with the election of the first Catholic, John F. Kennedy, as U.S. president, evidence of how deeply Catholics had integrated into American culture.

The momentum generated by the II Vatican Council influenced CHE as well. In its formal declaration on Catholic education, *Gravissimum Educationis*, the Council mentioned that "the destiny of society and of the Church itself is intimately linked with the progress of young people pursuing higher studies" (Paul VI, 1965b, no. 10). Regarding higher education, the Council emphasized the importance of freedom of inquiry, the harmony of faith and reason, and the importance of forming men and women to be witnesses of faith. The declaration stated:

> The Church is also concerned with schools of a higher level, especially colleges and universities. In those schools dependent on her she intends that by their very constitution individual subjects be pursued according to their own principles, method, and liberty of scientific inquiry, in such a way that an ever-deeper understanding in these fields may be obtained and that, as questions that are new and current are raised and investigations carefully made according to the example of the doctors of the Church and especially of St. Thomas Aquinas, there may be a deeper realization of the harmony of faith and science. Thus there is accomplished a public, enduring and pervasive influence of the Christian mind in the furtherance of culture, and the students of these institutions are molded into men truly outstanding in their training, ready to undertake weighty responsibilities in society and witness to the faith in the world. (Paul VI, 1965b, no. 10)

Following Vatican II, Catholic universities and colleges throughout the world made efforts to define more clearly their nature, mission, and identity in the Church and in the world. The International Federation of Catholic Universities met at Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin in 1967, marking the first official effort in the United States to define the nature of CHE (Gleason, 1997). Their report titled, "The Nature of the Contemporary Catholic University" strongly articulated

the need for institutional autonomy and academic freedom and began with the following

statement:

> The Catholic university today must be a university in the full modern sense of the word, with a strong commitment to and concern for academic excellence. To perform its teaching and research function effectively, the Catholic university must have a true autonomy and academic freedom in the face of authority of whatever kind, lay or clerical external to the academic community itself. To say this is simply to assert that institutional autonomy and academic freedom are essential conditions of life and growth and indeed of survival for Catholic universities as for all universities. The Catholic university participates in the total life of our time, has the same functions as all other true universities and, in general, offers the same services to society. (Land O' Lakes Statement, 1967, no. 1)

The most substantial emphasis of the statement was on "true autonomy and academic freedom,"

although it also covered other areas such as interdisciplinary dialogue, critical reflection,

research, and community service. This report set the tone for what became decades-long effort

between the Church hierarchy and Catholic institutions of higher learning to define its nature,

mission, and identity (Garrett, 2006; Rizzi, 2017). The tensions were very much felt in American

CHE. The concluding statement reads, "the Catholic university of the future will be a true

modern university but specifically Catholic in profound and creative ways for the service of

society and the people of God" (Land O' Lakes Statement, 1967, no. 10). The discussions and

conversations on Catholic identity in higher education continued.

Pope John Paul II, in his meeting with the presidents of Catholic colleges and universities

at The Catholic University of America on October 07, 1979, touched upon CHE's commitment

to scientific research and authentic Christian living. The following statement serves as a

summary of much of discussions on Catholic identity since 1963 when the conversations on

identity seriously started:

> A Catholic university or college must make specific contribution to the Church and to society through high-quality scientific research, in-depth study of problems, and a just sense of history, together with the concern to show the full meaning of the human person

regenerated in Christ, thus favoring the complete development of the person. Furthermore, the Catholic university or college must train young men and women of outstanding knowledge who, having made a personal synthesis between faith and culture, will be both capable and willing to assume tasks in the service of the community and of society in general, and to bear witness to their faith before the world. And finally, to be what it ought to be, a Catholic college or university must set up, among its faculty and students, a real community which bears witness to a living and operative Christianity, a community where sincere commitment to scientific research and study goes together with a deep commitment to authentic Christian living. This is your identity. (John Paul II, 1979, no. 3)

All these post-conciliar efforts culminated in the making of what is considered the magna carta for CHE, Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, in 1990 which is discussed in the next section.

    Ex Corde Ecclesiae. Pope John Paul II in 1990 promulgated the Apostolic Constitution, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, meaning "from the heart of the Church," which is to date considered the official teaching of the Church on CHE. The Pope identified the following four most important aspects of Catholic identity in higher education:

1. A Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community as such;
2. A continuing reflection in the light of the Catholic faith upon the growing treasury of human knowledge, to which it seeks to contribute by its own research;
3. Fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church;
4. An institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life. (John Paul II, 1990, no. 13)

Further, under the section "Nature and Objectives," Pope described the identity and mission of a Catholic university in the following words:

. . . a Catholic university, by institutional commitment, brings to its task the inspiration and light of the Christian message. In a Catholic university, therefore, Catholic ideals, attitudes and principles penetrate and inform university activity in accordance with the proper nature and autonomy of these activities, In a word, being both a university and Catholic, it must be both a community of scholars representing various branches of human knowledge, and an academic institution in which Catholicism is vitally present and operative. (John Paul II, 1990, no. 14)

Other themes in the document included the role of theology in the Catholic university, the importance of the role of laity in the mission of the Catholic university, the relationship between the local bishop and the university, the university's service to human community, pastoral ministry, ecumenism, dialogue with science and culture, and evangelization. The document presents a detailed description of Catholic intellectual tradition and its humanistic approach to higher education; it also discusses the jurisdictional and canonical aspects.

The document generated much debate on many contentious issues. The most discussed issue was the balance between academic freedom and Catholic teachings and traditions (Garrett, 2006). The very title *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*—that a Catholic university is born from the heart of the Church—presents the traditional Catholic idea that an authentic Catholic university can develop well only in a filial relationship with the Church, guided by her doctrines and magisterium. People working in higher education in the United States generally are not used to thinking that a Catholic university is born *ex corde ecclesiae*, from the heart of the Church. Many would understand a Catholic university as complementary to the mission of the Church rather than being born from the heart of the Church (LaCugna, 1994). There were other problematic issues as well. The document stipulated that all Catholic theology faculty should receive a mandate from the local bishop to teach and that "every Catholic university is to maintain communion with the universal Church and Holy See" (John Paul II, 1990, Article 5 § 1). It also gave authority to the local bishop to watch over the maintenance and strengthening of the Catholic character of universities. Regarding faculty, the pope called on the colleges and universities to ensure the presence of a majority of Catholic faculty. *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* did not settle the debate on Catholic mission and identity but was a significant step. Regarding the value of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae,* Gallin (2000) writes:

The quest for an acceptable definition of Catholic identity has not been solved by Ex Corde Ecclesiae, although the ideals it expresses regarding the nature and mission of Catholic universities have become a resource of great value in the ongoing dialogue on college campuses. (p. 155)

Post *Ex Corde Ecclesiae.* The years following *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* were of intense conversation between the Conference of Bishops and presidents of American Catholic colleges and universities on the implementation of the *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. The presidents came up with the first draft of the implementation plan in 1993, which was disapproved from Rome for not being "sufficiently juridical" (Dosen, 2012, p. 36). A more juridical document, prepared by a new committee, which included the elements that Rome demanded, was approved in 1999. The U.S. bishops passed the text, and it was titled "Application of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* to the United States" (Nilson, 2001).

Since the promulgation of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae,* the discussions and debate on identity of CHE intensified (Wilcox, 2000). Several authors expressed opinions on what constitutes Catholic identity. McBrien (1994) offers three criteria to determine what a Catholic university is:

1. A Catholic university intentionally identifies itself with the Catholic tradition and with the wider Catholic community.

2. It lives by Catholic values which are also humane values that can be shared by non-Catholic Christians and by non-Christians, and

3. A Catholic university will have the presence of a critical mass of faculty and administrators who are committed and active Catholics and non-Catholics who respect the Catholic tradition and who support the university's intention to be and to remain faithful to that tradition (McBrien, 1994).

In McCormick's (2000) opinion, the measuring yardstick of a Catholic university is the quality of its product—its graduates. He outlines eight qualities to be found in a graduate from a

great Catholic university. Those qualities are: (a) deep conviction of the Catholic vision of a reality grounded in God's grace, (b) sensitivity to justice and injustice, (c) appreciation of and thirst for knowledge, (d) the capacity to articulate one's thoughts clearly in both spoken and written words, (e) open-mindedness and respect for diversities, (f) critical capacity to reflect and to develop coherent and logical reasoning, (g) ability for dialogical listening, and (h) willingness to serve (McCormick, 2000).

Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, former president of Notre Dame and one of America's most influential figures in higher education, describes the distinguishability of a great Catholic university. He said, "A great Catholic university must begin by being a great university that is also Catholic" (Hesburgh, 1994, p. 5). He said that like any other great university, a Catholic university should be a place of responsible inquiry in an atmosphere of freedom, where values of justice and truth, charity, and beauty are taught and at the same time lived by the faculty. Like any other great university, a Catholic university should foster in its students deep compassion for human anguishes and should be committed to social justice and cultural development. Hesburgh (1994) added that a great Catholic university, in addition to all the above, should be something more in three ways:

1. It should emphasize philosophy and theology among its intellectual concerns, as all intellectual questions have philosophical and theological dimensions of meaning and relevance.

2. It should be a *bridge* of understanding and love, rational and civil discourse with respect for each other across all divisions such as age, gender, race, class, and faith that separate people.

3. It should be a *crossroads* to meet all the intellectual and moral discourses of the day

"where all ideas are welcome, even if not espoused" (Hesburgh, 1994, p. 10).

Hesburgh goes on to describe Catholic university as a place "where the church confronts the challenges, the anguishes, and the opportunities of our times" (Hesburgh, 1994, p. 10). Along similar lines, Provost (2000) lists out the following characteristics for an institution of higher education to be genuinely Catholic: (a) a fundamental respect for the dignity of each person and promotion of a deep respect for human dignity among its graduates, (b) the expression of Catholic identity in its curriculum, not just in the philosophy and theology, and (c) the permeation of its mission and identity in its research initiatives (Provost, 2000).

Arguably the most detailed and comprehensive study so far on the identity of American CHE is Morey and Piderit's (2006) national-level qualitative study on 124 senior administrators from 33 Catholic colleges and universities using descriptive data. The very title of the work, *Catholic Higher Education: A Culture in Crisis*, captures the compelling findings of the study. According to Morey and Piderit (2006), most administrators report that their colleges and universities had "rather weak Catholic cultures" (p. 5), and they are not sure how to address the problem. Based on the demographic data, Morey and Piderit (2006) divided Catholic universities into four models: (a) the Catholic immersion model, (b) the Catholic persuasion model, (c) the Catholic diaspora model, and (d) the Catholic cohort model.

The Catholic immersion model university/college is pervasively Catholic, with an overwhelming majority of students, faculty, and administrators who are Catholic. It has a robust and distinctive Catholic culture in academic, spiritual, and service experiences. The second one is the Catholic persuasion model university/college, where Catholic students form the majority, and a significant number of administrators and faculty are also Catholic. As compared to the

immersion model, the persuasion model has a less stringent Catholic curriculum and a little more diverse student body, faculty, and administrators. The third one is the Catholic diaspora model university/college, where Catholic students, Catholic faculty, and administrators are a minority. These are mostly Catholic institutions in non-Catholic areas. The few Catholic faculty and administrators who hold key positions are active catalysts and examples, whose influence makes the campus culture to be staunchly Catholic. Most students, while being non-Catholic, are not averse to Catholic teachings and beliefs. The fourth one is the Catholic cohort model university/college, which has a dual objective: to educate and influence Catholic and non-Catholic students simultaneously to be well-educated citizens who will grow sensitive to religious issues and integrate religious values, first of all, and then also have a small subgroup of Catholic students who receive religious formation, and among whom there is promotion of a clear understanding of Catholic faith and its practice (Morey & Piderit, 2006). With the evolved worldview of CHE, today, more Catholic institutions embrace the Catholic diaspora and cohort models of Morey and Piderit (2006), offering quality education to a broader audience. The challenge with these models is to provide quality education and opportunity to all and at the same time, uphold the mission and identity of CHE. Dosen (2009) calls this approach in education an evangelization in a subtle way, not by proselytizing, but through example and influence.

In 2014, on the 25th anniversary of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, Pope Francis addressed the Congregation for Catholic Education, reminding the educational institutions of "their duty to be an expression of a living presence of the Gospel in the field of education, of science and of culture" (Francis, 2014, p. 96). The pope urged the Catholic academic institutions to bravely enter the current culture and dialogue with it rather than isolate themselves from the world. The

world congress on Catholic schools and universities held at the Vatican in November 2015

provided the following guidelines. The mission of schools and universities is to provide an

education that promotes critical thinking and guides human values to mature; an education that

bears witness to the love of Jesus for His people; an education that looks for mutual

understanding and opportunity for dialogue; and an education that inspires service-mindedness

and solidarity with all those who are vulnerable to oppression and exclusion (United States

Conference of Catholic Bishops, n.d.).

Summary of Discussions on Catholic Mission and Identity in Higher Education

Many authors (e.g., Gleason, 1994; 1997; Morey & Piderit, 2006; O'Brien, 1997) say that

Catholic identity is the single most critical issue that CHE in the United States faces. Similarly,

many authors (e.g., Dosen, 2012; Hunt, Joseph, Nuzzi, & Geiger, 2003; Morey & Piderit, 2006;

O'Brien, 2010; Wilcox, Lindholm, & Wilcox, 2013) also acknowledge that maintaining the

distinctive identity of Catholic universities and colleges has been one of the biggest challenges of

CHE in the United States. The identity crisis that surfaced in the 1960s continues to linger even

though there have been continuous discussions. I summarize the discussions and list out the

following reasons that caused and continue to cause an identity crisis in CHE.

1. A decline in vocations to priesthood and religious life, the increased student
   enrolment post World War II, the increased presence of laity unfamiliar with the
   Catholic vision of higher education, the acceptance of federal funds and incentives for
   development on government terms, and the pressure to conform to the accreditation
   norms of higher education have all played their part in the identity crisis of CHE
   (Currie, 2011; Dosen, 2009; Gallin, 2000; Morey & Piderit, 2006; Wilcox, 2000).

2. Despite many efforts, there has been no consensus on an acceptable definition of Catholic identity in higher education. Even *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* could not solve the issue, although it is a resource of great value regarding the nature and mission of Catholic universities (Gallin, 2000; Gleason, 1994).

3. The presence of faculty and staff who have no training or experience in Catholic character, mission, identity has adversely affected the Catholic character and identity of CHE in the United States. (Gleason, 1994; Morey & Piderit, 2006).

4. In their striving for an academic reputation that is on par with top universities, for attracting more students, and for institutional autonomy and academic freedom, some universities sacrificed their Catholic character and identity (Dosen, 2012; Mixon, Lyon, & Beaty, 2004; O'Brien, 1997).

5. In some cases, there has been a lack of an intentional approach from the trustees and administrators in articulating the Catholic mission and identity of the university/college. In many cases, the well-framed mission statements had not translated into action (Morey & Piderit, 2006).

6. The cultural context of the United States today presents conflicting polarities: the Catholic worldview of understanding reality in the light of divine revelation against the modern relativistic worldview (Killen, 2015). The byproduct of the relativistic worldview is a culture of secularization and the perception that faith and religion are the sphere of an individual's choice (Killen, 2015; Morey & Piderit, 2006). In this context, if *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* is literally implemented, Catholic universities will not be different from seminaries. And, if the universities turn too secular, they are in

danger of not being Catholic in any meaningful way (Lavelle, 2000; Morey & Piderit, 2006).

7. The unsupportive relationship between the Church hierarchy and university leadership has also affected the maintenance of Catholic character and identity. Presidents, now most of them laity, desire a supportive relationship with the hierarchical Church. However, many of them, especially female presidents, find such relationships "elusive and complex" (Morey & Piderit, 2006, p. 14).

The literature on mission and identity has been varied and diverse even though one can identify some common identity elements in the opinions of different authors discussed above. The most common identity elements of CHE are: Catholic intellectual tradition, a Catholic vision of life, a synthesis of faith and reason, promotion of social justice and respect for human dignity, and promotion of critical thinking. Even with some consensus on aspects of identity mentioned above, engaging Catholic identity in a practical and meaningful way in the given context of a college/university has been the biggest challenge. As an answer to the crisis on identity in CHE, DeGioia (2005) mentions that identity is not something static that is handed over from one leader to the next. It is "an ongoing organic, evolving process" (DeGioia, 2005, p. 29) of determining how a community, in its context and time, and considering its resources, opportunities, and challenges, decides how best it can draw from the manifold elements of Catholic tradition "in order to strengthen its ability to engage and sustain its Catholic identity" (DeGioia, 2005, p. 29). It is the responsibility of each institution and its leadership to determine what elements of Catholic tradition can be effectively engaged in their contexts to sustain the identity and be authentically Catholic. Cernera (2005) thinks along the same lines:

The torch of Catholic higher education is not a static possession to be fearfully guarded, but a vision and way of life, fueled by the past, confidently carried by those who dare, like those before us, to bring Christ's faith, hope, and love into the future. (p. xii)

Why Do Catholic Mission and Identity Matter?

In the previous section, mission and identity questions were discussed. In this section, the relevance of CHE in today's world is the focus of discussion. Many authors (Benders, 2007; Dosen, 2009; 2012; Gleason, 1995; Heft, 2012; Hollerich, 2000; Morey & Piderit, 2006) observe an epistemological crisis with the modern, postmodern insistence on gaining objective knowledge only in the realm of scientific fact, which has a crucial implication on human life, and its values. This approach relegates religion, faith, and spirituality as private, unverifiable, relative, and subjective (Benders, 2007). Ford (2005) enlists the developments that have influenced contemporary epistemology in the following words:

> [The current American worldview is formed by] the Renaissance and Reformation, the colonization of the Americas, the Enlightenment, the American and French Revolutions, the rise of nationalism, the Industrial Revolution, and the development of the natural sciences, technologies, medical science, and the human sciences. There has also been the combined impact of bureaucracies, constitutional democracy, new means of warfare and communication, mass education and public health programs, and new movements in the arts and in philosophy and religion. (Ford, 2005, p. 1)

As against the contemporary understanding of the multiplicity of truths, classical Western thought was based on the unity and ultimacy of truth grounded in divine revelation. In the contemporary context of America, the Catholic tradition challenges and resists pervasive secularization. The Church provides a transcendental dimension to interpret human reality within the concrete context of one's life (Benders, 2007). To understand, explain, and transform human life, the Church recommends the best resources of faith, reason, and the sciences. The Catholic intellectual tradition offers an education—a transcendental perspective—that the contemporary culture and worldview needs for solidarity among people, social responsibility, and trust in

human creativity and reason (Benders, 2007). Responding to contemporary American reality, Hollerich (2000) enlists the following six benefits of the Catholic approach to higher education:

1. An overarching sense of purpose which has a transcendental grounding, and which goes beyond the purposes of public institutions.

2. A sense of historical continuity—teaching and learning rooted in the traditions that go back to the middle ages and the philosophical and theological traditions of antiquity.

3. A vision of the human good not controlled by instrumental rationality. It offers a Christian, values-based approach to education.

4. A vision of a community committed to recognizing diversity and inclusion, the unity of the human race, and respect for differences and human dignity.

5. An integrated grasp of human knowing, reconciling faith and reason, the interplay of divine revelation with the ingenuity of human reason.

6. An education in social justice, rooted in and connected to the context, addressing the concrete problems of the local community.

The application of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* for the United States that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops prepared summarizes in the following words how invaluable the Catholic identity of these colleges/universities is: "In a secular world the strong Catholic identity of our institutes of higher learning is invaluable in witnessing to the relationship of truth and reason, the call of the revealed Word, and the authentic meaning of human life." (The Application of *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* for the United States, 1999, no. 7). Pope Francis (2013), in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Joy of the Gospel*, articulated the role of Catholic educational institutions in evangelization:

> Catholic schools, which always strive to join their work of education with the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, are the most valuable resource for the evangelization of

culture, even in those countries and cities where hostile situations challenge us to greater creativity in our search for suitable methods. (no. 134)

In their study Morey and Piderit (2006) quoted the following words of a president who spoke on the impact of a Catholic university:

> The heart and soul of these [Catholic] institutions are transformational in nature, not just transactional. They are not just credit bearing but life giving. These institutions teach people not only how to earn a living but how to live a life in a moral sense, an ethical sense, in a values sense. They give a moral compass that enables students to get through life's crises. . . . If you closed the book tomorrow on all these Catholic institutions, sooner or later, you would have to reinvent them because of how good they really are. (as cited in Morey & Piderit, 2006, p. 11)

American higher education and society will be enriched greatly by the rich Catholic traditions and the mutually illuminating interaction between faith and intellectual inquiry. The long tradition of Catholic intellectual life, Catholic social teaching, and education for human good have much to offer to the present-day world.

Lay Leadership in Catholic Higher Education

Laity is running most of the Catholic institutions of higher education in the United States today. Profiling the presidents of 196 Catholic universities/colleges in the academic year 2017–2018, ACCU (2018b) found that 140 presidents (71%) were laity. Lay faculty and leadership used to be an exception in American CHE 60 years ago, but it has now become a norm. I present a short description of the historical contexts that led to laity assuming leadership at various levels of CHE. In the early 1900s, the lay faculty who were less than 10% in CHE were mostly teaching professional programs because priests and religious were not qualified in those areas. There was hardly any layperson in administration. Out of the 216 governing trustees of 35 Catholic institutions of postsecondary education in 1900, there were only two lay Catholics (Stamm, 1983). The Church leadership and the Catholic population in general, perceived lay faculty to be incapable of transmitting the religious tradition, values, and Catholic culture.

Furthermore, there was the fear of secularization of CHE if lay people were involved in administration (Leahy, 1991). Vatican II revolutionized the Church's thinking regarding the laity. In the spirit of the Council's affirmation of the laity's call to be "light of the world" (Paul VI, 1965, no. 13), laymen and women assumed greater responsibility in the Church and CHE as well. In CHE, in addition to the impact of Vatican II, there were also other reasons for this transition. The declining number of priests and religious, the felt need of diversity and academic competitiveness, the benefit of the laity's contacts and experiences, the need for faculty and administrators in business, law, medicine, and other professional programs, and their expertise in fundraising for institutional projects have all been contributing factors in this transition (Gallin, 1996; 2000).

Inspired by Vatican II and with a clear intent to foster ecumenism, in 1963, Bishop Walter W. Curtis of Bridgeport, Connecticut founded Sacred Heart College, which is administered and staffed exclusively by the laity. The lay faculty in CHE grew substantially, from less than 10% in 1900 to 50% in 1920, and to approximately 90% in 1980 (Leahy, 1991). Initially, Catholic laity was hired, but by the 1970s, due to the shortage of qualified and competent Catholic laity, non-Catholics and non-Christians were accepted (Leahy, 1991). In administration, La Salle College in Philadelphia was one of the first institutions to include laity, having them on its board of trustees since 1869. By the late 1960s, almost all Catholic institutions of higher education had a significant number of lay trustees, in most cases, the majority. In a short time, even in institutions where the president was still a member of the founding religious order, most of the vice presidents and deans were laity. By 1980, there were lay presidents only in about 35 Catholic colleges and universities; in a decade, by 1990, that number increased to 99 (Gallin, 2000). The transition process may not have been uniform in all

Catholic institutions, however the movement toward a more significant presence and real partnership with laity was a reality in almost all Catholic colleges and universities. Brother Bernian, the president of La Salle College in Philadelphia, one of the first to have laity in its board of trustees since 1869, when asked about the emerging role of laity in the college, said, "It's something we had to do, not because others were doing it, but because it was the only right way to conduct the college. La Salle needs the dedicated layman today more than ever before" (as cited in Gallin, 2000, p. 122). This was a transition that impacted the Catholic identity of institutions (Gallin, 2000; Morey & Holtschneider, 2005; Morey & Piderit, 2006).

Evolution of an inclusive ecclesiology. Vatican II was a watershed moment in the life of the Catholic Church. The Council transformed the Church's understanding of the position of the laity in its apostolate by articulating lay vocation. Thorman (1962) observed that in the 1950s and early 1960s, the years leading to Vatican II, there was extensive literature on the fundamental goodness of and appreciation for the secular world, as against the largely anti-secular language used in earlier theology. Gallin (2000) notes that the first international congress for the laity was in 1951, more than a decade before Vatican II. The ecclesial letters and papal teachings before Vatican II had often affirmed the lay vocation, but there was no clarity on what lay vocation meant. Therefore, the vocation of the laity in the Church and their contributions in and through its institutions was a priority in the Council (Gallin, 2000). Prior to Vatican II, the Church viewed the secular world as an obstacle for personal holiness; that perception is now overturned, and the Council encourages the Church to engage the secular world. The Council's reasoning was, if the laity exercises their vocation in the secular world, then the secular world must be viewed more "as a gift than as an obstacle to personal holiness" (Gallin, 2000, p. 21).

Before Vatican II, the most referred to definition of the Church was that of Robert Bellarmine, which was juridical and excessively clerical. It read:

> The one and true Church is the community of men brought together by the profession of the same Christian faith and conjoined in the communion of the same sacraments, under the government of the legitimate pastors and especially the one vicar of Christ on earth, the Roman pontiff. (as cited in Cernera, 2005, pp. 51 & 52)

Vatican II's preferred way of referring to the Church was "People of God" (Paul VI, 1964, no. 33). The Council presents a new ecclesiology of communion. *Lumen Gentium*, the dogmatic constitution on the Church that the Council produced (Paul VI, 1964), stated that by the sacrament of Baptism, and with the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist, all members are joined to Christ. By this union, all people of God are part of the body of Christ, and each one receives a charism. All participate in the threefold priestly, prophetic, and royal mission of Christ. All are called to holiness, and all work for the mission of the Church (Paul VI, 1964). The laity is called in a unique way to make the Church present and function in places and situations where only they can do it. They are invited to be witnesses and living instruments of the mission of the Church (Paul VI, 1964).

Echoing the same message, the Council's decree on the apostolate of the laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Paul VI, 1965) states that "the apostolate of the laity derives from their Christian vocation and the Church can never be without it" (Paul VI, 1965, no. 1). The decree states further:

> Our own times require of the laity no less zeal: in fact, modern conditions demand that their apostolate be broadened and intensified. With a constantly increasing population, continual progress in science and technology, and closer interpersonal relationships, the areas for the lay apostolate have been immensely widened particularly in fields that have been for the most part open to the laity alone. . . .The Church could scarcely exist and function without the activity of the laity. (no. 1)

Later, Pope John Paul II (1988) in his apostolic exhortation on the vocation and the mission of the lay faithful in the Church and in the world¸ *Christifideles Laici,* spoke of the distinctive role of laity to be present and to dialogue with, and purify the elements that burden the existing cultures with the Gospel and Christian faith. Particularly, Pope invites the laity who are involved in education to be "signs of courage and intellectual creativity" (John Paul II, 1988, no. 44) through scientific inquiry, technical research, arts, and humanities. Pope Benedict XVI (2012) insisted on the need for a change of mindset in the Church to not regard the laity as "collaborators" of the clergy, but rather as men and women who are "co-responsible" for the Church's existence and mission. The vocation of the lay faithful is a call "to be courageous and credible witnesses in all social milieus so that the Gospel may be a light that brings hope to the problematic, difficult, and dark situations which people today often encounter in their journey through life" (Benedict XVI, 2012, para. 5).

Empirical Studies on Lay Leadership and Mission and Identity in CHE

With the growing role of the laity in CHE, there has been increasing interest among scholars to study various dimensions of lay leadership in CHE. Most empirical studies among lay leaders in CHE so far have been conducted with the top-level administrative leadership. There are, however, a few studies conducted among the midlevel lay leadership such as deans, department chairs, and faculty. This section presents an overview of the empirical studies relating to lay leadership and the Catholic mission and identity in higher education.

Sullins (2004) used factor analysis and structural equations to examine if *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*'s thesis that a critical mass (50% or more) of dedicated Catholic lay faculty members served to promote and preserve the Catholic character and identity of Catholic institutions of higher education. The study had a random sample of faculty members ($n = 1,290$) from a

hundred American Catholic colleges and universities. The study found that institutions that had a majority of Catholic faculty members were more supportive of Catholic mission and identity than those without a Catholic majority faculty. The findings of the study reiterated the belief of many Catholic scholars that a critical mass of committed lay faculty members plays a significant role in carrying forward the mission and identity of a Catholic university. Similarly, Rittof (2001) explored the relationship between presidential type, lay or religious (priests/brothers/sisters), and the distinctive Catholic identity of small Catholic colleges and universities in America. Using a 28-item survey instrument, Rittof (2001) investigated the relationship between presidential type and the perceived Catholic identity of an institution, as seen through the eyes of chief academic affairs officers ($n = 159$). A significant positive correlation was found between having a "critical mass" of Catholics, (students, staff, and faculty, both lay and religious), and having a religious president and the strength of an institution's distinctive Catholic identity as perceived by the chief academic affairs officer of an institution. Another finding was the positive correlation between the percentage of Roman Catholic religion and theology courses offered at an institution and the strength of an institution's distinctive Catholic identity. It was also found that the presence of Catholic lay faculty in the institution has a significant positive relationship with the strength of an institution's Catholic character. A significantly positive correlation was also found between having a religious as president at a small Catholic college or university and the strength of an institution's distinctive Catholic identity as perceived by the chief academic affairs officer at an institution.

Petriccione (2009) conducted a mixed-method study among the first lay presidents ($n = 70$) in their Catholic colleges and universities across the United States, using surveys and then follow-up interviews with selected participants. The areas of inquiry in the study included

participant perceptions on personal spirituality, roles, and responsibilities in the institution, personal charism and Catholicity, transitioning to leadership, individual leadership styles, and institutional Catholic identity. The study came out with very positive findings. Most participants felt that they were living their vocation as leaders, taking pride in their role as leaders in CHE, and having a good relationship with their local bishop. They also felt that their effectiveness and satisfaction related to their familiarity with the charism and the traditions of the founding Congregation. With the ever-increasing leadership roles for laypeople, the study presents a very optimistic future for CHE in the United States. Similarly, Houston (1995), using the concept of organizational identity as conceptual framework, explored how identity and character are formed and maintained in Catholic institutions of higher education among undergraduate deans ($n = 15$) who are laymen and women. The qualitative study used in-depth interviews for data collection and examined the thoughts, perceptions, and experiences of the participants. The study concluded that the Catholic institutions of higher education could strengthen their identity by building a strong sense of community, and respecting the dignity of the human person, and believing in the equality of individuals.

Gardner (2003) conducted a phenomenological study and examined the perceptions of administrators ($n = 4$), faculty members ($n = 4$), and members of the Board of Trustees ($n = 4$) at a Marianist Catholic university in the Midwest of United States about lay leaders' ability to foster and maintain a genuinely Catholic campus environment. Semi-structured interviews and observations on the nature of the physical environment and culture of the university were the data collection methods. The analysis yielded three findings regarding lay leadership: (a) The mission and values manifested in the Marianist Catholic university experience was encapsulated in three aspects, "learning, leading within a community, and service to one's community"

(Gardner, 2003, p. 86). (b) A decentralized leadership against a top-down leadership style was found to be the most effective form of lay leadership. (c) While some participants expressed fear of the loss of institutional mission and identity from predominant lay leadership, others believed lay leaders could effectively sustain the Catholic identity of the institution.

Franco (2016) investigated the interior lives of exemplary lay leaders ($n = 8$) and their commitment to mission and identity at a Catholic Marianist university, using the transcendental phenomenological method. The researcher analyzed the experiential data and presented a composite synthesis of the textures and underlying structures of the phenomenon. Three streams of the phenomenon within the lived experience of the participants were described: (a) exemplary lay commitment, (b) exemplary Marianist leadership, and (c) the experience of Catholic and Marianist mission and identity. Olin (2005) conducted a case study of a Catholic institution of higher education in the northeastern United States, investigating the challenge of balancing the need for staying true to the founding mission and identity while adapting to the competitive environment. It was found that a clear and robust institutional identity created a niche that increased competitiveness in attracting students, and promoting lay leadership helped the institute to better deal with the modern-day market forces that influence CHE.

In a phenomenological study conducted on three Jesuit campuses, Cole (2013) explored how participants ($n = 37$) who attend lay formation programs understand the formation experiences, what competencies are developed, and their understanding of Jesuit mission and identity. It was found that mission and identity formation programs helped more in enculturation than leadership development. The programs also served the purpose of developing a shared mission language that built a sense of community in the institution. Cole (2013) writes, "Mission and identity programs build connection, community, and culture" (p. 171). In most participants,

the participation in the programs built reflective practices; in some, it deepened their involvement in the university, and in some others, their spirituality was engaged and enhanced. While the formation programs were useful in orienting the participants to the mission and identity of the institution, it was also found that the personal beliefs and values of lay participants, both Catholic and non-Catholic, were sometimes not aligned with the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

Herrick (2011) made an in-depth case study of a lay president ($n = 1$) of 10 years of experience, using interviews, observation, and document reviews. Three significant findings that emerged from the study are: (a) the significance of the president's own Catholic identity, (b) his calling as a Catholic educator, and (c) the intentionality of his leadership for the mission. The president's leadership style was found to be *directive*, as evidenced by the following leadership behaviors: he refined the vision and goals of the institution; gathered a leadership team on board with the refined vision and spent focused time with the team in laying out the goals and strategies. Sloma-Williams (2010) conducted a multiple case study using qualitative method and exploring how lay presidents ($n = 5$) of Catholic colleges/universities lead the Catholic mission in their respective Colleges/universities. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The conceptual framework used for analysis was "the leadership that matters" framework in a CHE setting. The mission themes that emerged from the study are the following: articulation of commitment to founding Catholic tradition, service to others, respect for the dignity of the human person, commitment to Catholic intellectual tradition and liberal arts education, holistic education, diversity, and commitment to excellence. A conceptual model of lay presidents was generated using the following 11 themes: (a) educating about mission, (b) telling the story of the institution's founders, (c) enhancing religious symbols on campus, (d)

articulating the unity of the Church and university mission, (e) interacting with critics, (f) more extensive community involvement, (g) respect for institution members, (h) involvement in enhancing academic priorities, (i) integration of mind, body, and spirit into leadership, (j) reciprocity of knowledge, and (k) communication with senior leadership.

Jensen (2008) explored the impact of the laicization phenomenon, and the meaning lay faculty members attributed to their lived experiences at a Catholic, Jesuit university using semi-structured, in-depth interviews with lay faculty members ($n = 12$). A hermeneutic phenomenological methodology was used to describe the essence of the participants' experience. Three themes emerged from the study: (a) *University is a noun, Catholic is an adjective.* This theme describes the tension involved in balancing between corporate identity and Catholic religious identity. (b) *Heart of a teacher.* The theme captures the roles and responsibilities of lay faculty members and all the elements that influence their personal identity and sense of integrity at a Catholic, Jesuit university. (c) *The big tent.* This theme analyses the dimensions of openness, sense of community, caring, and values that define a Catholic, Jesuit university, based on the perceptions and lived experiences of the participants. The findings also identified the challenges of sustaining a Catholic, Jesuit identity in the context of the laicization phenomenon.

Through a phenomenological study, Jackson (2002) explored the experiences of laywomen academic leaders ($n = 6$) in Catholic institutions founded by male religious congregations. Informed by feminist theory and methodology, the study examined the participants' notions of leadership and stewardship in the context of an institutional tradition historically dominated by patriarchal assumptions. The findings revealed that if the laywomen, working in Catholic colleges and universities founded by male religious, are firmly rooted in their own multi-dimensional experiences as women, as professionals, scholars, mothers, and

community leaders, then they are also capable of impacting institutional and cultural changes by trusting in their own personal and cultural biographies. The laywomen leaders in the study described themselves as "outsiders within." "Outsiders," because they did not share in the history and traditions of the institution in which they worked, and "within," because they viewed themselves as high-level administrators and leaders who are agents of influence and change in their current position of leadership. These laywomen leaders understood their leadership roles very well within the mission and identity of the institution. They brought their authentic voices and visions to the table as defining elements of their stewardship.

Luciano (2013) explored the journey of laywomen ($n = 11$) who became presidents of Catholic colleges and universities in the United States. The participants identified four defining historical events paving the way for them to become presidents: (a) women's education, (b) the feminist movement of the 1960s, (c) the passage of Title IX, and (d) the II Vatican Council. The presidents also acknowledged the influences of their family, education, and religion. Personal alignment with the organizational mission and culture and going beyond their job descriptions were crucial aspects of their journey to presidency. They also identified role models and mentors who played a significant role in their rise to presidency. This study aligns with my research question of exploring the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders. While Luciano (2013) focused exclusively on laywomen presidents' journey to presidency, the current study explores the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders of diverse religious affiliations in CHE.

Ferrari, Bottom, and Gutierrez (2010) conducted a survey-based, quantitative study to examine what was being done during transition to lay leadership to sustain the mission and values of Catholic universities. The perceptions of three groups of lay leaders in a Catholic

university—administrators ($n = 13$), senior faculty ($n = 13$), and trustees ($n = 13$)—were compared using one-way ANOVAs. The results revealed significant differences between the three groups as regards perceptions of the university as innovative and inclusive ($p < .001$), Catholic pluralism ($p < .003$), and personal importance for mission-driven activities ($p < .001$) such as urban and global engagement programs, activities relating to religious identity, and faith formation programs. The study found no significant prediction among the trustees on the scores associated with mission and values or traditional collegiate operational concerns. The researchers (Ferrari et al., 2010) reasoned that the lack of significant findings could be on account of rating the items so highly by the participants that there was not enough variance to compare the scales with one another. They concluded that the self-reporting quantitative survey might not have been the best method to elicit insights from the board of trustees. They proposed semi-structured interviews for future studies to generate more abundant data. This insight is significant to the current study as it highlights the value of qualitative approaches in research related to leadership, mission, and identity.

In a qualitative study among presidents ($n = 9$) of CHE, including religious and lay, using semi-structured interviews and informal observations, Meeker (2008) explored how the participants perceive their preparative experiences. The participants reported that a combination of different backgrounds, academic preparations, prior professional experiences, ongoing professional development experiences, travels, relationships, and life experiences have all significantly prepared them for the presidency. The study also recommends changing the preparation plan of presidents in CHE to be intentional, thoughtful, tailored for the person and the context of the institution. In the context of the growing number of lay leaders in CHE, the

study also recommends adequate preparation of young lay leaders in CHE, filling the gaps of knowledge, experience, and skills.

Morey and Holtschneider (2005) conducted a survey-based study in which the presidents of Catholic colleges and universities (55% response rate out of 222) of the United States were asked what in their perception interfered with their ability to lead the Catholic character, mission, and identity of their institute and the most difficult challenges in this area. The survey instrument had informational as well as open-ended questions about presidential backgrounds and aspirations. The findings regarding lay leadership are the following:

1. Laypersons infrequently emerged as presidents from the finalist pools if there were members of the founding religious order in it.

2. There is a lack of formal theological and spiritual preparation among presidents. Most presidents agree that inadequate lay preparation is a problem for the future of CHE. However, only 9% of lay presidents personally felt ill-prepared to lead the religious mission of their institutions.

3. Forty-one percent of religious and 26% of lay presidents find expressions "Catholic identity" and "Catholic intellectual tradition" to be "fuzzy concepts that lack sufficient vitality on campus" (p. 16).

4. Lay presidents (27%), more than religious counterparts (10%), find a working relationship with the hierarchical Church "elusive and complex" (p. 17).

5. Even when all presidents acknowledge that the role of faculty is critical in their institutions, many of them, both lay and religious, say that the faculty is an obstacle to effective leadership in the area of Catholic character, mission, and identity.

6. The board of trustees is yet to identify minimum standards for religious education and training required for lay presidents.

7. The increasing prominence of lay leadership may intensify rather than diminish the stark ideological divisions regarding American CHE among conservatives, middle-of-the-roaders, and liberals.

According to Morey and Piderit (2006), the new group of faculty and administrators at Catholic institutions of higher education know little about Catholic traditions. Catholic lay faculty members and lay administrators participating in Morey and Piderit's study had difficulty in stating how their institutions were different from non-Catholic institutions. The major themes raised by the administrators participating in the Morey and Piderit's (2006) study were centered on lay faculty members and students. They confirmed the presence of a dual emphasis for faculty with the demands of professional academic values and beliefs coupled with Catholic cultural identity, character, and mission. Each Catholic institution has its own Catholic culture. This represents a significant change from the pre-Vatican II era when the cultures of conformity in Catholic colleges and universities were often identical (Gallin, 2000).

The Impact of Laicization on Catholic Mission and Identity

In the extant literature, there is no substantial research on the impact of transition to lay leadership in CHE, although many writers speculate about how the transition may affect the identities of Catholic institutions of higher education. The findings of the few empirical studies (e.g., Franco, 2016; Gardner, 2003, Petriccione, 2009; Sloma-Williams, 2010) on the impact of laicization on Catholic mission and identity in CHE, as discussed above, have been generally positive even though some researchers (e.g., Morey & Holtschneider, 2005; Morey & Piderit, 2006) find the need for greater training and preparation in the area of mission and identity for

laity to lead CHE effectively. Gallin (2000) observes that laity brings in more critical approaches to learning, bringing their experience from diverse backgrounds. According to her, lay participation in the governance of Catholic institutions of higher education as faculty, administrators, and trustees has been a "source of growth and strength in Catholic higher education in the latter part of the twentieth century" (Gallin, 2000, p. 126).

Dr. John J. DeGioia, who was appointed in 2001 as the first lay permanent president of Georgetown University, viewed his appointment as emblematic of the role of the laity in the spirit of the directions of Vatican II. At the time of his appointment he said, "I've been raised in a church that is animated by the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. In that spirit, there has been an expectation that in my lifetime there would be increased responsibility given to laity" (as cited in Borrego, 2001, p. A32). Rev. Charles L. Currie, who was the President of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities from 1997 to 2011, was of the opinion that in many ways laity can be more credible in developing the Catholic character and identity of the institution because unlike clergy, who are expected to act as hired hands to promote their identity, when laypersons promote it, it is as though they had a choice not to. Regarding the significant role laity played in the Jesuit institutions, Rev. Currie said, "Lay leadership at our schools—at every level—has been the cause of the progress that we've made over the past 30–35 years" (as cited in Borrego, 2001, p. A32).

At the same time, Morey and Holtschneider (2005) reported that 77% of lay presidents of Catholic universities and colleges perceive in their leadership practice that the heritage and mission were self-taught. Very few laymen and women have the depth or breadth of religious formation and education of the priests and religious they succeeded. To this day, the Church provides the laity only the minimum formation in faith and theology. Morey and Holtschneider's

(2005) study found that the lay leaders cared deeply about the mission and heritage of Catholic institutions of higher education, but at the same time they had no idea how to go about building a Catholic culture. Lay presidents struggle with lack of clarity about many things that include the meaning of Catholic intellectual tradition, to what degree they could assert moral and religious leadership in the institution, and the fear of impact on student enrolment if religion is explicitly focused.

However, amid leadership transition, identity crisis, and financial difficulties, the growth of Catholic institutions of higher education in the United States has been stable. Even the small Catholic colleges have managed to stay relevant and viable. While some small colleges were closed, an almost equal number of new colleges were recently opened (Morey & Holtschneider, 2005). The extensive predictions made in the 1970s and 1980s about the terrible future of American higher education has not come true (Breneman, 1994). Some authors (e.g., Cernera, 2005; Gallin, 2000; Gardner, 2006; Lavelle, 2000) note that in recent times there is greater emphasis given to training lay leadership in Catholic intellectual tradition and Catholic identity. For example, Boston College in 2001 began an institute to help leadership transition from the religious to laity (Cernera, 2005).

The leadership transition as such does not suggest a weakening of institutional character and identity (Gardner, 2006). Lay leadership in CHE is here to stay as all signs indicate. And lay leadership is a viable and effective solution to the leadership crisis in CHE created by a declining number of qualified clergy and religious. Lay leaders, as the few available studies indicate, have the required commitment to lead Catholic colleges and universities into a new, more challenging era of higher education without endangering the religious character and identity. The transition to lay leadership, therefore, could be viewed as an opportunity to empower laity in the apostolate of

the Church in a way that would enhance and strengthen the Catholic identity (Gallin; 2000;

Gardner, 2006).

Summary of Discussions on Lay Leadership in Catholic Higher Education

I summarize the discussions and the findings of the empirical studies on lay leadership in

CHE as follows:

1. Transition to lay leadership in CHE was necessitated by the declining number of

   priests and religious. Additionally, other factors such as competence, academic

   qualifications, and experience in professional areas were contributing reasons for the

   prominence of laity in CHE (Gallin, 1996; 2000; Leahy, 1991).

2. Vatican II's affirmation of the lay vocation and their unique role in permeating the

   secular world by the spirit of Christ (Paul VI, 1964) has paved the way for lay leaders

   to assume greater responsibility in the ministries of the Church. A "time of fear and

   exclusion" (Cernera, 2005a, p. ix) of the pre-council times, has given way to

   inclusion, communion, and greater participation post Vatican II (Cernera, 2005;

   Gallin, 2000; Paul VI, 1964; 1965; 1965b). Particularly, the ministry of education has

   been an avenue for the laity to meaningfully respond to their vocation to be "salt,

   light, and leaven" (John Paul II, 1988, no. 15) in the world.

3. As a new area of research, lay leadership in CHE has limited empirical studies,

   although an increase in empirical studies has been noticed in the recent years. The

   impact of lay leadership on the mission and identity of Catholic colleges and

   universities has not been adequately studied. The available studies (e.g., Franco,

   2016; Gardner, 2003, Petriccione, 2009; Sloma-Williams, 2010), however, indicate

   an overall positive result in lay leadership's commitment to sustain and develop the

mission and identity of CHE (Gardner, 2006; Petriccione, 2009). It was found that the

leadership and business skills of lay leadership enhanced the overall academic and

organizational performances in Catholic higher educational institutions.

4. The absence of adequate training and preparation for lay leaders to understand the

mission and Catholic character of the university and assume their responsibility to

champion the mission is a grave matter needing attention. Review of the literature

finds that the lay leadership that replaced the priests and religious is inadequately

prepared in the area of mission and identity. According to Morey and Piderit (2006),

"Conservative, liberal, and middle-of-the-road laypersons are assuming leadership

positions in institutions that represent the full range of the ideological spectrum" (p.

14). This complex and diverse ideological scenario of the country calls for adequate

training and preparation for lay leaders.

5. The preferred methodology for most of the studies relating to mission and identity

integration have been qualitative (Cole, 2013; Franco, 2016; Gardner, 2003; Herrick,

2011; Houston, 1995; Jackson, 2002; Jensen, 2008; Luciano, 2013; Meeker, 2008;

Sloma-Williams, 2012) and particularly, phenomenology (Cole, 2013; Franco, 2016;

Gardner, 2003; Jackson, 2002), as evident from this review of the literature. This

finding supports my choice of IPA methodology for this study.

Gap in the Literature

The review of the literature indicates that lay leadership of CHE is a relatively new and

expanding phenomenon. The empirical studies on lay leadership in CHE have mostly been

among top leadership (Herrick, 2011; Jackson, 2002; Luciano, 2013; Meeker, 2008; Morey &

Holtschneider, 2005; Petriccione, 2009; Rittof, 2001; Sloma-Williams, 2012). In general, there is

a dearth of empirical studies on lay leadership in CHE at the middle and lower levels. The extant literature does not include any empirical study of mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders in CHE. No empirical study has so far been reported on the interconnection between a leader's calling and integration experience of institutional mission and identity in CHE. Most empirical studies among lay leadership in CHE have been conducted with the Catholic laity while there is an increasing presence of leaders in CHE from other faith traditions. How men and women who are non-Catholic Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and from other faith traditions integrate and engage Catholic mission and character in higher education is another unexplored area. The current study explores the mission and identity integration experience of lay participants from Catholic, non-Catholic Christian, and non-Christian religious affiliations.

Franco (2016) observed that the focus of the "first wave" of leadership research in CHE was understandably on top level leadership, such as presidents and trustees as the priority has been on dealing with the tensions and complexities of the transition of power from priests and religious to lay leaders at the executive levels of the organization. He feels that it is now an opportune time for a "second wave" of lay leadership research that focuses on midlevel, lower-level, non-executive leadership within CHE (Franco, 2016). This knowledge gap presents me with the right context to make an in-depth study of mission and identity integration experience of academic lay leaders of the Catholic universities of San Antonio.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities of San Antonio, who integrate the mission and identity of the university they belonged to. In the previous chapter, I summed up the current knowledge pertaining to the research question, stated the gap in knowledge, and articulated the need and relevance for the study. In this chapter, I raise the research question again and detail the research method applied in finding answers to the question. Chapter 3 begins with a discussion on research design and continues with an overview of IPA, the appropriateness of the research method, the participant selection procedures, and the demographic details of the participants. The remainder of chapter 3 presents the data collection methods and the analysis procedures. The chapter concludes with the description of the strategies deployed in enhancing credibility and trustworthiness.

Research Design

A qualitative research methodology, using IPA developed by Smith et al. (2009), guided the study. A social constructivist paradigm is the ontological foundation of qualitative research in general (Creswell, 2015). A constructivist ontology, according to Hatch (2002), assumes the following characteristics: (a) universal and absolute realities are unknowable, (b) realities are individual constructions, and (c) multiple realities exist because "they are constructed by individuals who experience the world from their own vantage points" (p. 15). Therefore, realities, according to social constructivism, are based in experience; they are local, and specific (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Hatch, 2002). In qualitative research studies, the participants and the researcher co-construct knowledge (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002). Through a mutual engagement, the researcher and the participants "construct the subjective reality that is under investigation" (Hatch, 2002, p. 15). In a qualitative research study, it is therefore impossible for

the researcher to be distant and objective (Hatch, 2002). In data analysis, the study uses an inductive reasoning, moving from specific instances to analytic generalizations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

I found a qualitative approach and a social constructivist paradigm suitable for this study because the nature of the research question required rich and thick details of the subjective phenomena experienced by the participants and the personal meanings the participants ascribed to their experiences. Exploring subjective experiences through quantitative research methods would not have produced the desired results because quantitative research approaches rely on numeric data collection methods; use statistical, mathematical, and computational techniques for data analysis; and report relationships and associations among the variables studied (Creswell, 2015). On the other hand, qualitative research explores a problem and develops a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon by capturing the participant's subjective experiences. It explores meanings by analysing words, pictures, metaphors, and symbols (Creswell, 2015). The data analysis in qualitative research results in extraction of common themes, detailed description of an experience from participants who had shared experiences (Creswell, 2015). The central phenomenon studied here is the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders of select Catholic universities. The participant selection method was purposive sampling using inclusion criteria laid down. The data collection method was semi-structured in-depth interviews, and the data analysis was completed using the six-step method recommended by Smith et al. (2009), which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. Table 1 presents a summary of the research framework.

Research question and sub-questions. The following question guided the research:

What are the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities of San Antonio

who integrate the mission and identity of the university they are part of?

Table 1

A Summary of Research Framework

Category	Framework
Philosophy	Phenomenology
Ontology	Social constructivism
Epistemology	Hermeneutics/Interpretative
Methodology	Qualitative
Approach	Inductive
Participant selection	Purposive
Data collection	Semi-structured, in-depth interviews
Data analysis	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

The following sub-questions guided the development of the study:

1. What are the life-affirming experiences of participants in the process of integrating

   the mission and identity of the university?

2. What are the challenging experiences, if any, the participants encountered in the

   process of integrating the mission and identity of the university?

3. How have the participants responded to the challenges encountered in the process of

   integrating the mission and identity of the university?

4. How do the lived experiences of the participants interconnect their personal calling

   and their commitment to the university's mission and identity?

5. What meanings do participants ascribe to their lived experiences that have influenced

   the integration of mission and identity of the university?

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher is an insider in the socially constructed and subjective world (Hatch, 2002; VanScoy & Evenstad, 2015). Being an insider, the researcher can never assume a value-neutral stance but is implicated in the phenomena being studied (Creswell, 2015; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; VanScoy & Evenstad, 2015). I am a Catholic religious priest belonging to the international society of Claretian Missionaries. In my priestly ministry of over 20 years, nearly half the time I was actively involved in CHE in India, both as a faculty member and as a leader. Personally, from my experiences, I am deeply convinced about the mission and purposefulness of CHE. In the context of the study, I am familiar with the phenomenon under study and it is likely that I share common experiences, interests, opinions, and backgrounds with the participants in the study. However, I had no prior acquaintance with any of the participants in the study. And at the same time, my perspective of the phenomenon as a priest may be different from that of the lay participants in the study. The shared common experiences, and similar roles in life that I had with the participants, may have unconsciously influenced the research setting, the process of data collection, and the interpretation. In Patton's (2004) opinion, the prior experience and knowledge of the researcher could either augment or curtail the quality and effectiveness of data collection and analysis process. However, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggests that the common experiences shared by the participants and the researcher would add to the effectiveness of open-ended questioning as the experience orients the researcher to the world of the participants. Conscious of the possibilities of bringing preconceptions and bias into the study, I deployed reflectivity, bracketing, and epoché to minimize my influence (Smith et al., 2009). Reflectivity is the act of making oneself the object of self-inquiry to gain awareness of how one's personal framework conditions the research

process (Mortari, 2015). Epoché is a Greek term popularized by Husserl (1970) which literally means "suspension" implying the suspension of judgment of the researcher in this context, the process through which the researcher acquires a neutral mindset without the influence of any framework to interpret. Similarly, bracketing is a process in setting aside the researcher's assumptions to ensure that the analysis is primarily about the participants (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009). I reflected throughout the different stages of the study, deployed journal writing, and made note of my biases and reactivities to minimize my influence in the study (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Maxwell, 2013; Smith et al., 2009).

Ethical Protection of Participants

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board of UIW, I proceeded to identify prospective participants. The IRB approval number I received from the UIW Institutional Review Board is 18-11-003 dated November 19, 2018. The data collection began only after the participants reviewed and signed the informed consent (Appendix D). A copy of the signed informed consent was handed over to the participant and I kept the original.

Grinyer (2002) and Guenther (2009) question the convention within social sciences that identity of participants should always be disguised. Guenther (2009) argues that the following factors should be considered before deciding to use real names or pseudonyms for participants: (a) wishes of the participants, (b) the reason behind their wishes, (c) the level of risk to them if the real names are used, (d) the significance of the decision for the accuracy of reporting the findings, and (e) the possible effects of the decisions for the researcher's and/or participants' commitments to social change. Given the nature of the study, its requirements, the process involved in the selection of participants, and the limited population the participants are selected from, it may be possible to discern the identity of the participants even when they are

pseudonymized. Not anticipating any risk to the participants, or any adverse effect on data collection, analysis, and reporting, participant anonymity was not made a requirement for this study. The participants were given the choice either to use their real name or a pseudonym in the study. At the time of signing the informed consent, eight participants chose to use their real names. The ninth participant preferred to use a pseudonym initially, however, after reading the part of the manuscript pertaining to her, decided to use her real name. Similarly, one of the participants who initially chose to use his real name, after reading the manuscript, preferred a pseudonym.

During the data collection, I did not notice any discomfort to any of the participants. The digital audio records were stored on my personal computer in a secure, password-protected manner. I transcribed all the audio recordings. Data analysis began only after I received approval for the transcribed manuscripts from the participants. All data-related computer files will be deleted 5 years after the completion of the study. Some of the participants, during the interview mentioned names of people who have been influential in their lives. In the study, I retained the real names of only those from whom I received permission to report their names, and in the case of others, I have pseudonymized them. After the data analysis, I noticed that the findings had references to the participants' identifiable professional information. With two randomly picked participants I completed the final member checking interviews and ensured their approval of the analysis.   To the remaining seven participants, I submitted via e-mail the manuscript pertaining to their data and received approval from all of them for all information pertaining to them in the study through a second informed consent (Appendix E).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

IPA provided a fitting methodology to explore the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders in the three Catholic universities. IPA appeared on the research scene in the field of psychology in the mid-1990s when it was first conceptualized by Smith. The first publication using IPA methodology was a position paper published by Smith (1996). In education and social sciences, IPA is a relatively new methodology (Smith et al., 2009). However, research using IPA has increased notably from 2008 (Smith, 2011). A web search for dissertations using IPA methodology in ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis Database in 2019 returned over 28,000 results. Similarly, the database also produced over 4,100 results when searched for peer-reviewed scholarly journal publications using IPA. IPA is informed by concepts from three areas of philosophy of knowledge: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2004). In order to posit the use of IPA as methodology, the following section discusses the theoretical underpinnings of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography.

Phenomenology. Phenomenology is a qualitative research approach that explores and comprehends lived experiences (Creswell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 2005; Smith et al., 2009; Van Manen, 2016). Present-day phenomenological research methods were developed from the broader philosophical tradition of phenomenology which provided a rich source of ideas and protocols to explore human experiences (Moustakas, 1994; Van Manen, 2016). In phenomenology, the researcher gathers data from individuals who have experienced the same phenomenon and "develops a composite description of the essence of the experience" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75) for all the participants. The description covers "what" the participants experienced and "how" they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). Broadly

speaking, there are two phenomenological approaches: the Husserlian transcendental

phenomenology and Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenology (Laverty, 2003). The German

philosopher, Edmund Husserl (1970), considered the father of phenomenology, conceptualized

transcendental phenomenology which is "a scientific study of the appearance of things, of

phenomena just as we see them and as they appear to us in consciousness" (Moustakas, 1994, p.

49). Husserl viewed consciousness as a dialogue between the person and her/his world. To reach

the essence of experience, Husserl's approach was to bracket out the outer world, one's beliefs,

judgements, and individual biases (Laverty, 2003) and purely describe the phenomena "as they

appear and in their essence" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 26) without any interpretation. The second

approach is Heidegger's hermeneutical phenomenology which is discussed in the next section.

Hermeneutics. Heidegger expanded on Husserl's thoughts in phenomenology (Creswell

& Poth, 2018). His phenomenological approach paid attention to illuminating details and

apparently trivial aspects of human experience in order to create meanings and understand them

(Heidegger, 1927/1964). According to Heidegger, human experience is a transaction between

people and their world, and it takes place within people's cultural, social, and historical contexts.

Therefore, the experience cannot be understood without reference to a person's background; and

interpretation is a critical aspect to understanding the experience (Heidegger, 1927/1964). While

both the transcendental and hermeneutical approaches focus on lived experiences of participants,

transcendental phenomenologists give greater weight to describing without interpreting whereas

hermeneutical phenomenologists hold the view that "there are no such things as uninterpreted

phenomena" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 180). According to Van Manen (1990) the very use of

language is "inevitably an interpretive process" (p. 181). IPA falls under the hermeneutic

tradition of phenomenology with focus on interpretation espoused by Heidegger, Van Manen,

Gadamer, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Finlay (2009) argued that description and interpretation should be viewed as a continuum where a particular work may be more or less interpretive. In the current study, I chose to lean towards the hermeneutic side of the continuum in phenomenology. IPA's interpretive emphasis fits the purpose and context of this study to examine the lived experience of academic lay leaders who integrate the mission and identity of Catholic universities.

The idea of hermeneutic circle which was developed by Heidegger (1927/1964) as a process of interpreting a text is an important concept in IPA. In textual analysis the hermeneutic circle implies that understanding the text as a whole is possible by reference to the individual parts and understanding each individual part is possible by reference to the whole. Neither the whole nor the individual part of the text can be understood without reference to each other. Hence it is called a circle. It is a repeated circular movement between the parts and the whole. A key aspect of IPA process of analysis is iterative—movement back and forth through a range of different ways of dealing with the data—rather than a step-by-step linear approach. As the researcher moves back and forth through this process, one's relationship with the data can shift according to the hermeneutic circle (Smith et al., 2009).

Idiography. Idiography is an approach to knowledge that relates to the study of particular as distinct from nomothetic—a tendency to generalize—which is the typical approach to knowledge in natural sciences. Idiography is the usual approach to knowledge generation in social sciences as it attempts to understand the particular, specific, unique, and subjective phenomena. IPA is committed to the particular at two levels: firstly in the sense of detailed, thorough, and systematic analysis of each participant and secondly in the sense of how an experience is understood from the perspective of participants in their particular context (Larkin

& Thompson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). Therefore, IPA uses small, purposively selected, and carefully situated samples. Experienced IPA researchers might choose even single participant study (Larkin & Thompson, 2012). Anywhere between a three-to-six sample size is usually considered adequate for an IPA academic research project. IPA begins in-depth analytic procedures with a single case at a time, generates themes for each individual narrative, and brackets it before moving to the next case. A cross-case analysis is performed only after all the individual cases are analyzed (Smith et al., 2009).

In conclusion, firstly, IPA is phenomenological in the sense that it examines human lived experience as is expressed by the participant, not according to any predefined category. Secondly, the IPA approach concurs with Heidegger (1927/1964) that phenomenological inquiry is an interpretative process (Smith et al., 2009). And thirdly, IPA has an idiographic commitment, exploring the experiences of participants from their particular contexts and perspectives.

Methodology Appropriateness

Informed by hermeneutical phenomenology, IPA assumes that human beings are sense-making creatures and explores the participants' accounts as an attempt to make sense of their experiences. Then the researcher interprets the participant's account to make sense of their experiences. Thus, the IPA researcher is "engaged in a double hermeneutic because the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them" (Smith et al., 2009). According to Ricoeur (1970) there are two distinct broad interpretative positions: hermeneutics of empathy and hermeneutics of suspicion (Smith et al., 2009). In the first, the researcher adopts an insider's perspective and sees things from the participant's point of view and in the second, the researcher views the participants from a

different angle, asking questions on things they are saying. IPA balances both these stances, as it takes a middle-ground position combining both hermeneutics of empathy and hermeneutics of questioning (Smith et al., 2009). IPA helps the researcher to get as close as possible to the personal experience of the participant, but at the same time it is an interpretative endeavor for both the participants and the researcher (Smith et al., 2009). I preferred IPA for the current study as the methodology engaged with reflections and meaning making (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2004; 2008). In this study I was looking not just for the description of the mission and identity integration experiences of the academic lay leaders of Catholic universities alone. The meaning of their experiences derived through critical reflection and interpretation was a crucial aspect of the study. IPA provided the vital and critical reflective space for the participants to make meaning from their experiences and for me as a researcher to co-construct knowledge in the analytical phase of the research. Given my academic background of philosophy, theology, and literature and my personal affinity to exploring meaning in human experience, IPA with its focus on interpreted meaning and critical reflection appealed to my way of knowing. The following sections present the different phases of research activities.

Preparatory Phase of the Study

Throughout the 3-year period of my doctoral level classes, preparations were underway through reading and reflection on what I wanted to do research on. My thoughts were on bringing together leadership, CHE, and the relationship between one's personal calling and commitment. My own experience in higher education leadership drove me to look at the relationship between personal experiences and leadership practice of midlevel leaders and how they integrate mission and identity of the institute they belong to. My internship at San Antonio Archdiocese's pastoral department, developing a training program for Pastoral Councils in the

parishes of the Archdiocese as part of my PhD class requirements, opened my eyes to the important leadership role that laity needs to assume if the proclaimed mission of the Church is to come to fruition. My own conversations and interactions with leaders and administrators in various organizations brought greater clarity to this idea. The classes on leadership theories and organizational behaviors and the many reflection papers written on several related themes guided me to the conceptual framework of the research. The qualitative research methods and design classes guided me in pooling the idea together into a research proposal. After broadly conceptualizing the area of research, I wrote a draft outline of proposal for clarity on what I wanted to find out and how I wanted to go about executing it. At the advice of my dissertation chair, I took the idea to eight people involved in higher education and leadership research and received their feedback. Their feedback, comments, and suggestions factored in the final proposal that the dissertation committee had approved.

Participant Selection

This study used a purposive sampling strategy in the selection of participants. Polkinghorne (2005) reasons out the need for purposeful selections in qualitative researches in the following words: "Because the goal of qualitative research is enriching the understanding of an experience, it needs to select fertile exemplars of the experience for study. Such selections are purposeful and sought out" (p. 140). As the first step in the process of selection, I contacted the gatekeepers, the vice presidents of Mission and Ministry of the three Catholic universities in San Antonio through a formal letter (Appendix A), requesting them to nominate potential participants. The vice presidents of Mission and Ministry were identified as gatekeepers because of their direct involvement with the mission initiatives and their reach over all the schools and departments of the respective university. All the three vice presidents of Mission and Ministry

together nominated 18 candidates on the nomination form (Appendix B) supplied to them. The following were the inclusion criteria laid down for participation in the study:

1. The participants should have a minimum of 3 years of experience in academic leadership in a given Catholic university.

2. The participants could either be currently working in academic leadership or retired from such a position in the Catholic universities under study within the last 10 years.

3. The participants should have received recognitions for their outstanding contributions to the university's mission.

4. The participants should also be willing to cooperate in the research through deep sharing of their personal experiences and be able to relate them to their leadership practices.

5. The candidates who may not meet one or the other of the first three criteria mentioned above may still be considered for participation if the vice presidents of Mission and Ministry cite strong reasons based on mission and identity integration. In the case of such participants, the exempted criteria and the cited reasons for their participation will be mentioned in the study.

I contacted all the 18 nominated candidates via e-mail (Appendix C) soliciting their participation. I received responses from 14 expressing their interest to be part of the study. I narrowed down an initial list of 7 participants applying the diversity criteria of age, gender, race, religious affiliation, academic area, and their leadership roles. Two participants who met the inclusion criteria mentioned above, were recommended by my personal contacts. They were included in the study with the approval of the dissertation committee. In all, nine participants were interviewed.

Participant Profile

All the nine participants met the inclusion criteria for the study mentioned above. All were U.S. citizens, five males and four females. Their average age was 53; the youngest, 41 and the oldest, 76. Their average leadership experience in the universities under study was 15.5 years, a range of 5 to 45 years. Table 2 provides a summary of participant demographics.

Table 2

A Summary of Participant Demographics

Participant	Gender	Age	Race/ Ethnicity	Faith Tradition	Leadership Level	Years in Catholic Universities under study
Alex [pseudonym]	Male	41	African American	Non-denominational Christian	Dean & Interim Vice President	8
Candace	Female	41	Latina	Catholic	Director/ Chair	7
Emily	Female	44	Caucasian	Presbyterian	Chair	14.5
Larry	Male	76	Caucasian	Non-Catholic Christian	Chair	45
Mike	Male	46	Caucasian	Catholic	Director	12
Steve	Male	55	Caucasian	Episcopalian	Dean	5
Tanuja	Female	54	Asian Indian	Hindu	Dean	10
Terri	Female	66	Caucasian	Catholic	Chair	29
Winston	Male	55	Asian Indian	Catholic	Dean	10

The participants averaged 20 years of experience in teaching and leadership in higher education including both Catholic and other universities, a range of 12 to 46 years. All the participants hold doctoral level academic degrees. As shown in Table 2, the participants'

leadership positions ranged from program director, department chair, dean, to interim vice president. The participants were from diverse faith traditions and from different races/ethnicities as well.

Data Collection Procedures

After the initial e-mail correspondence, I had a one-on-one meeting with all the participants that lasted between 20 to 30 minutes in which I built a rapport and explained to them the nature and the intent of the research. In that meeting, the participants received the informed consent (Appendix D), demographic data form (Appendix F), and the interview questions (Appendix G). Either during the first meeting or before the first interview, all the participants signed the informed consent and filled out the demographic data form.

First interview. An interview protocol and schedule (Appendix G) were prepared as guide for data collection. Prior to the interviews, I, as a researcher also spent time in reflection, creating my own mind map [in my own mind a map] of questions. My reflections were helpful in bracketing out my personal influences. The date, time, and venue of interviews were finalized according to the convenience and choice of the participants. The interviews were audio recorded with the help of a digital phone recorder—LG Stylo 2Plus. I introduced the interview in the following words:

> My name is Thomas and I am a doctoral student at the University of the Incarnate Word. My dissertation is on the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities who integrate the mission and identity of the university they are part of. The focus of this research is on your lived experiences. I am interested in your life experiences that have helped you integrate the mission and identity of the university you are now part of. In other words, please describe in as much detail as possible your life experiences, thoughts, and feelings that connect to your integration of mission and identity of the university. (Appendix G: Interview Protocol)

The interviews began with the general open-ended research question: "Please tell me in detail the journey that led you to this university." Picking cues from the responses, I asked

follow-up questions requesting more details and in-depth stories. I took notes during the interviews regarding the context and about the nonverbal communications of the participants. Since the participant is the experiential expert, I allowed the participant's own responses to guide the direction of the interview (Polkinghorne, 2005; Smith et al., 2009). Upon completion, I asked the participants if they had any thoughts to share or comments to make. I thanked the participants for their participation and for sharing their experiences. The second interview date and time was also planned at the end of the first interview. After the transcription, a copy of the interview transcript was e-mailed to all the participants to cross-check for accuracy and to withdraw anything that they considered inappropriate. It also helped the participants to prepare for the follow-up interview with additional reflections in the light of their initial responses.

Follow-up interview. Polkinghorne (2005) recommends more than one interview with participants "in order to obtain interview data of sufficient quality to produce worthwhile findings" (p. 142). A second round of interviews, with follow-up questions on experiences shared in the first interviews and questions that were not asked from the interview schedule in the first interview, were conducted with all the nine participants. For each participant, I prepared a set of separate follow-up interview reflection questions (Appendix H: Sample reflection questions for follow-up interview) to explore deeper the experiences they shared in the first interview. The follow-up interview reflection questions, along with an optional worksheet (Appendix H) that describes five to seven significant life moments that influenced the way they integrate the mission and identity of the university, were e-mailed to the participants at least 2 days ahead of the actual follow-up interview. Six participants filled out the optional worksheet while three spoke about the significant life moments during the follow-up interview.

In all, I conducted and recorded 18 interviews between November 27, 2018 and April 10, 2019. Each participant was interviewed two times. In the case of five participants, the second interview happened within a week after the first. For two participants, the gap between the interviews was three to four weeks and between seven to eight weeks for the last two participants. Except in the case of one interview, which was conducted at a cafeteria, all the other 17 interviews were recorded in the office space of the participants. The participants reported on time for the interviews. Only one interview was rescheduled for the convenience of the participant. The shortest interview lasted 44 minutes and the longest, 83 minutes. Total audiotaped interviews amounted to 18.15 hours. Participant interviews lasted between 98 to 145 minutes when the first and second interview durations were put together. The interviews lasted until I gained the confidence of data saturation. After the interviews, the audio files were stored in my password-protected personal computer.

I wrote my initial impressions on the day of the interview and maintained it in a book. And I transcribed the data verbatim from the audio digital voice recording into Microsoft Word documents. Transcribing the interviews personally helped me to deepen data engagement throughout the process (Smith et al., 2009; Van Manen, 1990). In most cases, the transcription began on the same day as the interview. I listened to the audiotapes a couple of times before transcribing the interviews. Except in one case where the second interview happened within a gap of 3 days, all the other second interviews were conducted after completing the transcription of the first interview and presenting a copy of the transcript to the participants for their review. On average, I read the script of the interview three times, making notes and preparing questions for the second interview. Each interview took me 10–12 hours for transcribing. Data analysis began only after I received approval of the transcript from the participants.

Data Analysis Procedures

I used Dedoose, the qualitative analysis software, to organize the data and to develop patterns and themes. Smith et al. (2009) suggested that software tools could assist in data management, especially in research that involves large amount of data. I found Dedoose appropriate for IPA analysis as it has provision to enter comments and to organize codes hierarchically and to easily access analysis results. This multilevel coding in Dedoose fits the process of developing emergent themes and eventually arriving at superordinate themes from the transcripts. The software was used only as a tool to comment, organize excerpts, codes and themes, not as a driver of analysis.

Smith and Osborn (2004) summarized the process of analyzing data in IPA studies in three key terms: idiographic, inductive, and interrogative. Idiographic because it is a detailed and nuanced analysis of each case; inductive because the themes emerge from the data as against the testing of any hypothesis; and interrogative because the discussion proceeds from the data analysis and findings are considered in relation to extant literature. Data analysis involved an iterative, inductive cycle of visiting and revisiting the data, collecting new data, and an ongoing analysis (Polkinghorne, 2005; Smith, 2007). The data analysis moved from the descriptive to the interpretative stages of the individual experiences.

Analysis steps for IPA research. IPA is flexible in data analytical development and there is no single method for data analysis (Smith et al., 2009). However, as a novice researcher in phenomenology, I preferred to use the following six-step procedure suggested by Smith et al. (2009).

Step 1: Reading and re-reading. To actively engage the data, I read the interview transcripts numerous times. The first couple of times while reading the transcript I also listened

to the digital recordings. Listening while reading, allowed me to make note of the tone of voice in the conversation and capture the stress of words. This reading and rereading of the transcripts permitted identifying the richer sections of the data (Saldaña, 2016; Smith et al., 2009). The iterative process allowed me to identify contradictions and paradoxes (Saldaña, 2016; Smith et al., 2009).

    Step 2: Initial noting. Next, I began the initial noting phase to explore semantic content and language use in the data and entered three sets of comments: descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual with the help of the "add memo" option available in the analytic software, Dedoose. I made the descriptive comments not only on the keywords and phrases the participants used but also on their thoughts, emotions, and experiences expressed. My linguistic comments covered the use of language, pronoun use, pauses, laughter, repetition, hesitancy, degree of fluency, articulation, and use of metaphors. And the conceptual comments focused on the participants' narratives using my thoughts, feelings, and experiences and the theoretical literature as touchstones. The noting phase helped me with a reflective engagement and an in-depth familiarization with the transcript (Saldaña, 2016; Smith et al., 2009). Additional notes were added with each subsequent reading of the transcript.

    For initial coding, I applied an integrated approach of both Smith et al. (2009) and Charmaz (2014), using gerunds as much as possible to connote action in the data. Using gerunds ('-ing' words) in coding, also called process/action coding is a strategy to capture action in the data. Process coding helps in identifying an on-going action as response to situations; it conveys movement and helps the researcher to present a dynamic account of events. For example: experiencing parental love, living by example, and advocating social justice (Charmaz, 2014;

Saldaña, 2016). I entered the level one codes into each participant's data on the software and the

codes that applied to each participant were exported onto a Microsoft Word file.

     Step 3: Developing emergent themes. At this stage emerging themes were developed

from the exploratory comments. The themes reflected the words, thoughts, and interpretations of

the participants and my interpretations (Saldaña, 2016; Smith et al., 2009). These emergent

themes were listed out. Mapping the interrelationships, connections, and patterns among

exploratory comments and by clustering level one codes, I developed emergent themes for each

participant (Appendix I: A sample of clustering level one codes). I completed the same process

of initial coding, exporting onto Microsoft Word file, and developing emergent themes for all the

nine participants.

     Step 4: Searching for connections across emergent themes. After listing out the

emergent themes, I developed a table of themes that depicted the thematic relationships across

cases. Two strategies I used in finding patterns and connections among emergent themes were

abstraction and subsumption (Smith et al., 2009). Abstraction is an analytical process of

identifying patterns among emergent themes by clubbing together themes that are similar and

giving a new name for the cluster (Smith et al., 2009). The process of subsumption is similar to

abstraction, but with the difference that in subsumption an emergent theme acquires a

superordinate status and brings the related themes together whereas in abstraction there is a new

name for the cluster of emergent themes (Smith et al., 2009). So, through the process of

abstraction and subsumption and clustering together of emerging themes, six superordinate

themes or higher-ranking cluster of dominant ideas were arrived at. In the process, some of the

themes were combined; some others that did not have enough data support were discarded.

Step 5: Moving to the next case. The IPA focuses on one case at a time. When the analysis of one case was completed, I set that aside, bracketed it, and reflectivity was implemented. And then the next case was analyzed. Each case was treated on its own merit in keeping with the IPA's idiographic commitment (Smith et al., 2009).

Step 6: Looking for patterns across cases. After all the cases were analyzed, I looked for patterns across cases (Saldaña, 2016; Smith et al., 2009). Finding shared themes and superordinate themes added depth and high-order qualities (Saldaña, 2016; Smith et al., 2009). A set of final themes was developed from the shared patterns across cases. After determining the superordinate themes and the respective themes under each superordinate theme, I went back to the software and reorganized the initial codes and themes to fit the superordinate themes (Appendix J: Screenshots of codes from Dedoose). Then the coded abstracts for each superordinate theme with code descriptions and initial comments were exported to Microsoft Word file. Throughout my reporting of the findings, the analysis process continued. In some instances, when considered within the whole, I found some codes fit better under a different theme or a superordinate theme. Accordingly, those reorganizations were completed.

In the process of data analysis, I assigned more than 600 level-one codes to all the 18 transcribed interviews put together. From those level-one codes 22 themes were identified from the coded text segments amounting to over 73,000 words across all the interviews. Many level-one codes and themes were found common to more than one participant. Through clustering and merging of themes, six superordinate themes were found common to the experiences of all the participants. The six superordinate themes and their subthemes will be discussed with the participant narrative in chapter 4.

Methods to Enhance Trustworthiness

IPA, as it positions the researcher as a central instrument in the research process has the potential for researcher bias. Bracketing and reflexivity were applied to reduce bias (Smith et al., 2009; Van Manen, 1990). Throughout the research process I kept a journal and made note of my own reflections on any biases, preconceived notions, thoughts, and feelings (Maxwell, 2013). The journal writing added to my own self-awareness. The findings are the result of a detailed and iterative approach to thematic analysis. The findings pertaining to each participant were e-mailed to the concerned participant for review and approval. I also conducted member-checking interviews with two randomly selected participants who validated the findings (Creswell, 2015). I received respondent validation for the findings from all the participants. The use of data analysis software, Dedoose also helped to triangulate the findings through categorization, frequency of themes, and thematic analysis. Cases and personal accounts are context specific and therefore in a qualitative study empirical generalizability is ruled out, although theoretical transferability could be possible (Creswell, 2015; Maxwell, 2013). It is the reader who will make connections between the findings of an IPA study, their own experiences, and the claims in the extant literature. The readers, after reading the contextualized analysis of the experiences of the participants, will evaluate its transferability to individuals in similar context (Smith et al., 2009). Chapter 3 presented the methodology and the participant profile of this study. The next chapter presents the findings arrived at using the methodology described in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings

This IPA study explored the life stories and experiences of the academic lay leaders of the three Catholic universities in San Antonio that contributed to the development of the institutional mission and identity orientation in them. This explorative study was guided by the central research question: What are the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities of San Antonio who integrate the mission and identity of the university they are part of? The participant selection method was purposive sampling using the inclusion criteria, and the data collection method was semi-structured in-depth interviews. In all, I interviewed nine participants in two sessions each for the study. Data analysis, as detailed in chapter 3 was the six-step method recommended by Smith et al. (2009). I used Dedoose, the qualitative analysis software, to organize the data and to develop patterns and themes. Through an iterative process of reading and rereading, noting, multi-level coding, clustering and merging of themes, and finding patterns across cases, six superordinate themes were found common to the mission and identity integration experiences of the participants.

This chapter is organized in three sections. The first section is a descriptive profile summary of the participants. This adds to the demographic details of the participants already presented in chapter 3 and this descriptive summary is expected to help the readers understand the experiences of the participants, situating them in their contexts. In the second section, I present a brief overview of the data analysis procedures. In the third section, I report the six superordinate themes, their subthemes, the participant narratives pertaining to the themes, and the interpretative findings under each subordinate theme. Then I will bring together the interpretative findings into a key behavioral competencies model of academic lay leaders' integration of the mission and identity of the Catholic university.

A Brief Summary of Participant Profile

This section provides a brief description of participants' profile. All the participants, except one, preferred to use their actual name in the study. In what follows, I present a short descriptive profile of all the participants that were gathered from their demographic data, the significant moments' list, and the interviews.

Alex. Alex [pseudonym] is an African American and the first person to graduate from his immediate family. He has 12 years of teaching and administrative experience in higher education out of which the last 8 have been with OLLU. For the past 4 years, he has been the Dean of Student Success at OLLU. And recently he has been assigned the additional responsibility of the Interim Vice President of Student Affairs. Alex had his schooling in public schools. His undergraduate degree is from a private United Methodist institution, which is also an HBCU—Historically Black College or University. After the undergraduate degree, he had 8 years of graduate education in public universities. Motivated by the special needs of his younger brother, who was born blind, Alex chose special education for his master's and doctoral degrees. He began his career as a schoolteacher before he decided to earn his PhD. Before coming to OLLU, he worked for a while at the University of New Mexico, a large public institution. Alex recalls that he desired all along to work at a small faith-based institution. Prominent among the challenges Alex and his family faced was dealing with the drug addiction and PTSD issues of his father.

Candace. Candace is a Latina, born in a traditional Mexican American Catholic family. Her entire education was in public schools. She has 16 years of teaching experience in higher education out of which the last 7 years have been with OLLU. She has been the Director of Quest First Year Program for 5 years and the Chair of Mass Communications and Drama English

for the past 2 years. Her master's and doctoral degrees are in English with specialization in Rhetoric, Latina Literature, and Cultural Studies. From a very young age, Candace worked at the tire trade and mechanics business of her father. Her devout Catholic parents instilled a strong Catholic faith in Candace. She firmly believes that through prayer and devotion, she could overcome any difficulty and succeed. Her focus in research and scholarship has been on how Hispanic-serving institutions serve students of color through program design, curriculum design, or pedagogies. Candace considers her job a ministry, vocation, and calling. In her personal life, Candace has lived through a dark time of a troubled marriage, divorce, and the trauma that came along.

Emily. Emily was born into a Presbyterian family in Texas. She had all her education in public schools. Her parents were both university professors. Her master's and doctoral degrees, both in English, are from Texas A&M and University of North Carolina, Greensboro, respectively. She has 14.5 years of teaching experience in higher education, all of them at UIW. For the past 5 years, she has been the department chair of English at UIW. Her parents were divorced when she was around 15. Her mother has been a powerful influence on her. Emily acknowledges that her mother's side of the family always instilled in her the idea of service to others in different ways. When she thinks of the tenets of the mission of UIW, she says that "social justice absolutely stands out" for her. It was during her graduate school in Greensboro that Emily first realized that what she really wanted to do most was serve students, teaching and working with them, particularly those on the margins.

Larry. Larry was born into a non-Catholic, Christian family in Greenville, Ohio in a very strongly agrarian background in a county that is 99% White. He has a master's degree in Political Science from Miami University, and one in Social Work from OLLU, San Antonio, Texas. His

doctoral degree in Political Science is from the London School of Economics and Political Science, London. Forty-five of the total 46 years of his services in higher education, teaching, and leadership are shared between two Catholic universities in San Antonio: UIW and St. Mary's U. From 1972, Larry has been teaching Political Science and Justice and Peace Studies. Currently, he is a tenured Full Professor, Political Science/International Relations at St. Mary's U. He directed the Graduate Program in International Relations at St. Mary's U. from August 1994 to June 2004. In Larry, there is a strong integration of faith, academia, and social justice. He began his career as a social worker in Darke County Migrant Ministry, in Union City, Ohio; assisted Cesar Chavez and the United Farmworkers Union during the Talisman Sugar Company strike in Dade County, Florida in 1972 and was a VISTA Volunteer (Domestic Peace Corps) Robstown, Texas in 1966–1967 before he got into full-time academics. He has traveled extensively to the developing world, finding solutions to poverty. Larry is a widely published scholar and has received numerous awards and recognitions. Larry has been actively involved in mission-centered initiatives at St. Mary's U. He was a member of the Center for Social Justice and Global Awareness and has been a founding member of Marianist Social Justice Collaborative.

Mike. Mike is a Caucasian male, born in a Catholic, military household. First 8 years of his school education was in Catholic Franciscan schools. The rest of his formal education for 14 years were all in the public education system. Both his master's and doctoral degrees are in Electrical Engineering. He has a total of 22 years of work experience out of which the last 12 are in higher education, all of them at UIW. He is currently an Associate Professor of Engineering, in charge of PI AVS Lab, and Director of the community service programs, mini Girls in Engineering, Mathematics, and Science (miniGEMS) and mega Girls in Engineering, Mathematics, and Science (megaGEMS). Active involvement in mission-driven community

programs has been Mike's method of integrating the mission of UIW. His Catholic education in Franciscan schools, life on military bases, and the value of service taught by his parents have all been influential in integrating the mission and identity of UIW he came to be part of. Integrating the spirit of the mission of UIW, Mike, along with a student, initiated a summer science camp for girls, miniGEMS program, to engage the San Antonio Community. Over the years the summer camp has developed into a major government funded program, megaGEMS which runs through whole summer every year.

Steve. Steve is a Caucasian American, born in a military household from the Episcopalian faith tradition. He had his schooling and undergraduate degree in the public education system. His master's and doctoral degrees, both in law were from England. There, he had his first direct engagement with Catholic institutions when he visited monasteries for studies and went on a retreat with the Benedictines. He has 25 years of experience in teaching and administration in legal higher education. For the past 5 years, he has been the Dean of St. Mary's University's School of Law. Steve has researched extensively on the role of law as a guarantee of morality. Before joining St. Mary's School of Law, Steve taught and was Associate Dean at the University of Arkansas. What appeals most to Steve from the mission of St. Mary's U. is the "part of its tradition to be an avenue for social justice."

Tanuja. Tanuja was born in India, in a traditional Hindu Brahmin family. She came to the United States for higher education and is now an American citizen. Except for the first 4 years of Catholic school education in India, the rest of her education was in public schools. Her doctoral degree is from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois in Marketing with an emphasis in International Business. She has an M.B.A. from Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi and a Master of Science in Physics from Allahabad University, India. She has in all

30 years of work experience, 28 of those in higher education. Ten of those years she has spent in CHE as the dean of the School of Business at St. Mary's U. She has been driven by the impact that education has on the lives of those she serves—faculty and students. She says that she chose to serve at St. Mary's U. because "we could talk about our faith traditions in a much more intentional way; we could talk about how the journeys we are going through lead us to a certain outcome."

Terri. Terri is a Caucasian female raised in the Catholic tradition in San Antonio, Texas. She had Catholic education until the completion of her undergraduate degree. She had her BA from St. Mary's U., San Antonio. Her master's degree in Physical Education is from Eastern Michigan University and doctoral degree in Pedagogy from the University of Texas at Austin. She began her teaching career in a high school, and after her doctoral studies, she returned to St. Mary's U. campus as a faculty member. She has 35 years of teaching experience in higher education and 29 years in CHE at St. Mary's U. She is currently the Chair, Exercise and Sport Science Department. Catholic faith, traditions, and schooling have been influencing factors in Terri's integration story of the mission and identity of St. Mary's U.

Winston. Winston was born in India, in a Catholic family and came to the United States for his graduate studies and is now an American citizen. He had Catholic school education in India until grade 10. He had 8 years of public university education, 4 of which were in the United States. His master's and doctoral degrees are in Engineering. He holds a total work experience of 34 years and 30 of those years are in higher education. He has been at St. Mary's U. as the dean of its School of Science, Engineering and Technology for 10 years now. Six days before Winston's second birthday, his father died of cancer. The hard work and resilience of his mother have been great inspiration to Winston. He is devoutly Catholic. His faith in God drives him to community

service involvements, in addition to his leadership responsibilities. Narrating the influence of St. Mary's U. on him, Winston says that the place has transformed him with "the heart of a servant."

Data Analysis Process

I imported all 18 interview transcripts into the Dedoose platform. For data analysis, I applied the six-step method proposed by Smith et al. (2009). To actively engage the data, I read the interview transcripts a minimum of three times. This reading and rereading of the transcripts permitted identifying the richer sections of the data (Saldaña, 2016; Smith et al., 2009). Then I began the initial noting phase to explore semantic content and language use in the data. Three sets of comments: descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual were entered with the help of the "add memo" option available in the analytic software. The descriptive comments were made not only on the keywords and phrases the participants used but also on the thoughts, emotions, and experiences they expressed. The linguistic comments covered the use of language, pronoun use, pauses, laughter, repetition, hesitancy, degree of fluency, articulation, and use of metaphors. And the conceptual comments focused on the participants' narratives using my thoughts, feelings, and experiences and the theoretical literature as touchstones. The noting phase helped me with a reflective engagement and an in-depth familiarization with the transcript.

For initial coding, I applied an integrated approach of both Smith et al. (2009) and Charmaz (2014), using gerunds as much as possible to connote action in the data. The level one codes were entered into each participant's data on the software, and later the codes that were applied to each participant were exported onto a Microsoft Word file. By mapping the interrelationships, connections, and patterns among exploratory comments, and by clustering level one codes, emergent themes were developed for each participant (Appendix I: A sample of

clustering level one codes). The same process of initial coding, exporting onto Microsoft Word file, and developing emergent themes for all the nine participants was completed.

After listing out the emergent themes, I developed a table of themes that depicted the thematic relationships across cases. I looked for patterns and connections among emergent themes and through the process of abstraction and subsumption (Smith et al., 2009) and clustering together of emerging themes, six superordinate themes were arrived at. Some of the themes were combined; some others that did not have enough data support were discarded. After determining the superordinate themes and the respective themes under each superordinate theme, I went back to the software and reorganized the initial codes and themes to fit the superordinate themes (Appendix J: Screenshots of codes from Dedoose). Then the coded abstracts for each superordinate theme with code descriptions and initial comments were exported to Microsoft Word file. Throughout my reporting of the findings, the analysis process continued. In some instances, when considered within the whole, I found some codes fit better under a different theme or a superordinate theme. Accordingly, those reorganizations were completed. Many level one codes and themes were found common to more than one participant. Through clustering and merging of themes, eventually, six superordinate themes were found common to the experiences of all the participants.

Findings of the Study

I begin this findings section with a general introduction to the six superordinate themes that emerged from the study. Each superordinate theme with the supporting themes, data, and interpretative findings will be presented in detail in the following pages.

Introduction to superordinate themes. This IPA study explored the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities in San Antonio.

The scope of the study spreads across the diverse experiences of the participants' whole life, not limited to the time they spent at the Catholic university. For example, all the participants relate their mission integration experiences to the values they inculcated from their parents when they were children. In the analysis of the narratives, I find it relevant to relate the superordinate themes to the participants' experiences within a particular period in their lives. For example, the first superordinate theme, forming values and beliefs covers all the experiences that relate to the mission and identity integration before the participants joined the Catholic university. The six superordinate themes identified are (a) forming values and beliefs, (b) experiencing disorienting dilemmas, (c) nurturing mission consciousness, (d) assimilating the mission, (e) owning the mission, and (f) championing the mission.

Across the mission and identity integration narratives of all the participants, there are strong indications of a progressive journey that begins with the formation of values and beliefs and progressing towards becoming advocates of the mission. All the superordinate themes, except the experience of disorienting dilemmas, loosely relate to a stage in the life of the participants. However, this progressive journey is not linear, nor the experiences exclusively limited to one stage. There is overlapping of experiences relating to the other five themes within a superordinate theme, but the predominant experiences of the stage connect to the given theme. Table 3 presents an overview of the superordinate themes, the stage of the experience, and the themes experienced under each superordinate theme.

The structure of the presentation of the findings. The six-stage model of mission and identity integration experiences of the academic lay leaders in the following pages presents a composite story of the broad process of the integration. In the first section under each superordinate theme, I will present the findings mostly in the descriptive form providing relevant

Table 3

An Overview of the Superordinate Themes, Stage of Experience, and Themes

Superordinate theme	Stage	Themes
Forming values and beliefs	Before joining the Catholic U.	• Forming a spirit of service • Integrating fundamental values • Internalizing faith and spirituality • Experiencing mentor and ideologue influence
Experiencing disorienting dilemmas	Experiences throughout life	• Encountering social issues • Experiencing dark moments in life
Nurturing mission consciousness	The formative experiences in mission and identity being part of the Catholic U.	• Experiencing the charisma of the founding Congregation • Experiencing trusting leadership and mentoring • Receiving formation in mission and identity • Experiencing a sense of community
Assimilating the mission	A continuous process of mission interiorization	• Interiorizing through reflective engagement • Experiencing a compelling sense of purpose • Aligning personal values with the institutional mission • Deepening faith and spirit
Owning the mission	Growing in personal ownership of mission that runs throughout one's presence at the Catholic U.	• Building relationships • Experiencing mission integration as a continuous evolution • Experiencing a mission-centric culture • Experiencing challenges of integration
Championing the mission	Being an advocate of the mission—a continuous process	• Integrating the mission in academia • Imparting ethical and moral values • Advocating social justice • Living by example

evidence from the data. The idiographic and interpretative emphasis of IPA provides me with the

opportunity to go beyond a surface-level description of the phenomenon and look for insights

into the participants' experience and present interpretative accounts of their experience and perspectives on reality around them (Smith et al., 2009). The interpretative findings section under each superordinate theme is the result of analyzing the data with a special focus on the leadership behaviors of the participants. These interpretative findings are a set of ideas that show a composite action model of the academic lay leaders. After presenting all the descriptive data and the interpretative findings pertaining to all the superordinate themes, I will bring together the interpretative findings into a key behavioral competencies model which will be taken to chapter 6 for further discussion. I believe that generating a behavioral competencies model from this explorative endeavor will be very beneficial to CHE in the formation of new leaders, and in the transition of leadership from priests and religious to laity.

Forming Values and Beliefs

The first superordinate theme, forming values and beliefs, consists of four themes: (a) forming a spirit of service, (b) integrating fundamental values, (c) internalizing faith and spirituality, and (d) experiencing mentor and ideologue influence. The supporting themes of this superordinate theme, and the summary list of participants experiencing the themes, are presented in Table 4. The evidence for the themes is presented in the narratives that follow.

Table 4

Forming Values and Beliefs: Themes

Theme	Number Experiencing	Participants Experiencing
Forming a spirit of service	9	All
Integrating fundamental values	9	All
Internalizing faith and spirituality	8	A,C,L,M,S,W,T,Te
Experiencing mentor and ideologue influence	9	All

Note: The first letter of participant name is used as identifier. T stands for Tanuja and Te for Terri.

Forming a spirit of service. All the participants share that their formative years in their family and the environment they grew up in have inculcated in them a spirit of service and a responsibility to give back to community. Emily credits her mother's side of the family for instilling in her the value of service:

> And so, it's [service mentality] just kind of, I think, been ingrained in me. I'm always looking for what can I do to help or how can I contribute. And even from a young age, my mom and my grandparents sort of talked to me about that in different ways, and then it just continued on. . . . I grew up with both of my parents until I was about 15 and then they got divorced and then I was raised by my mom . . . she has been a very strong influence in my whole life. . . . But she and her side of the family always instilled in me the idea of service to others in various different ways. . . . And my grandmother taught me that still today I'm luckier than a lot of people. . . . And so it's my responsibility to sort of give that back and I didn't realize until I sort of thought about it, what an influence that was on me. . . . My grandfather was an engineer. . . . Um so even after retiring, he still continued to do things in the community, to help out, he continued to garden and sort of do all sorts of things. Um my grandparents were World War II generation, so they also sort of had that idea. I think of . . . don't waste a moment, always give back. So, it was just kind of a theme that has run through my life. (Emily)

Emily also relates her developing the spirit of service to her higher education experiences at Texas A&M, which has a very strong military influence and a great focus on "something higher than yourself to serve."

Steve considers himself to be "incredibly blessed" to be born to his parents. His parents taught him to help those in need. He recounted the proactive role his mother had played as the president of the parent-teacher organization in bringing extracurricular activity to the elementary school in Picayune, Mississippi at a time the school system had just been ordered to desegregate. The schools were thus far separated based on race. Now that they were integrated there was a great deal of distrust and disorganization. The school authorities canceled all extracurricular activities except for varsity sports to avoid either the mingling of the races or the potential for violence. Challenging the decision of the principal, Steve's mother decreed that there is going to

be extracurricular activities and they were going to raise money for air conditioning the classrooms.

Tanuja, who hails from an Indian Hindu Brahmin family, remembers the question her family used to ask her in her very early childhood, "What are you doing that's more than just you?" And she recalls her dad saying, "Are you able to answer the question, 'What have you done to make a difference in somebody?'" She recounts how through a family tradition the value of giving back became part of her:

> In India there's a tradition at least the part I came from when you made a meal there would always be a little, we would always set aside one person's food. . . . And then it became almost like a tradition because we would always have extra food and we would . . . . So, for us, giving back was always, it was part of . . . we grew up with it. . . . We always kept that in mind growing up that if you had something, you always shared. . . . And that was part of our growing up. (Tanuja)

Tanuja takes inspiration from her parents who are "both very compassionate, very giving people," and she has always felt the need to help somebody else. She does run a school for the less privileged children in India from her resources.

Mike believes the seeds of the spirit of service were planted in him by his close-knit family, the community service example of his parents, his school education in Franciscan schools, and his life on community-oriented Marine bases. The Franciscan education had its positive influence on him, and he is inspired by St. Francis who "gave away everything." He also remembers his involvements in community service projects in the school, particularly a major fundraising event when he was an eighth grader, the planning of which the nuns entrusted to him. He relates that planning experience to what he now does for Mission and Ministry at UIW, as the Director of megaGEMS—a summer camp for middle school girls from San Antonio. He relates, "So, I think some of that planning experience also came early, too, because the Sisters let me do it." Mike believes that "living on community-based Marine bases and everyone knowing

everyone else" has generated a comfort level and a sense of community. Being in Boy Scouts and involvement in big community service projects that engages a lot of people is another experience, Mike remembers. He also recalls the many times he, along with his father, would volunteer to cut the grass for the Franciscan Sisters; and the whole family would volunteer, serving food at the food bank in Yuma. He describes how as a kid he understood service as a very "natural" thing to do. Note the emphasis on the words "natural" and "just" by repeating them, implying that it was a family expectation and a spontaneous action:

> It's natural, felt natural. I felt natural. . . . Just as an example, [as] I'm watching my parents do this, they would not make a big deal about it. So, I think it just as a kid, you're just like, okay this is just what you do. (Mike)

Larry has been a social justice practitioner throughout his professional career. After gaining his master's and training in VISTA—Volunteers In Service To America—he began his career in community organization. He chose to work in Robstown, Texas, which was "incredibly poor," and was 85% Hispanic. Larry narrates his experience of community organization:

> I was doing community organization to deal with problems in the really poor areas of town and I was living in a really poor area of town in a house that had electricity, it did not have running water indoors, it did not have an indoor toilet or a shower. I shared an outdoor toilet and an outdoor shower which was one stream of cold water coming down, with two other small homes and this was a two-room house that I was staying in. So, I got a sense of what living in poverty meant although I knew that at any time I could leave unlike the folks I shared that outdoor bathroom and shower with. (Larry)

Winston very vividly remembers a community service program he was actively involved in while he worked in Flint, Michigan. After "seven, eight years of wandering around" he found his way back to Church by joining the community service program at St. Michael's Catholic Church in Flint. He, along with a few others, began feeding the homeless in Flint. He describes the service and the influence of that experience:

> So, it was get-together, opening prayer, clean, and cook. And right before the doors were opened, we would get-together, huddle, pray once more for the people that we had the

privilege of serving and then people would come in. To Fr. Jim [pseudonym], the act of cleaning, the act of opening stuff, preparing and cooking and all of that, serving all of that was just um an expectation that preceded the actual service. To him, the actual service was when you were done, and you were expected to take a cup of coffee, juice, water, or whatever and walk through, talk to people, ask them how they were doing; fill their cups and glasses, be patient with them. Some had mental issues and they were not the nicest people; they were not the cleanest people; the clientele could be rough. . . . That stayed with me and it has stayed with me. (Winston)

Integrating fundamental values. In addition to forming a spirit of service, all the participants also narrate experiences of integrating other fundamental life values with them. And in all the participants the value integration happened because of their families and the environment in which they were raised. Steve, who hails from a military household, says that he grew up in an "environment with a deep respect for certain core values of commitment, respect, fidelity, and faith." He also recalls that his father was a Sea Scout and the president of the humane society in town for at least 20 years. And following his father's example, Steve was a Sea Scout as well. He remembers his father quietly raising money to keep the animal shelter going and to make sure that there was always discretionary funding to find a place for animals beyond their expiry dates. Steve recollects volunteering along with his father and taking dogs to houses out in the country. About his learning from that exercise, Steve describes, "that background of . . . carrying the puppies and knocking on doors, trying to raise money for this disease or that one, I never realized it fully, I knew there was something useful being learned."

Mike acknowledges that in his upbringing, his "parents' value system" and "being raised Catholic had a major influence and impact" on what he is doing today. Being a close-knit family, dependent upon each other, and being raised in a military family and going to the Catholic churches on the base had impacted his life and formed in him a sense of community. Winston had lost his father to cancer at the age of 2 and his mother had to work very hard to provide for

him and his older sister. He holds his mother as a role model and describes her "behavior worth

emulating." He describes the values of unconditional love and sacrifice that he learned from her:

> That is the unconditional love that a parent can have for a child, and but to me, I think
> yeah, that has influenced how I approach my own work ethic . . . balancing how you
> interact with other people even when you are tired, because that I learned from my
> mother. She would come home dog-tired and still have enough time to check homework
> and enough time to give us a hug, enough time to sit down and ask how our day went.
> Learned a lot also about what one does to sacrifice for a cause . . . if you care enough
> about something whether it's work, whether it's your family, whether it's volunteer
> effort, then you have to be prepared to make sacrifices to make that goal happen.
> (Winston)

Larry, who later in life became a strong advocate of social justice, says that the

fundamental values he was taught by family and church had a strong impact on him:

> I look back. And it was family values and those early years in the church and even though
> there was no social justice, there were fundamental values that were taught, and those
> fundamental values were a foundation for social justice work that I began to understand
> and live. (Larry)

Larry, who in his younger days was angry at the church, later realizes that the anger was

inappropriate, and he believes the values that his parents and his faith instilled in him paid off

later:

> But my anger at the church at the time, I later understood, was not appropriate that it was
> the church that gave me the values to get through that decade of the '60s, without ever
> experimenting with drugs, even though I was at parties where there were drugs; had
> friends who were smoking marijuana and all sorts of things; but I never did and I never
> did because of the values that my parents instilled and the values of that faith upbringing.
> (Larry)

Emily recollects that her grandfather had an extremely strong connection to Texas A&M

University, and that he maintained that connection through his old classmates and even by

helping out future students and donating money or time to the university. She recalls times she

spent with him going around the campus and witnessed "how invested" her grandfather was in

that community and "the values of that community which are loyalty and tradition." She recalls

the code of honor at Texas A&M, "Aggies don't lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate anyone who does."

And she adds, "And so, sort of those values were very much what I learned through my

grandfather and in my family."

Tanuja's father was in the government administrative services in India. She narrates how

in the pluralistic religious context of India her father taught her an inclusive approach to faith:

> He was an educated man. . . . And we had always a very . . . what I would consider
> inclusive approach towards faith. So, growing up, I had friends from all different
> backgrounds . . . we interacted with people of different faith traditions, there were
> Hindus, there were Muslims, there were Sikhs, there were Christians. (Tanuja)

Tanuja attributes her respect for earth and love for environmental protection to her grandfather

whom the family jokingly called "the original environmentalist." She narrates:

> So he [grandfather] would always set aside a certain amount of food for the birds and the
> animals, and he would always get up every morning and before he put his foot down on
> the earth, he would always apologize to earth for insulting. He said, "You are my mother
> and I'm insulting you," and it was a Sanskrit *sloka* [a couplet of Sanskrit verse from epics
> of ancient India] which I still remember. (Tanuja)

Winston believes life in his family was a set of defining learning experiences for later

life. He points out that he learned the value of teamwork, the importance of sacrifice from his

family, especially from his mother and later from his wife:

> Teamwork matters tremendously because we had our responsibilities laid out very
> clearly. My mother was out there earning the money to keep the roof over our heads, and
> the clothes on our back and food on the table. . . . I saw the same thing in my wife
> coming home after a 12 hour shift, and then finding time to sit down and hang out and
> spend time with all four kids or coming in after an overnight shift, and then sleeping for 2
> or 3 hours, and then getting up. And so, it's about what you prioritize in your life. So that
> has been a very positive influence. (Winston)

Terri is very nostalgic about her memories of her elementary school education at St.

Leo's Catholic school over 50 years ago. Last year when St. Leo's was closed for good, she

arranged for a get-together of 12 people from her student group at St. Leo's. They came over to

her house and it was like "we all started teasing each other and remembered the silly things

[laughter] and it was just amazing and I really thought about that a lot since then." And now taking her 3-year-old granddaughter to the Montessori program at Sacred Heart she hopes "she [granddaughter] gets to stay through the eighth grade there, so that she has that sense of community at an early age." And about her experience in her Catholic school and the care and attention she received from the nuns there, she says, "I think honestly that was, without ever knowing it until many years later, that was absolutely the foundational piece for me, being taught by people who cared so deeply about us."

Seeing the plight of the migrant workers in Yuma, Arizona was an "eye-opening" experience for Mike as a young child and helped him "to reflect on how fortunate" he was. Mike connects his experience of seeing poverty and his active involvement in community service projects now at UIW. Note the repeat of the word "big" to emphasize the impact of the experience:

> The big, big, big, big influence on what I do now and I . . . and I remember seeing a lot of poverty. I grew up in Yuma, Arizona and that's not a rich city, right on the border. Um I know people that just didn't have anything. (Mike)

Summing up the impact of various experiences as a child—the military family background, Catholic education, being in Boy Scouts, and volunteering—Mike says, "I think all of that together just kind of blends . . . and you just get this natural service of the community, service to the country. Selfless, being selfless."

Internalizing faith and spirituality. All the participants narrate experiences of internalizing faith and spirituality from their childhood and deepening it during their life journey. Alex grew up in a family that believes in God. The sense of spirituality in his upbringing he now relates to his connection to a faith-based institution:

> My family believes in God. We pray every day. And we knew that growing up there was a sense of spirituality in our upbringing, and we knew that it was important to our parents

that we believe in God, and believe in faith, and so that has always been ingrained in us. . . . At the same time, again, I've always had as a kid, a special connection to a faith-based institution. And again, when I graduated from high school I moved on to a small faith-based school to earn my bachelor's degree and when I attended that school, it affirmed what my heart was telling me in terms of the spirituality piece. (Alex)

Alex recounts that the seeds of faith sown from the family flourished while he was in a faith-based college as an undergraduate student. "That was a time of really getting connected with spirituality and be grounded with spirituality," he recalls. In retrospect he feels the time spent in the college chapel were moments that brought clarity to his personal mission to serve:

I gained so much from being in that space and literally the space, the chapel itself and looking at the sanctuary as a space where you could go and sing His praises. So, I just knew that at that point wherever I go, I want to serve, and I want to serve without any reservations when it comes to being faithful and saying the Word of God. You know, saying the name of God. I wanted to make sure I do that. (Alex)

Alex also recounts how those prayers and spiritual experiences relate to the work he does in a Catholic university now:

And so that experience as an undergraduate student transformed me um forever and so I've used some of the teachings and learnings and all those other things that you get out of sitting in the chapel and learning more about Jesus Christ and God and that type of thing. And I just literally transformed and transitioned, if you will, some of those experiences to the work that I do at this institution, at a Catholic institution, meaning that I'm able to pray and be unapologetic for, right? (Alex)

For Mike, going to Catholic churches on a navy base with his family, attending religious education classes, being an altar boy till 18, and attending Franciscan schools till eighth grade had "major, major, major impacts" in the way he sees the world, and the community. He emphasizes the impact of those experiences by the repetition of the word "major" three times. He recognizes that those experiences influenced his values and orientation towards serving and giving to the community. Although he did not hear the term "social justice" until he came to UIW, it has been, in many ways, readily emphasized growing up, both within the church, in Franciscan schools, and within his family. Those experiences, especially the spirit of humility

and simplicity of St. Francis, have inspired Mike to stay humble and grounded doing community

service. He reflects:

> You hear the stories about St. Francis. You hear the stories about Jesus. And I think in some ways, you want to model that behavior a little bit, but you want to do it in such a way that it's humble, and then you're not feeding your ego. And this is something I always have to be careful about, this is not feeding my ego. No, this is not any ego-driven thing to make you feel good about yourself. . . . That is not the point of this, this is about going out and helping the community, and letting the community help you. (Mike)

Having gone through public education in his high school and universities, now reflecting

on those faith experiences, Mike articulates the influence and recognizes the meaning faith has

brought to his life:

> I think for me yeah, it [faith] does play a big part. It's probably the first time I am even articulating it in some way. . . . And I think the longer I am here at UIW, the stronger it gets. Yeah, eighth grade, after that, I went to all public schools, public high school, public universities, and I didn't circle back and come back here until '07. So up until that time, I was kind of out of that, so I think it's kind of, for me, it has been kind of a growth of allowing that faith to get to become more, have more of an influence in recognizing in a meaning and maybe that's what it is. (Mike)

Candace recounts the depth of faith she internalized from her father, a devout Catholic:

> My father is a devout Catholic, and so much so that sometimes in the family as a young child, I'd see my parents bicker because even though we may have struggled financially, he always tithed to the church. And so, as a young child, when you see this, it's something that becomes part of your epistemology. It is at your core that through prayer and devotion that you can succeed and with very little my dad was able to stay in business for over 30 years, and it grew at one time to four businesses and an online store. (Candace)

From her childhood on Candace made a spiritual connection, that Christ walks with her. She

recalls that her mother had a little plaque hanging in her kitchen with the popular poem,

Footprints in the Sand with the message that in dark times Christ carries you:

> I remember reading it all the time; it was really pretty with the sand and understanding that Christ is walking with us through the most difficult times. Funny enough, like that one visual thing that was every day in her kitchen till I grew up, it really had a profound effect on me later on because through those moments [dark times], I was uncertain about everything and I really relied on. (Candace)

Tanuja, whose faith tradition is Hinduism, remembers how faith was very much part of her identity, growing up. In her experience, faith was not so much about the rituals, rather it was more about the quality of life lived:

> Your faith was very much a part of who you were, and the common theme was how do you lead a good life, as opposed to how you are a good Hindu, right. So, good Hindu is important. I don't think we ever were told to be a good Hindu; we were to be good people. And the good people meant that you were respectful towards nature and others, that you gave yourself to both: your privileges that you shared those privileges with others that you would be respectful to the earth, those around you, the animals, the nature, that's a different way of looking. (Tanuja)

Winston recalls the strong belief his mother had that prayer and work should go hand in hand:

> My mother believed in it strongly that prayer is good, prayer is wonderful; prayer without the work, it doesn't move anything. So, her guidance to us constantly was, "I want you to pray, I want you to be devout. But God expects you to put in about 98% before you ask Him to push you over the hump in the last 2%." (Winston)

Winston says that his faith in God drives him to serve the community. And he loves community service because he found himself very joyful doing them. He says, "It's, again, hard for me to put into a whole lot of words, but I found myself being joyful, I guess that's the closest I can describe it, 'being joyful.'" And he feels community service has strengthened his faith, "I think what has happened is, it's been the work in some ways that has strengthened the faith."

Alex considers the impact of the spiritual experiences from his undergraduate years "far-reaching." He calls those undergraduate years "the foundation," for his education, for his identity as an African American man, and for his spirituality. He recalls that the influence of that experience spread across everything he did from then on, "from working as an elementary school teacher to working as a doctoral student at a large Hispanic-serving institution to now being at a Catholic institution that's rooted in its Catholic values."

Experiencing mentor and ideologue influence. All the participants report being

influenced and inspired by mentors and ideologues. Alex recalls meeting civil rights leader Rosa

Parks during his undergraduate studies and the inspirations he received from her faith in God:

> I remember meeting Rosa Parks . . . civil rights leader and I can remember meeting her. She talked about her experiences that she had on the bus and things like that. But I loved the conversation and talking with her in the chapel, her talking to us, really. I left the conversation, knowing that she had faith and she had God on her side, right. And so that experience really connected me with; it wasn't about her being a civil rights leader, it was about her having faith and God to get through these trials and tribulations. So that's one significant thing that I remember. I remember her telling the audience how difficult it was for her to be removed from the bus, but more importantly how important it is for her to stay steadfast of her faith and being able to not allow incidences like this to impact her belief. (Alex)

For Larry, reading social reformers and spiritual leaders inspired him to teach at Catholic

universities. He recalls:

> And then I was reading everything I could by Martin Luther King on non-violence, King led me to Gandhi, read everything I could by Gandhi, about Gandhi, Gandhi led me back to Leo Tolstoy. So, I read everything I could by Leo Tolstoy. I started reading Thich Nhat Hanh. I really got into Thomas Merton. So, when I got my doctorate, I knew what type of university I did not want to teach at. And that was a large state university; so, I was never interested in looking at Ohio State University or the University of Texas in Austin. I wanted a university that would allow me to have one foot in the community and one foot in academia. (Larry)

Larry also recalls the influence of one of his professors at the graduate school, who talked about

the political and social issues of the time in the context of his faith:

> I had one professor who was committed to teaching about problem of poverty, problems of unequal education, the problems of economic inequality, housing problems. But he brought it all home and he also brought in this growing war in South East Asia that I knew nothing about, called Vietnam, even though I had a college degree. And it was a State University but he was a person of deep faith and so when I met him in his office, he would talk about these issues as in the context of his faith and that made me begin to think about my faith and why wasn't I thinking about these issues? (Larry)

Winston describes "two really formative relationships" he had in his life. One is John

[pseudonym], a professor he met when he began his teaching career as an Assistant Professor.

About the influence of John in his life, he shares:

> John . . . he is my oldest, probably the most influential mentor in my life. Even today, if I have something that is difficult, I will call John and bounce it off of him. . . . John has taken me through tenure. John has taken me through so many things, but through it all, there was never a power relationship. There's never a power relationship that I'm the full Prof., you are a guy starting out. It was always brother Winston and brother John. And there was always listening, encouragement, and suggestions. I never heard the man say, "That's a terrible idea." He would talk about consequences of the things you wanted to do. And then turn around and says this could happen. "Have you thought about how you handled that?" And I think that's a pretty significant role and how I hopefully passed on some of those mentoring lessons to the people that I hang out with as an administrator. (Winston)

And the second person is Tom [pseudonym], under whose leadership Winston worked. About

Tom, he says, "Tom was there, when I launched another part of my career. But Tom was also

there at really low point in my life." About his learning from these mentors Winston points out:

> The beauty with both of these guys is, again, work like dogs, transparent, fair, shoot straight, and treat others like you would want to be treated. . . . Tom is someone that I'm so close to. I look at the people on my list of references; they all have between 15 to 30 years of interaction. I have very few friends but the friends that I have, have been lifers. (Winston)

Similarly, Candace, when she was on the verge of giving up and dropping out of

undergraduate studies, met a professor who was very spiritual, believed in her and motivated her

to complete the program. She explains:

> Again, as this profoundly spiritual person guided by faith, I latched on to him because at a Texas state school, you didn't get any of that. So, I felt like he understood when there was fears that you will turn to your spiritual side that it will guide you to your higher power. And eventually I thought I was done, and it was this particular professor that told me you're not done yet, you have to finish your degree. And I'm like "I'm done." He's like "No, you need to be in the classroom." . . . And he eventually helped me figure out whatever paperwork it was late, and he made an exception for me. I mean it was like two weeks! But he was so inspired, and he said, "You of any student needs to be in the space and without a doubt there is a higher purpose telling me you need to be in this space." (Candace)

Steve calls to mind the strong influence of Finnis, a legal philosopher who was also his master's thesis supervisor:

> And also, one of my supervisors for my master's is a legal philosopher, Finnis. And is probably one of the two or three most acknowledged neo-Thomists working in the revival of the theory of natural rights. Naturalistic legal philosophy is among the two or three most influential in the Anglican world of legal philosophy. He was one of the four supervisors who had a significant influence on me in my graduate studies. And also, it reminded me of all the peculiar role of the Catholic Church that has the guardianship of the Western intellectual tradition. (Steve)

Terri, similarly, was motivated by her adviser at the University of Eastern Michigan to pursue a PhD:

> And my adviser from Eastern Michigan, I got to be really good friends with him, he was a really, really wonderful teacher. I said, "I'm thinking of getting another master's," and he said, "Why?" and I said, "Well, I'm interested in Community Ed," and he said, "Terri, you're finishing one master's right now," he said, "So just go get a PhD." I said, "What?" I said, "A PhD?" And he said, "Then you could teach at the university if you wanted to." I said, "Well, I don't know if I could do that." And he started laughing, he said, "Yeah, you could do that; just go do that." So, I did. (Terri)

Interpretative Findings: Forming Values and Beliefs

The following are the interpretative findings from the first superordinate theme, forming values and beliefs.

Experiencing social justice exposure and developing critical thinking. The participants' exposure to social justice and development of critical thinking in their formative years prepared a fertile ground in them for the integration of the mission and identity of the Catholic universities they later chose to be part of. Steve, Tanuja, and Mike, inspired by the examples of their parents, developed a critical awareness of social inequity and injustice. Larry, Alex, and Winston developed critical thinking through the influence of their mentors and ideologues and their exposure to social injustice and inequities. Larry is a standout participant

who critically examines economic, social, and political inequities, race relations, faith, and religion.

Immersing themselves in social action. Having been exposed to social injustice and inequities, the participants immersed themselves in social action, working for the welfare of those on the margins, those suffering from poverty and discrimination. Through the immersion they came directly in contact with adversity and precariousness. Larry, right after gaining master's degree, chose to work in Robstown, an incredibly poor and predominantly Hispanic community in South Texas. Similarly, Winston, Mike, and Tanuja share their experiences of volunteering in community activities.

Becoming aware of privilege. The participants became conscious of their privilege when they encountered the social and economic adversities of others. Seeing the plight of the migrant workers in Yuma, Arizona was an "eye-opening" experience for Mike as a young child and he reflected on "how fortunate" he was. Similarly, Larry, while living in Robstown, in impoverished circumstances, knew that at any time, he could leave, unlike the people he served. The participants' awareness of a privileged identity helped them understand the marginalized identity of those they served.

Finding seeds in faith. Most participants attribute their character formation and integration of fundamental values to their faith and religion. Terri speaks of her experience of Catholic caring she had received from the nuns who taught her at St. Leo's school. Candace has been deeply influenced by the staunch Catholic faith of her parents. She ties her success to faith and is very strongly influenced by faith-related symbols and parables. Larry considers the values of faith as the foundation for his immersion in social justice and peace activities.

Understanding faith holistically. The academic lay leaders also developed a holistic understanding of faith. They practice a holistic spirituality that nurtures them and contributes to the wellness of others and all God's creatures. Steve, for example, cites his childhood experience of volunteering along with his father, taking dogs to houses out in the country, raising money, and finding shelter for them. Tanuja narrates her grandfather's example of setting aside food for birds and animals, and his reverence for the earth, which have inspired a holistic understanding of spirituality in her. This holistic understanding has created in them respect for the integrity of creation and inspired them to work for the wellness of others and the good of the universe.

Developing an other-centered disposition. Most participants developed an other-centered disposition in their growing-up years. Tanuja remembers the question that her family asked her in her early childhood, "What are you doing that's more than just you?" Coming from a military family, Emily says she was driven by "something higher than yourself to serve." The participants say that they engage in actions in support of others. Terri shared her experience of fomenting a community. She recently arranged a get-together of 12 of her schoolmates from St. Leo's after over 50 years. Larry, Steve, Mike, Tanuja, and Winston cite experiences of volunteering in community activities.

Experiencing diverse people and worldviews. The participants report that their experience of encountering diverse people and worldviews prepared them to be inclusive leaders. Tanuja says that growing up, she had friends from all different backgrounds, and interacted with people of different faith traditions, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Christians. Steve, from an Episcopalian faith tradition, while in England for master's and doctoral studies, had direct engagement with Catholic institutions. His openness to learn from the Catholic traditions resulted in his love for and deeper understanding of the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Experiencing Disorienting Dilemmas

In this superordinate theme, I borrow Mezirow's (1994; 1997) expression, "disorienting dilemmas" to refer to the dark and/or crisis moments that the participants experienced at various times in their lives, both before and after joining the Catholic university. Mezirow's formulation of the adult learning theory, the transformative learning theory has a 10-step process which begins with experiencing "disorienting dilemmas." The disorienting dilemma can be any crisis moment at any time; in some cases, the experience can be epochal, all at once event and in some other cases, it can be incremental, happening over a period of time (Mezirow, 1994; 1997). In the disorienting dilemma experience narratives of the participants there is no noticeable pattern. However, all the participants report experiences of moments of crisis and/or darkness at one time or the other. The superordinate theme, experiencing disorienting dilemmas, consists of two themes: (a) encountering social issues and (b) experiencing dark moments in life. Table 5 presents the list of the participants who experienced these themes. The narratives of the participants pertaining to the themes follow.

Table 5

Experiencing Disorienting Dilemmas: Themes

Theme	Number Experiencing	Participants Experiencing
Encountering social issues	7	C,E,L,M,S,T,W
Experiencing dark moments in life	5	A,C,L,Te,W

Encountering social issues. Seven participants report encountering social issues in their lives and they relate those experiences to their mission and integration story. Larry was oblivious to the political, cultural, economic, and religious realities around him until he moved out of his hometown for undergraduate studies. He narrates:

I was born and raised in Greenville, Ohio in a county that is very agricultural, the second wealthiest agricultural county in the State of Ohio. It is a county that is 99% White, probably a little more. In my high school there was one African American girl in my class, the only one in the whole high school. And I grew up in that rural setting, went to a one-room school house for 8 years; had the same teacher for 8 years. . . . And I grew up um active in church, church every week, choir every week, youth activities, involved. I never heard one speaker or one homily, one sermon on race relations or any discussion of just war theory. (Larry)

Larry narrates how during his undergraduate and graduate studies he became politically aware of social issues such as poverty, problems of unequal education, economic inequality, and housing problems:

And then went to a small college 2 years and then transferred to Ohio State and became politically aware. When President Kennedy was assassinated, I was a student at Ohio State. That was the beginning of my kind of political awareness, but it wasn't well developed even at Ohio State. Then I decided I should get a master's degree, immediately, so I went to Miami University in Ohio, and I had one professor who was totally committed to teaching about problem of poverty, problems of unequal education, the problems of economic inequality, housing problems. But he brought it all home and he also brought in this growing war in South East Asia that I knew nothing about, called Vietnam, even though I had a college degree. And it was a State University but he was a person of deep faith and so when I met him in his office, he would talk about these issues as in the context of his faith and that made me begin to think about my faith and why wasn't I thinking about these issues? (Larry)

Larry expresses his anger at the religious establishment for not teaching him the real issues:

So, I got really angry at organized religion; I got really angry at the church for not teaching me that there were these real problems out there, and that there's a real issue that you need to consider and think about it politically, culturally, economically and spiritually most of all. (Larry)

Mike grew up in Marine bases most of his childhood, and he was exposed to extreme poverty in Yuma, Arizona where he grew up. He recalls how seeing that poverty was an influential experience.

The big, big, big, big influence on what I do now and I, and I remember seeing a lot of poverty. I grew up in Yuma, Arizona and that's not a rich city, right on the border. Um I know people that just didn't have anything. (Mike)

Candace went through difficult times in her life through "fear, discomfort, and shame and stigma coming from being a Latina identity and the background" she came from. She recalls her time in undergraduate school:

> But it was during that time that I think I was scared. I was radically different than who I am now, and I made lots of observations about space and place I felt unwelcome. I felt uncomfortable. I felt my professors didn't understand me often. I was shamed for either not having the money to own the books or having the resources, so I became an art student, because of my background. (Candace)

Meeting refugees and immigrants along with her colleague, Lopita, and seeing the various challenges they faced was a "disorienting dilemma" moment for Emily. She narrates:

> Oh, my goodness! I had no idea that there were refugees in Texas really because I guess, I knew that there was a large Nigerian population of immigrants in Houston, but I did not know that there were refugees in Texas until I met Lopita and then I got to meet some of the refugees from Bhutan, um I've met several from, I've met several Rohingyas. I just met people from all over the world um and the challenge of me getting to hear and listen to and understand their challenges has just totally changed the way that I think about the world because I can't imagine what they must face when they come to, they come to a country that's supposed to be like this is finally we're here, we're safe, we're repatriated somewhere.
>
> But then there are all these other challenges that they have to face um in terms of language and money and just everything, and then getting over the trauma of their experiences and getting to meet some of the refugees that she [Lopita] works with and getting to know them has really changed my perspective on just the different ways that people live in the world. Um and I never would have thought that a girl from a small town in Texas would get to meet people from all over the world. And hear their stories and learn things about them and it really has changed my teaching a lot. [Emily]

Winston shares some of the horrible circumstances his own students have experienced:

> And so, you look at these kids and you get people coming through horrible circumstances sometimes, and some of it I've seen. I'm not trained to handle any of these things, but I've seen, and I've tried to work people through mental illness, through divorce, through abuse from spouse or significant other, financial circumstances that make our poverty seem like nothing. I never slept in a car. I didn't live in a car. I didn't bathe using tissue from a McDonald's bathroom. When for the first time I had a student tell me that, I was dumbfounded. (Winston)

The social issues that Winston experienced while he was in Flint, Michigan were impactful too. He says, "Flint's poverty is beyond measure, drug addiction problems, crime-ridden neighborhoods." He recalls his volunteering involvement in Holmes Middle School, "in a pretty ugly part of town, a 98% African American inner-city Flint." He talks about the rough circumstances the students came from:

> Most of the students were single parent family. A parent is easily grandma, one parent, so it doesn't matter whether its male or female okay, one parent was either never on the scene or dead, and the other parent was incarcerated, and so it didn't matter male or female. So, the students came from pretty rough circumstances and they went through school not because they wanted to, but they had to. (Winston)

Tanuja talks about her reasons for her decision to become a vegan, her response to slavery in the shrimp industry:

> So, I am attempting to become a vegan, which is hard, by the way, I'm at this time a pescatarian. And the reason, it's not just simply, it is really about, if I truly believe in the importance of earth and planet and there's enough evidence that the shrimp industry, for example, apparently has the biggest slavery in that industry. So, a lot of times, particularly from Thailand etcetera, a lot of people are in that, a lot of our fish comes from there and if you're eating that are you not, as a human being, promoting that? (Tanuja)

Experiencing dark moments in life. Five participants shared their experiences of dark moments in their lives. Larry began his career as a community organizer in a small town, Robstown, close to Corpus Christi, South Texas which was an incredibly poor town. The demographics of the town were about 85% Hispanic, 10% Anglo and 5% African American. He remembers that the City Council was all Anglo except for one very carefully selected Mexican American. Larry recalls a traumatic encounter with two Anglo young men:

> I started a boys' club for status offenders, young boys who had gotten into trouble, were potentially going to get into trouble, and it was like prevention, and also trying to have them take GED classes which were education classes outside of high school because they had dropped out of high school. . . . And um there was one night when one of the young men who came from the community, had dropped out of school, had gotten his GED high school equivalency, he helped me close the boys' club. We went to a restaurant, pulled in

where you stay in your car and somebody comes out to wait on you and a pick-up truck pulls in, beside us. The young man who was with me, very obviously Mexican American, and so the two young men in the truck, who were obviously Anglo started yelling anti-Mexican things at my friend, Chico and anyway I said, "Chico we're going to back out and we're slowly going to, I'm going to drive you home." And so, I slowly backed out, the truck followed me, it was bumping me. I had a Volkswagen, a small Volkswagen. Big truck would bump me, and I was driving twenty, twenty-five miles an hour.

We got to the area of town where Chico lived which was a really poor place. And it had no paved streets, no paved sidewalks, no streetlights, um and when I pulled in there, the truck didn't follow me. So, I went in and Chico says, "I'm going to get my friends and we're going to go out and hunt those guys." And I said, "No, you're not." I spent about an hour, more than an hour talking to Chico about non-violence, about how if he did get his friends and went out and hunting that they would be the ones who would end up [*laughter*] in jail more likely than those two guys. And so, anyway, after I talked, I thought I had convinced him not to do this.

I pulled out of that neighborhood, and it was maybe about 11 o'clock at night. By that time and I pulled out and all of a sudden light went on behind my car and it was the truck and so they ran me off the road. They got out of their truck, and I got out of the car because I wanted them to see that I didn't have anything, I just held my arms out and so they walked over to me, one pulled out a handgun pointed it at my face and said "We don't need northerners coming down here and telling us how to treat our Mexicans and we don't need Mexicans voting, and they all need to be in prison and you need to get out of this town," and I said nothing. So, they started saying things to try to get me to incite me to violence. Said everything they could about my mother and so forth. I said nothing. . . . And so what I did do was memorize the license plate on their truck, and they finally left and the next day I had a friend that I would have lunch with, with two or three guys, two or three times a week. And he happened to be a Constable, County Constable. He was Mexican American, so I told him what happened, and he said, "I'll take care of it, I'll find out who the truck belongs to, I'll go, have a talk." (Larry)

Alex shared a dark moment experience in dealing with the addictive behavior of his father and the consequences of that behavior at his home. Immediately after high school his father was drafted into the army and served in Vietnam for a while. Unfortunately, his father, during those times also experienced a drug addiction, and was dealing with PTSD, from being in the war. Alex recalls the traumatic experience when he came on break from the university:

My dad was still dealing with drugs, and I remember coming home from break and the television was stolen from the house; the lights would be cut off because he took the money from my mom, and she couldn't pay the light bill. So, I'm trying to do what I can about being in school, 4 hours away, sending money home to help support her so that she continues to have the support she needs financially. And so it was devastating knowing that I wasn't there and they were still going through a lot of difficult and emotional times,

especially when my dad was using a lot, again from stolen televisions to not being able to pay bills because the money is being taken away. Very emotional time and really trying to make sure that my sister and brother are not heavily impacted by. (Alex)

For Candace, the "dark period" was going through a toxic relationship and the trauma

that followed it. She recounts:

So, within that period, I call also my dark period. I went through a horrible, emotional, physical, and psychological, you name it, relationship that I was in for a significant amount of time and I knew it wasn't right. I knew it was not where I needed to be, but there was a shame and stigma of coming with the territory being Latina, that I would disappoint my parents. And we were high school sweethearts and we eventually. . . . Never should have gotten married and somewhere within there, it just went bad. And eventually the marriage was terminated and I went through a legal battle, while I was pregnant, while I was teaching at A&M after I had finished my graduate program to remove his rights as a parent, and I was scared. (Candace)

And the termination of the marriage was followed up with the responsibilities of being a young

single mother, not having a job or any financial resources to support herself and the child. She

narrates her struggles for survival during those dark times with the help of her godmother who

also moved to San Antonio around the same time:

I moved up here [San Antonio] with maybe 60 dollars in the checking account and the potential of a job, trusting someone that's guaranteeing these classes. I didn't have anything. I'm intentionally not focusing on the dark periods; but in this dark periods everything I own was destroyed; so I had nothing and what I had was what people gave me and I had a bag for stuff for him [the child] and I had what books I did have left, and I found sort of a central place, it was close enough to where my godmother would be moving. We moved at the exact same time and close enough to my friend in the program, and I eventually humbled myself and asked the manager for every discount I could get. I was unapologetic about my experience. (Candace)

Winston lost his father to cancer 6 days before his second birthday. He recalled the

financial issues the family faced following the loss of his father:

Somewhere along the way we had a significant downturn in family fortunes. We were, I would say pretty well off in the '50s with my father's work at Mahindra and we pretty much lost it all. A couple of friends, so called friends of the family, his friends convinced my mother that they would take care of all of his provident fund and savings and everything else. And we pretty much went from; I would say the proverbial silver spoon to pretty much destitute. So, I think at that point my mother pretty much decided that she

> was going to work, and she was going to go to work teaching English Literature during the day and in the evenings she would tutor. (Winston)

Winston's experience of darkness also came through the lack of clarity of direction he experienced after his 12th grade. He termed that period of his life, "good seven eight years [of] wandering around trying to figure out things on your [his] own." And that was also the time his church attendance dropped.

> Interestingly enough though, and I'm not proud to admit it, but it is reality, and it does define, while I was going through all of these, church-going family all the way through the 12th grade, I leave home and I go away, and my church attendance drops. I had become at that point, what I would call a C and E—you know a Christian at Christmas and Easter.
>
> Similarly, Terri calls her 15 years away from a Catholic campus, "15 years of religious desert." While public education was wonderful and taught her a great deal, her faith life resided just in the Sunday Mass and she found something was really missing. Then returning to the Marianist environment again awakened a part of her that had been silent for a long time.

Interpretative Findings: Experiencing Disorienting Dilemmas

As mentioned earlier, the superordinate theme of experiencing disorienting dilemmas refers to the dark and/or crisis moments that the participants experienced at various times in their lives. The experience of social justice exposure and development of critical thinking, discussed as interpretative findings in the first superordinate theme, applies to the data discussed here as well. The participants shared their experiences of coming into direct contact with precariousness, social inequities, poverty, and homelessness. In addition to the findings discussed earlier, there are two interpretative findings pertaining to experiencing disorienting dilemmas:

Experiencing traumatic events. Some of the participants related their traumatic experiences to the integration of mission and identity of the Catholic university. Larry vividly remembers his personal experience of encountering racial prejudices while being a community

organizer in Robstown, Texas. Alex and his family experienced trauma as a result of his father's drug addiction and PTSD issues. Winston lost his father even before he turned 2; he also experienced poverty when his father's friends misappropriated his father's savings. Candace faced emotional and psychological trauma from a toxic marriage. After the termination of marriage, she faced the struggles of being a young single mother, struggled for survival not having a job or any financial support. She experienced these traumas on top of her "fear, discomfort, and stigma" coming from her identity of being a Latina.

Experiencing spiritual darkness. Some of the participants also recalled the disorienting dilemmas experienced through times of spiritual darkness in their lives. Winston experienced years of lack of clarity of direction after his 12th grade. He termed that period of his life, "good seven eight years [of] wandering around." He remembers that his church attendance dropped drastically in those years. Similarly, Terri termed her 15 years away from a Catholic campus an experience of "religious desert." Returning to the Marianist environment, according to her, reawakened a part of her that had been silent for a long time.

Nurturing Mission Consciousness

While the first two superordinate themes relate mostly to the experiences of the participants before joining the Catholic university, the theme of nurturing mission consciousness, covers their formative experiences that nurtured the mission and identity integration while being part of the Catholic university. The superordinate theme, nurturing mission consciousness, is comprised of four themes: (a) experiencing the charisma of the founding congregation, (b) experiencing trusting leadership and mentoring, (c) receiving formation in mission and identity, and d) experiencing a sense of community. Table 6 presents the list of participants who experienced the themes under the superordinate theme, nurturing mission consciousness.

Table 6

Nurturing Mission Consciousness: Themes

Theme	Number Experiencing	Participants Experiencing
Experiencing the charisma of the founding Congregation	9	All
Experiencing trusting leadership and mentoring	7	A,C,E,L,M,Te,W
Receiving formation in mission and identity	9	All
Experiencing a sense of community	9	All

Experiencing the charisma of the founding Congregation. All the participants speak

about their experience of the attractiveness of the founding Congregation: the legacy, the

charism, and the spirit of the founder, and the lived examples of the members of the founding

Congregation. Tanuja recognizes that Father Chaminade, the founder of the Marianists, was

very progressive in his times in making education accessible to the poor and the marginalized.

Her belief in the impact of higher education strongly aligns with that of the Marianists:

> Father Chaminade wanted to make education available to the average person. He wanted
> to make sure that the poor and the marginalized got access to education. And I'm not
> saying we were perfect because for a long time in the universities in this country, there
> was discrimination against certain ethnic minorities, still is, but the idea was very
> progressive back in the day when it was. . . . So, it just validated my personal belief that I
> am in higher education because I think this is probably the only profession in which the
> impact lasts beyond that one individual, right? Once a person gets educated, that then
> redefines the trajectory of everybody in that family, and how they live their lives.
> (Tanuja)

In the same way, Alex appreciates what the Sisters [Congregation] of the Divine

Providence (CDP) do at OLLU making higher education available to the vast majority, and the

way that spirit of the founding Congregation helps him continue the work:

> I will just simply add that the Sisters [CDPs] held themselves accountable, for what they
> were charged to do, and they were relentless; they wanted to ensure that a space was
> made available for higher education and with limited funds, and limited resources . . . and
> so I think that's what helps continue to keep me going. I am being reminded of they went

from the space where I was standing to build a better life for so many people on so many walks of life, and so that keeps me inspired. (Alex)

Tanuja, who comes from the Hindu tradition, and is doing her first job in a Catholic university, recognizes that her internalizing of the Marianist charism has evolved. She speaks about that experience of evolution:

> You know when you first come here, you are asked those questions in an interview, right. "What is the charism? What's the Marianist charism?" I've never heard the word. . . . We don't use the word charism let's say at St. Thomas in the same way that we do here. So, I had to learn what it meant. In fact, when I first came here and I asked, I said, "So tell me, what is it about the Marianist tradition that is different from a Jesuit tradition or something?" And, yes, so it has evolved over time and it has. So, in the beginning, it was you know, it's something you did, but now it's almost woven into the fabric of how we think about it. . . . So, that narrative comes more easily, but also what it means comes much more easily. I can identify what it means to be Catholic and Marianist. What do you mean when you say you learn in community? What do you mean when you say you do this? And it has become knowledge, become almost natural, but it took time to evolve and understand. (Tanuja)

Steve finds the five pillars—faith, mission, Mary, inclusivity, and community—of the Marianist charism (Community engagement, n.d.) deeply satisfying and wants those pillars to motivate each person in the Law School he leads:

> So, I found the five pillars of the Marianist charism, these characteristics of Marianist university deeply satisfying even if they are themselves simply articulated. And so, what I wanted to do was find a way to make that part of each person's experience of their time in the Law School to raise it up to a place of consciousness and understanding and also comfort and of motivation. (Steve)

Winston narrates that the sense of small community that the Marianists talk about resonates with him:

> And the more I read about the Marianists, what came out was the sense of small community which resonated in some interesting ways . . . with the small community that I was raised at home because we were a very tight-knit small community. Marianists talk about living and learning together. That's what we did at home, the classes, the rosary, homework, cooking, that small tight-knit feeling. (Winston)

Winston also remembers the deep influence and lasting impact that many of the Marianists had

on his life and work. He has very vivid memories of the time he spent with some of the

Marianists:

> But what the Marianists have taught me at least for the last 10 years, people like
> [mentions the names of nine Marianists] it's not the words, it is what you do and it's not
> enough to do it once, you've got to just surrender to the charism and give yourself over to
> it. And oftentimes, I think, some of these pictures [the pictures of Gandhi, Martin Luther
> King Jr., Mother Teresa, and Pope John Paul II, on the wall in his office], will get
> replaced by some of our Brothers and Sisters of the past. (Winston)

Steve recalls the many visits he made to the Marianist residence and the warmth of

hospitality and sense of communion he experienced:

> And if you're there [in the Marianist residence] at the right hour and it's time for Mass
> and everyone's included and it's just a wonderful moment of a truly shared joy and a
> tremendously informal liturgy and very meaningful and it's a great communal moment
> and I feel every time I do this the meaning of Chaminade's call that we all should treat
> each other as a member of a family and it's very alive. (Steve)

Winston goes on to speak about how the Marianists of yesteryears are powerful and

inspiring examples of commitment and hard work:

> I go to a lot of Marianist funerals and some of it is, I don't know who's helping whom.
> I'm supposed to be there praying for these guys in the casket, right? It's actually the men
> and women, in those caskets that turn around and continue straightening your head out.
> It's also an inspiration, because if these men and women could give—the last one was
> Bro. Bernard [pseudonym]—who gave 77 years of his life for the Marianists. I have
> barely made a dent in the body of work. These men and women have given faithfully for
> so long and they become pretty powerfully inspiring examples. (Winston)

From the Marianists' working style, what Winston wishes to take to heart is their "living-

by-example piece," the teamwork, selflessness, and sense of ownership:

> The Marianists have reinforced there is no 'I' in team. You know you need to take
> ownership of the things that go badly because of the office you occupy and then you
> elevate all of the faculty and staff members and students and alumni around you so that
> their good works are seen. So, the Marianists tend to be very quiet about any good that
> they do, and I love that way of living because I look at it saying, that's very consistent
> with my own personal philosophy. If something goes well recognize the man or woman

that has done good, if something goes poorly, you own it, because it happened on your watch, you don't need to chastise somebody publicly. (Winston)

Winston has interacted with other Marianist university campuses such as Chaminade, Dayton, and has visited schools such as Vianney and Chaminade in Saint Louis and found the Marianist charism very powerfully alive in those places. And being involved in the mission of the university has helped him find purpose at a deeper level:

> I did not know that one charism could literally be so visible no matter where you go. So, that has been a wonderfully comforting thing to be part of. And you kind of get a sense saying now, I would say for 10 years, I look at it and say, "Now my existence makes sense." Not that I was drifting I was doing stuff in different jobs and hopefully adding value in different jobs. But then you turn around and you go, okay what's the purpose? So now here, and it's comedy, because in the last 20 years of your professional career, you find purpose at a deeper level. (Winston)

Larry appreciates the social justice thrust of the Marianists. Two weeks after joining St. Mary's U., he became a member of a Marianist organization on social justice and global awareness. He also was on the board of an organization in Washington, DC called the Center for Economic and Social Justice which was co-founded by a Marianist priest, Father William Ferree, the social justice guru of the Marianists in the United States. Larry also spent a sabbatical at the University of Dayton researching Father Ferree. After being involved in the Center for Economic and Social Justice, Larry, along with other like-minded people, created the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative (MSJC), that still exists. He was on its board for many years and they would meet twice a year. His passion for social justice and peace is very palpable from what he shares about those meetings:

> I couldn't wait to get to these meetings because laypeople, professed, former professed um balanced with men and women. Man! everybody committed to social justice and non-violence, and I just . . . that was incredibly uplifting to me. . . . And so that encouraged me to want to learn as much as I could about the Marianists and to get more involved with the Marianists. (Larry)

Similarly, Terri too joined the Marianist Forum in St. Mary's U. campus where laypeople, professed religious, Christians, non-Christians, everyone was welcome. She recalls how the forum created an inclusive environment:

> When I came here, they had just, it had been going on a few years but the Marianists and I think some lay folks had, had started, it was called the Marianist Forum and so laypeople and professed, everybody was welcome. Brothers or somebody on campus, or somebody would do a talk or have an engaged or a panel or something about Marianists, about the charism, about the virtues or something like something. Generated a very open, inclusive, and hospitable environment. (Terri)

Experiencing trusting leadership and mentoring. Seven of the participants report the experience of being influenced by trusting leaders and mentors. Larry reports that he received encouragement from the Provincial leadership for his active involvement in the Marianists social justice movements, "And the Provincial leadership was very encouraging to me and I ended up on the board of an organization in Washington DC called the Center for Economic and Social Justice." Mike, who joined UIW with only a superficial understanding of the mission, narrates that he got involved in community service projects because Sister Walter, the vice president of Mission and Ministry identified organizing skills in him:

> Sister Walter took over the year after. And I think it was from there, and I don't know, maybe she saw something in me, I don't know, but she started much more giving me assignments personally. She's like, "You need to please do this, please do this, please do this." And she told me later on that she understood I'm very organized, and she needed someone that can take a task and get it done. . . . And it was these small little events where I had to work with other faculty members, UIW students, which began to force me, I guess, in a way to start thinking, "Okay, how do I explain what we're doing and how is this mission important to other people?" (Mike)

Mike adds that Sister Walter made him "comfortable with the mission," helping him figure out where he fits in the mission. He remembers how in his third year at UIW Sister Walter invited Dr. Steve Brown [pseudonym] and him into a meeting and surprised them with the responsibility of the Fall Meet the Mission:

And we go into a meeting with Sister Walter and she hasn't even told us, but she tells, "You two are completely in charge of planning for the Fall Meet the Mission." And we look at each other and say, "No one told us that!" It's like, "Yes, ma'am." Sister has a unique ability to identify talent, I guess, in some people and then give them the project. So, Steve and I and I think this is the big change, I think this is really kind of for me, rapidly to help in my understanding of what the mission of the university was. (Mike)

Emily feels that the biggest thing that has helped her in the understanding of the mission is the openness of the Sisters, and the university chaplain to talk about the mission at any time when she had a question about it. Those mission-related discussions have been fruitful and comforting to Emily and helped her know those leaders well:

> You know I'm not by myself trying to figure that out. I can literally go downstairs and have a 30-minute conversation with Sister Walter about what that might look like, things I can do, and I think um I don't really know how I've gotten to know Sister Walter and Rev. Alexander so well, part of it is being on committees and things but um they just always have . . . both of them talk to me about how are things going, how are classes going, those kinds of things, um and then included me in more discussions about the mission. (Emily)

Emily also enjoys the freedom that the leadership has given her over the 14 years of her presence in the UIW campus to be able to be involved in service projects and research projects. She always was encouraged to be involved:

> And I think what the university has given to me is just opportunities to explore. I've really never heard anybody tell me, "No, you really shouldn't try to do that." There just seemed to be endless ways that you can do whatever you want to do here um which I also didn't expect. And so being able to just sort of pursue my interest has been a huge part of that journey whether it's working with students and taking them places um or doing research projects with other faculty um I just had so many opportunities, and it has not even been about seniority or anything. Even the first couple of years I was here I was given a graduate class to teach when I'd been out of graduate school about 2 minutes [laughter] and I was asked to be on committees and things and so a big part of it was just, I think, kind of the village of UIW is saying, "Welcome to UIW, we want you to be involved." (Emily)

Emily makes a special mention of late Bob Connelly who mentored several faculty and staff in deepening the understanding of mission:

And he [Bob] was really a strong, strong driving central force in those conversations in the mission and so since he passed away, those of us who relied on him as a mentor have talked a lot about how we can continue to do things the way that Bob did then. . . . He was successively wise and very patient and so since he passed away many of us who relied on him heavily have said, "Okay, we now have to carry on the spirit that Bob sort of taught us about and that's really strong." (Emily)

Alex feels encouraged by the trust the CDPs have placed in him and their belief that he emulates the core values of the university:

I think they [CDPs] have believed in me. I think they have trusted that um I am one that will support students' success. I think they have believed that I can do the work and be collaborative at it. I also think they believe that I hold the core values of Our Lady of the Lake University to my heart. (Alex)

Alex also speaks particularly about some mentors such as Father Mark [pseudonym], Gloria, and Sister Mary Jane [pseudonym] and the influence they have on his day-to-day operation:

They all [Father Mark, Gloria, and Sister Mary Jane] offer me a reminder of the mission and values, core values here. Not only at Our Lady of the Lake but also through the Catholic traditions. So, they give me much um information if you will, on what does it mean to be Catholic and how is that then used through the work that you do daily, the vocation if you will, on a daily basis. So, they all three of them offer a variety of things that help support my faith and truly it helps support my understanding of being an employee. (Alex)

Receiving formation in mission and identity. All the participants share their experiences of receiving formation in mission and identity through training, retreats, and mission trips organized by the respective universities. The participants find the various orientation programs that the respective universities offered were helpful for them in the mission integration for them. Emily reflects on how a lot of workshops and retreats she attended in the early part of her career at UIW helped her reflect on the legacy of the Sisters. She has fresh memories of the components of those retreats and their impact on her:

Often there would be a long one [workshop] in the summer; that was a week or two you know we would come every day and they would bring in speakers or we would just have

reflection or discussion and sometimes it was about um bringing faith into the classroom; so sometimes it was about service, there were sort of different themes and that was really helpful because then it was very natural to see how um you could live the mission in your daily life at UIW teaching in class, going to a meeting that was really very powerful. . . . And so, having that time for reflection, and discussion specifically about the mission helped me right away, understand it. (Emily)

Emily believes that at the beginning of her career she had "a really strong foundation for having those [mission-centered] discussions." She credits the workshops and the retreats for laying the foundation for mission-centered conversations on the campus:

We've continued to talk a lot about, for example, a faculty has a difficult decision to make . . . almost always the conversation has to do with the mission. If we make this decision this way, are we still supporting the mission? That phrase occurs a lot or is this mission-centered? (Emily)

Mike from UIW, on the other hand, attends the retreat every year, helping Sister Walter with the annual faculty retreats. He considers himself "fortunate" to be part of that experience every year and it helps him to reflect on how he could fit into the mission:

I go every year, so it's kind of like refresher course for me, so I get to meet new faculty members, and I get to stop and think for 48 hours outside of school and kind of rethink where I fit in to the mission, and again, I just say an evolution every time it's a little bit, of a little bit of a different answer. It's a journey. (Mike)

Tanuja speaks about the components of the immersion program that the school she leads offers to the newly hired faculty:

These are deep conversations about what do we mean when we say, "adaptation and change," right? That's a big part of it. What do we mean when we say "community" and what do we mean when we say, "the whole person?" (Tanuja)

In the school that Tanuja leads, she invites the new hires to engage from the very beginning in the community service activities such as the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. So, the new hires could witness in tangible ways the mission being lived. Tanuja explains:

I wouldn't say that we just make them [new hires] sit down, but to these very active, an active act [community service activities], I guess, of living our mission talking about it in

a very open, tangible way helps them understand and integrate and most of them do it fairly quickly. (Tanuja)

In addition to the workshops and retreats, the founding Congregations also provide opportunities to be actively engaged in the mission of the university through various in-house programs. The CDPs of OLLU have the Associates of the Congregation of the Divine Providence (ACDP) program in which they welcome associate lay members to learn more about the charism, legacy, mission and vision, and core values of the Congregation. There is training before one is formally installed as an ACDP. Alex is an ACDP. He shares how being an ACDP profits his work:

> I learned what the mission was, and really what the CDPs and who the CDPs are by way of this associate program. And so that's when I became more connected and it became more validated and more affirming of why I'm here and why I am serving here in this space. I learned a lot about the word providence, the fact that God does provide and I always knew that but to also put that in a word and they use that as part of everything I do, helps me to, again, affirm that mission this university has set, the values that were grounded under and really the focus that the CDP legacy is offering us as well. . . . But also based on this program, it has allowed me to really stay true to my faith, stay true to the mission of this university while knowing more about the charism and the legacy that the Sisters have left because they are our mission, they are the mission, and they are the vision. (Alex)

Alex, Tanuja, and Steve shared the experiences of visiting the place of the founding of the respective religious Congregations [Marianists & CDP] in Europe. Alex from OLLU said that he had the "the distinct honor" of visiting the Mother House in France during a mission trip. That visit to the Mother House in France helped him "to think through what it means to be Catholic and the meaning of the mission from the place it was birthed." About the experience of the mission trip he shares:

> It [the trip] made me think about a variety of things and make some connections with the work I was doing here in San Antonio. Meeting some of the CDPs that are in France were inspiring; knowing, recognizing several of the buildings similar to here in San Antonio was inspiring. It was an emotional time but also an educational time for me because I really realized not growing up Catholic, and really understanding what it is to be Catholic

and going to where it at least started from at Our Lady of Lake University, at that space, at that foundation, was tremendously helpful for me to connect. What I'm learning here as an employee is the history and the vision and the legacy in France. (Alex)

Similarly, both Tanuja and Steve from St. Mary's U. also traveled to France and Spain and

traced the footsteps of Blessed Chaminade, the founder of the Marianists. Tanuja learned about the

spirit that drove the young priest to begin the missionary Congregation. The experience brought

greater clarity and a "wonderful personal grounding" to Steve in the understanding of the charism

and it made him feel comfortable. He explains:

> And so to be able to go to France and to see this world at the dawn of a revolution, and to think through the lens of this young priest and his experiences, the persecution, and go to Spain and think of what it means to be in exile, to be fairly impoverished and to live on the charity of others, and then to return, that is a valuable experience for me. . . . I suddenly came very much to find peace there because I began to understand that there's a completely different type of charism from the ones I was used to. (Steve)

Larry, Steve, Mike, and Emily report being nurtured in the processes of mission

integration by a deeper and clearer understanding of the Catholic intellectual tradition. Larry

narrates his love for the aspect of openness to disagreements found in the Catholic intellectual

tradition:

> I love the Catholic intellectual tradition, whether you go back to Thomas Aquinas, to Augustine . . . you understand that there is a theological or philosophical way of engaging and dialogue that's civil that um has a common element of . . . we're all trying to find the truth, searching for the truth. But none of us are convinced that we have the truth and the Catholic intellectual tradition can produce very conservative, politically and theologically conservative folks, and it can produce very liberal, theological, and political thoughts. And that's the beauty of it, the Catholic intellectual tradition doesn't teach us what to think, it teaches us how to think. That's the beauty and that one may be conservative or maybe very liberal, but they can come in understanding if we disagree, we have to think this through. And to me that's very refreshing, so the incredible challenge, but it's refreshing and again, we're not trying to convince the other, "I'm right, you're wrong, but let's think it through," I think that's fantastic. (Larry)

Steve appreciates the Catholic intellectual tradition's engagement with the whole person and its accommodation of both faith and doubt. Hailing from a non-Catholic Christian faith tradition, he admits it is hard not to be influenced by Catholic intellectual tradition:

> The Catholic intellectual tradition is very difficult in itself to define. That's a part of its strength. If you have to figure out certain things that would be on everybody's list, the elements of it, one I think would be the tremendous engagement with the whole of the experiences. So, the intellectual is vital but insufficient; the idea of community is vital but insufficient; the idea of the development in each person, of all of their talents to the fullest, again is vital but insufficient. Each of these is essential but not enough. And there is this deep central aspect in which faith and doubt are very compatible. There is respect for the universals. There is the desire to seek universals, but there is also respect for dissent and from that dissent comes a lot of wonderful things that help our understanding of the universals. There is a great and enduring love of artistic expressions in the human soul whether they come in language or in music or in visual arts, all of these things are among the things of Catholic universal vision and it's hard not to be influenced by them. (Steve)

Mike from UIW attended Collegium, a week-long summer workshop on Catholic intellectual thought. He observes that the workshop changed his understanding of the Catholic intellectual tradition. Earlier he had a superficial view of the tradition, thinking about it as "very medieval—thou shall not!" But he learned "how very open to new ideas Catholicism is!" He says, "In fact, I was really impressed how actually open the Church is to innovation, to science."

Similarly, Emily attended a conference on the Catholic intellectual tradition at Marist College. As a young faculty member, she found the conference "incredibly formative" for her and she continues to think about it today and relates that experience to her mission integration:

> That is truly where I began to feel a very strong connection to the Catholic faith and UIW's mission because I was able to learn how to integrate the traditions into every aspect of my professional life, which seemed very natural and connected to how I had been raised and my personal beliefs. (Emily)

Experiencing a sense of community. All the participants narrate their experiences of a sense of community in the Catholic university where they work. Winston remembers, before his hiring interviews at St. Mary's U., how the sense of small community that he read about in the

Marianists resonated with him, and he draws parallels with the small community at home while growing up:

> And the more I read about the Marianists, what came out was the sense of small community which resonated in some interesting ways, with the small community that I was raised at home because we were a very tight-knit small community. Marianists talk about living and learning together. That's what we did at home, the classes, the rosary, homework, cooking, that small tight-knit feeling. (Winston)

And over the years he experienced the warmth of a community at St. Mary's U. All the participants from St. Mary's U. speak of the strong community element in the Marianist tradition. Tanuja, for example, says:

> The best part about this, this, I guess this tradition is that there are no big hierarchies. You have Brothers that are plumbers and Brothers and it's a very active profession-based kind of thing. So you have Brothers that are PhDs that there are also electricians and that kind of. . . . So that non-hierarchical nature of the traditions I really liked and I think the community part is the one that really attracted me and I saw it lived and we live it in our daily work. (Tanuja)

Winston likes the idea of "the community of equals," which Fr. Chaminade envisaged:

> Something else jumped out at me saying the community of equals, which comes out of Fr. Chaminade in the post-French revolution period, but that whole idea that we are all equal, it doesn't matter what your title is, it doesn't matter what your degree is, doesn't matter what your level of education is, or the number of years you have in service. (Winston)

Winston also appreciates the environment of welcome and respect and value given to everyone's opinion at his school:

> The second one is that the warm welcome, the welcome to everybody saying the table is truly round. Everybody is equal at the table. Everybody's ideas matter and we are again only as good as the weakest among us. And, your job as a leader is not to turn around and say, "Oh weak-link gets replaced.". . . The first step is to see, "Can I make this link stronger? Can I make the links around this link help this link? What is my personal stake in this person?" (Winston)

Emily was "very pleasantly surprised" that almost as soon as she came to UIW, she began to feel at home because the people that she "met were very welcoming." "Let us help you

find your place here," she used to hear often and "it just immediately became home," she

recalled. Steve cites the example of how the faculty of the Law School rally around and support

the family of a faculty member after their loss:

> In the last several years for the Law School, it has also turned out to be very important
> when we lose a member of the community there is a great rallying around in supporting
> the family and maintaining engagement with the family after the death of a faculty
> member. Some of them have been here for a while and also, we lost a student a few years
> ago. These are classic places where the community works to reassert its role in the lives
> of people that have suffered a loss. (Steve)

The participants also talk about their experiences of building lasting relationships across

the board, with faculty members, leadership, students, and with the neighborhood, and how those

relationships have nourished the process of mission and identity integration. Emily, for example,

narrates how her many years of friendship with a colleague, Dr. Lopita Nath, has been sustained

through research interests and sharing of perspectives. She explains:

> To say that Lopita has brought the world to me to meet me or me to meet the world
> would be an understatement because I'm not a very good traveler. And I haven't had the
> opportunity to travel very much, but I have learned; I feel like I've learned so much about
> the world through my friendship and working relationship with Dr. Nath. (Emily)

About how enriching that friendship academically is, she continues:

> Firstly, most of all just because um just because she and I share a lot of the same research
> interest about the British Empire and um the history of India. And so I had only thought
> about the world and those research interests from of course my perspective and my
> experiences. So getting to work with her on those research topics from sort of the flip
> perspective has been amazingly enriching because I feel like I can see the whole picture
> of the world now or at least two sides of it at a certain point in time because she brings
> her historical knowledge, of her own personal experiences from growing up in India.
> Then I bring my research interest from the British side and obviously I'm not British, but
> I can bring that perspective and I just have learned so much from her. (Emily)

And about the role of her colleagues and students in helping her over the past 15 years at UIW to

integrate to the place she says:

> I was lucky enough to be hired to stay permanently and that was 15 years ago. And the
> thing that I can say I really love now about UIW that I didn't know then, all the things

that I loved then are still true, but the thing that I didn't know that I love now is that Incarnate Word helped me do things and become things that I never could have imagined. And half of that is my colleagues and half of that are our students. (Emily)

Mike shares how along with a student, Thomas, they began the miniGEMS free summer camp program for middle school girls at UIW campus. Thomas came from Mexico, from the cartel violence there. Thomas was articulate and fluent in Spanish and that helped Mike to communicate with the Spanish-speaking neighborhood. From Thomas, Mike understood Spanish culture better. Thomas continues to be part of the miniGEMS program as an alumnus. Mike remembers how enriching that relationship has been over the years:

> And I think without him [Thomas] I would not have been able to get the program to be as tailored as it is. . . . And I think again, it goes back to the mission and relationships; there's a relationship. I had the opportunity to watch him grow up. He's a great engineer and we did all the engineering stuff together, plus the resource together. But it's about that long-term relationships of being able to not only me help him, but him help us and we're kind of mentoring each other in some ways. (Mike)

The participants also share their experiences of an environment of appreciation for diversity and inclusion in their campuses which contributes to forming a sense of community. Tanuja experiences and appreciates the inclusive approach to faith at St. Mary's U. She adds:

> I've been here [at St. Mary's U.] 10 years, stayed, and I have seen how these conversations about faith, irrespective of your faith tradition, you can come from any faith tradition but how does it allow us to talk about something bigger than ourselves and that has really been a joy for us. What is interesting about our faculty is, they come from very different faith traditions: we have Catholics, we have Baptists, we have Christians, we have non-Christians, we have Episcopalians, we have a Muslim, we have Jewish people; but all of them are driven by this concept of our mission because hiring for mission is a very important part of St. Mary's. So that part led us to look at religion as more inclusive, a guiding force, a faith journey that was inclusive. (Tanuja)

Alex speaks along the same lines as regards diversity and inclusion at OLLU:

> Okay, yes, we have a large Catholic identity. But I don't see anyone ostracized; I don't see programming that says you got to be Catholic to come in this space. Everyone is invited. I also see this, we pray, everyone prays. (Alex)

And he felt very much included:

And so it's all about respect, but it's also about inclusion, and that's one of the things that I've learned here and being at a Catholic institution, the fact that I'm not Catholic, but I'm highly included and everything and anything that we do right, without necessarily impeding the mission, and values and the support as a person of Catholic faith. (Alex)

Mike enjoys the experience of working with faculty from diverse faith traditions:

I've always enjoyed working with faculty members from different faiths. It brings in different perspectives, especially like Muslim, I'm very impressed with their service, their dedication to service and I think it helps to have to have that exposure, the other faiths. I think we're very supportive of that and I think by the diversity we intentionally try to have diverse faculty members from across the spectrum and we do a good job of, I think integrating that . . . we can all hear each other, and not be judging. (Mike)

Larry who has been at St. Mary's U. for 25 years has a very powerful story to share. Right after

what happened on 9/11, there was spray paint and awful words on the office door of an

engineering professor at St. Mary's U., an Iranian Muslim. Someone saw it before the professor

came to work and called the press; the press interviewed the professor and said, "Well, this must

make you very angry." And he replied:

How could I be angry? Something very horrible happened on 9/11. Horrible. And people react emotionally. This was an act of passion, but I would like to meet the person who did it. I would like to have a cup of coffee with him. I'd like to talk about his understanding of faith, and I would share my understanding. And I bet we would leave as friends. (Larry)

And Larry adds:

That was his response, you know, a great example of a Muslim who says, "They don't represent me, I live my faith very differently and I live my faith in alliance with the mission of St. Mary's University." That's pretty powerful. (Larry)

Interpretative Findings: Nurturing Mission Consciousness

The following are the interpretative findings from the third superordinate theme,

nurturing mission consciousness.

Experiencing self-university value alignment. The participants feel personally

connected to and aligned with the vision and mission of the university they have been part of.

This value alignment has played a crucial role in their mission and identity integration. Steve found the five pillars of the Marianist charism—faith, mission, Mary, inclusivity, and community—profoundly satisfying to him. Speaking of the trust that the CDPs have in his leadership abilities, Alex believes that the Sisters trust him because he holds the core values of OLLU close to his heart. Winston finds the Marianist charism very consistent with his personal philosophy.

Reflecting continuously. The participants, after receiving formation in mission and identity through training and retreats, and after visiting the respective founding place of the religious congregations, nurtured and deepened the integration of mission and identity through a process of continuous reflection. This intentional and continuous reflection helped in identifying their personal fit in the mission, deepened their faith, and helped them to be open to new learning. Emily says that reflection helped her to bring faith sometimes into her classroom, and personally, it has deepened her understanding of the mission. Mike, who attends the mission and ministry retreat every year, considers it a time to reflect on where he fits into the mission.

Drawing inspiration from exemplars. Drawing inspiration from the lived examples of the members of the founding congregation has been a defining factor in the mission and identity integration experience of all the participants. In the members of the founding congregation, they witnessed the charism truly lived and shared. Regarding the inspiration he draws from CDPs, Alex says that he is reminded that the Sisters went from the space where he is standing to build a better life for so many people on so many walks of life. Winston feels he has "barely made a dent in the body of work" as compared to the Marianists who have "given faithfully for so long."

Experiencing inclusive environment. The participants credit their experience of an inclusive environment in their respective universities, an essential factor in the mission and

identity integration. Tanuja, who has been at St. Mary's U. for over 10 years, has witnessed conversations about faith on the campus, irrespective of one's faith tradition. In the school that she leads, she finds faculty from diverse faith traditions, all of them driven by the concept of mission. Terri recalls that to the Marianist Forum, a platform at St. Mary's U. to discuss and learn the Marianist charism, everyone, laypeople of all faith traditions, Brothers, Sisters, and priests were welcome. She feels St. Mary's U. has a very open, inclusive, and hospitable environment.

Feeling respected and valued. In addition to the experience of feeling included, the participants feel respected and valued in their respective universities. Larry shares his experiences with the Marianists encouraging him in his social justice and non-violence initiatives. Winston appreciates the non-hierarchical and open environment at St. Mary's U. Regarding his experiences, he says, ". . . the table is truly round. Everybody is equal at the table. Everybody's idea matters . . ." The participants experienced a sense of community in which their opinions are respected, and their contributions valued.

Understanding Catholic intellectual tradition. Some participants, for example, Larry, Steve, Mike, and Emily, attribute their mission and identity integration to their deepened understanding of the Catholic intellectual tradition. After attending a workshop on Catholic intellectual tradition, Mike learned "how very open to new ideas Catholicism is!" He was impressed by the Church's openness to innovation and science. Larry says that the beauty of Catholic intellectual tradition is that it "doesn't teach us what to think; it teaches us how to think." Among the several aspects of Catholic intellectual tradition, Larry and Steve appreciate its respect for diversity of thought, accommodation of faith and doubt, engaging of the whole person, and respect for dissent.

Assimilating the Mission

The superordinate theme of assimilating the mission is comprised of four themes: (a) interiorizing through reflective engagement, (b) experiencing a compelling sense of purpose, (c) aligning personal values with the institutional mission, and (d) deepening faith and spirit. The experiential narratives of the participants for each theme are presented in the following pages. Table 7 presents a summary of the themes and the number of participants experiencing them.

Table 7

Assimilating the Mission: Themes

Theme	Number Experiencing	Participants Experiencing
Interiorizing through reflective engagement	9	All
Experiencing a compelling sense of purpose	9	All
Aligning personal values with the institutional mission	9	All
Deepening faith and spirit	8	A,C,E,L,M,T,Te,W

Interiorizing through reflective engagement. All nine participants share their experiences of self-reflection in the process of mission and identity integration. The participants report that their reflections helped them in reviewing, reconstructing, and critically analyzing their own behaviors. Winston, for example, observes that reflection is a very critical aspect of one's continuous improvement:

> I think being reflective has got to be one of the most important things that you will do as a leader, any place, but especially vital over here because being reflective is not just in one domain of running a school; it's also in this other domain of faith formation and mission of the bigger mission, the Catholic and Marianist mission, not just the mission of the university. And I think, to me, one of the most significant things you will do because if you want to continuously improve, if you're not doing that reflection then you're not going to be effective in mentoring anybody; if you're not doing that reflection then you make the same mistakes, or you will perform at a certain level and if you want to break

through that level and get to the next level you've got to be able to look at yourself very honestly. (Winston)

Mike was at a public university before he joined UIW. Asked if he finds any difference in the community service of public university and UIW, he said the difference was reflection:

> One big difference is reflection. And I have to be honest with you, when I first started on reflection, I thought this was just waste of time. But it's important to stop, take a deep breath with the folks that you just work with and talk about what just happened; and you do that. We do the community service at [the name of the institution]. And I would do that to clean up the roads and all that. You just clean up roads and go home. . . . We're different here because I think we do recognize the human and the sanctity of life, you're talking to a human being, but you have to recognize that this is an individual, and the idea of that dignity, this is a person, you're no better than this person and don't judge them for whatever is happening. (Mike)

Mike also adds that reflection is a very important aspect of evaluating the execution of mission projects. Note the emphasis he gives to reflection by repeatedly using the intensifier, "very." He says, "So I think being able to stop, turn off everything and think about what happened is a very, very, very, very important aspect of being able to execute a project that is mission-based in some way." And he feels personal reflection is one of the most important aspects of understanding how one fits in within the mission and without reflection, "you're not really thinking about it. You're just kind of going through the motions of it." Mike also remembers how attending the Collegium and the reflective process he learned from it revealed community service as his personal calling within the UIW mission:

> So, I think the Collegium allowed me a lot of, and I learned about Christian meditation. I didn't know it was allowed [laughter]. I was like, "Oh, we actually meditate?" [laughter]. . . . I was doing a lot of meditations. That was really interesting; it allowed me to reflect. Silence the noise in your head, sit in the chapel and kind of think about where I fit in and that was kind of my big revelation and it is like, you know, it's more about service and service to the community. It doesn't need to be all big theory stuff. I just go, do it. I think that was kind of a big takeaway. (Mike)

Participants also describe experiences of how reflections have led to personal changes and transformation in their attitudes and behaviors. Larry cites the influence of reading Paulo

Freire's (2000) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and his whole pedagogical approach of reflection

upon action and new action. He cites an example of learning from his mistakes through the

process of reflection:

> You always have to reflect and coming out of my entering the social justice, non-violent
> area, was that as a community organizer and . . . when we started out, we were young and
> by God, we had the answers for people and we went in. I went into Robston. By God, in a
> year from now, it's going to be different. And we were arrogant, we were pretentious, we
> had answers to our questions. We didn't realize they weren't the questions of the
> community. The community knew what its problems were, and they were smiling at us
> and nodding their head, but they were thinking "you guys don't know anything," and we
> didn't. . . . So through making a lot of mistakes, I learned as Freire pointed out, reflection
> is critical. (Larry)

Reflections add to being effective in one's own regular responsibilities such as teaching

and leadership. Candace from OLLU is very intentional about self-questioning her pedagogy and

her process every semester. She teaches English and reflects on how to turn the theories she has

read into practice in her classes. She does "intense reflection of who is coming to the class," and

understands their goals when preparing for the classes. And she makes sure the components she

includes in her class are "consistent with metacognition which is the academic version of

reflection." She adds that she provides opportunities for the students "to reflect and find

answers."

All the participants admit being persons of faith. Their reflections also relate to their faith

and spirituality. And they find being spiritually reflective helps their roles as leaders and

teachers. Terri, who integrates yoga and embodied spirituality, and spends time in personal silent

meditation regularly, says that she sits back and listens to what the Holy Spirit is prompting her

to do:

> I keep asking, part of my reflection, and part of my own um work in silence is trying to
> listen, just to be . . . to being open, the centering prayer um listening to what I have to . . .
> and to sit back and listen to what the Holy Spirit is trying to tell me. (Terri)

Similarly, Candace devotes certain moments of her day to silence. For instance, she says driving

to OLLU is typically the time for silence to reflect on how God could use her on that day. She

also spends time in silent adoration, and she finds it a fruitful time to receive clarity on "the

bigger purpose of life."

Constant reflection has helped Larry in deepening faith and critically asking questions

about faith. And he says there cannot be a "one-word answer" to the question, "What is your

faith?" He finds the different theologies, such as "the traditional theology, liberation theology,

feminist theology, process theology, creation theology, environmental issues and all these

different theologies," all part of his faith. These are all part of what it means for him to be

Christian, and so he does not want to be "boxed in." For him, the truth is interconnected, and it

invites for deeper learning, constant reflection; and according to him, religion needs to be

reflected upon. He explains:

> I don't think any of these pieces [different theologies] have the truth, but they all have a
> truth that's interrelated, interconnected and they all bring something to my table and that
> helps me feel as though I still have a lot to learn now at various times in my life, given
> what I was researching, my activities or whatever is going on in the family. The pieces
> are of different sizes; it doesn't mean that all these pieces are the same size. You know 5
> years ago, this piece may have been larger than it is now. So, it's a constant, constant
> reflection that has to go on. I said religion without doubt, or religion without reflection
> isn't healthy in my perspective, I've always got to ask questions. (Larry)

And he encourages his students to take the same reflective approach in their faith and ask

questions. He has been teaching International Relations for many years and he asks:

> And how can you study International Relations without wanting to know and understand
> world religions and how can you study International Relations without trying to deepen
> your own faith understanding, that's the beauty of interfaith dialogue. . . . Interfaith
> dialogue requires you to think more deeply about your own faith. Because you can't be in
> dialogue with someone when you're not really, deeply understanding your own faith and
> the exciting prospect of learning from one another. (Larry)

Larry derives his motivation for his social justice and peace involvement from the

Beatitudes in the New Testament:

> And I went back to the New Testament and I said you know the Ten Commandments don't move me at all; the Beatitudes do. I carry the Beatitudes in my wallet with me. And I read them every day. Um, they challenge us. . . . For me, um I simply wake up every day and say, "I'm going to read the Beatitudes first and then I'm going to go about my day hoping that they remain present in what I do, what I say, who I am." (Larry)

Tanuja connects her personal reflections to her spirituality and how it helps her evolve as

a human being to ask "the bigger questions in life." She adds:

> So, I think that part about combining the religious part with something, a reflective part and that reflection comes from a deep spirituality that helps you evolve as a human being. That helps you ask the bigger questions in life. . . . So, if you are truly evolving into hopefully a better human being, you should be reflecting on things you do. (Tanuja)

Winston acknowledges that his reflections and conversations with the members of the

founding congregation, the Marianists have not only deepened the understanding of the charism

but increased his personal faith as well:

> And you read the charism and you think you read the words [laughter] and you start thinking about it, you get pretty confused and so in some ways it's a lot of reflections, a lot of time spent in conversation with people like [mentions the names of two Marianists]. I think it is the place that has actually done more for my personal faith than it has been my personal faith that has done more for the job. (Winston)

Experiencing a compelling sense of purpose. The experience of a compelling sense of

purpose is a common theme found in all the participants. The participants responded with varied

expressions to the question, "Why did you choose to work at a Catholic university and not

others?" Here are some of the key expressions picked from their answers to the question: "feel

called to" (C,E), "God's calling" (T), "vocation" (A,C,T,S), "noble calling" (T), "education as

calling" (T), "purpose" (E,L,M,S), "for a higher purpose" (C,S), "sense of purpose" (C,M,Te),

"got a purpose" (A), "purpose at a deeper level" (G), "led by a purpose" (T), "a purpose for life"

(T), "for greater purpose" (T), "serve/service" (C,M,T,S,Te,W), "I want to serve" (A),

"meaning" (S) "meaningful/ness" (E,T), "personal meaning" (M), "meaningful service" (M),

"meaningful way" (L), "teaching as ministry" (C), and "education as mission" (A). These

expressions and the following narratives indicate the compelling sense of purpose the

participants experience. Tanuja says that she has always been "very driven by the impact that

education has on the lives" of those she serves, whether it is faculty or students. And she has

always "integrated that purpose" in her teaching. And throughout her journey, she says that one

thing that kept her connected to the academic world was the impact that she made on the lives of

her students. And throughout her career she has been seeking its "more meaning part," and it is the

quest for meaning that brought her to St. Mary's U. She believes being an educator is a "noble

calling" and recognizes the transformative power of education:

> I've always found from the very beginning; I chose higher education because I believe
> it's a noble calling; it's not just something. I am a business dean; I could make three
> times the money I make here in the industry. But I've always believed in this power of
> higher education. I come from a family of educated people, and we've always believed
> that this is the one thing that if you give people nobody can take away from you and this
> really helps you change your life. (Tanuja)

And in her leadership role at St. Mary's U., she says that she is driven by the "idea of purpose."

And she has been purposeful in bringing up mission-centered conversations among the faculty.

And she feels the school has created a culture driven by mission:

> They [faculty] see because it then reflects in our relationships with each other, in how we
> view our journey with the students. . . . Some of the biggest accomplishments has been
> that we talk about this idea of purpose a lot more than I have ever seen at any other
> institution. . . . All I had to do in the first few years was make it more intentional. And so
> we've created a culture now and that's a big difference that you create a culture driven by
> mission. (Tanuja)

Tanuja adds that the sense of purpose has been contagious, and the school has been able to

influence and create a purpose in the lives of the faculty:

> People like to live with purpose, right? We always say, you can pay people a lot of
> money, you can do, but if you can create a purpose in their lives about why we do what

we do, a purpose for life. . . . But I think when people come to you and say, what I do makes a difference, people are just more . . . you will notice in the school, there's a level of energy, a willingness to go above and beyond that you don't see in an organization where they say, "I do a job and I go home." (Tanuja)

Winston came to St. Mary's U.'s School of Science, Engineering and Technology with close to 25 years of prior work experience of which 20 were in academia. Now after completing 10 years of leadership of the school he experiences the personal purpose at a deeper level:

> And you kind of get a sense saying now, I would say for 10 years, I look at it and say, "Now my existence makes sense," and it's so weird. Not that I was drifting; I was doing stuff in different jobs and hopefully adding value in different jobs. . . . So now here, and it's comedy, because in the last 20 years of your professional career, you find purpose at a deeper level. (Winston)

Similarly, Terri, who was once a student at St. Mary's U., later experiences a sense of purpose coming back to the campus as faculty. She has been at St. Mary's U. as faculty for 29 years now. Alex has identified that his personal mission is "to serve." And he wants to serve with compassion. The term he uses to refer to his leadership role in CHE is "vocation." He emphasizes:

> It's a vocation for me because I get involved, I participate, I immerse myself whole-heartedly in the space that I occupy. . . . So my mission is to serve and I use that as an opportunity to know that this is not a day-to-day thing or check boxing. It's really immersing yourself in the space that you serve. . . . I come to work, I come to this space, this vocation, this mission, vulnerable every day, and I come willing to share my story of my personal life every day with them. (Alex)

Emily realized while she was at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro doing her PhD that she really wanted to serve students, very specially the ones on the margins. That was the first time she taught first-generation students or underprepared students as a graduate student teacher. Getting to know the needs of those students "absolutely revolutionized" the way she taught:

> And it was actually at that school in Greensboro that I first realized that what I really wanted to do was mostly serve students, the teaching and working with students, particularly students who maybe had not had a chance to have a very good education

before, who had not been valued before, could come and feel like they had a voice. (Emily)

Candace terms teaching a "ministry," "calling," and "vocation." In her job interview at OLLU, she remembers how she defined teaching as ministry, relating it to vocation and calling, which impressed the interviewer. A Latina herself, she also finds a "bigger reason," to represent and give voice and agency to her community which is ill-represented in higher education:

> I always talk about from day one I don't see this as a career, this isn't job, this is ministry. And in the end, you have that purpose. . . . And I think it's this interesting spider web of experiences that ultimately convinced me that this world needed more people like me. And any time I doubt that, I'm so data-driven to the numbers. They don't lie. I mean, I think the last NSSE Surveys were like in 2016 three or four percent of full-time faculty at universities nationwide are like 3.5 to 4% and out of that number Latinos make up like 1.5%. And so those dire numbers reinforce the calling of yeah, this is a bigger reason why I'm here. (Candace)

Larry who works fulltime at the age of 76 is very passionate about education and social justice. And he wishes to be an educator and activist until his last breath:

> I still have this passion at 76. . . . If I have health, I'm going to be working for social justice. So that's just part of my DNA, who I am now, and I think some things have happened in my life which make me want to be an activist until I take my last breath. (Larry)

And Larry says that the success stories of students keep him going. Those stories give him a sense of accomplishment:

> I get a high of student success, and I really get a high of student success that keeps me going, and I always have made it an effort to remain in contact with as many former students as possible. That to me is critical and that's where I feel accomplished and more so than publish an article in a journal.

Aligning personal values with the institutional mission. All the participants report alignment of their personal values with the institutional values and mission. This is evident from the narratives of all the nine participants. The participants relate one or a few of the aspects of the institutional values and mission to their personal values and mission. I present the mission

statements of the three universities first, before I go into the personal narratives of the

participants that relate to the personal values and mission alignment.

The mission statement of OLLU is as follows:

As a Catholic university sponsored by the Sisters of Divine Providence, Our Lady of the Lake University is a community whose members are committed to serve students by ensuring quality, innovative undergraduate and graduate learning experiences; fostering spiritual, personal, and professional growth; and preparing students for success and continued service. (Mission, Vision and Values, n.d.)

The core values of OLLU are faith in a provident God, community, integrity, trust, and service

(Mission, Vision and Values, n.d.).

The mission of UIW is stated as follows:

Inspired by Judeo-Christian values, the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, and Catholic Social Teaching, the University of the Incarnate Word aims to educate men and women who will become concerned and enlightened citizens within the global community. The University of the Incarnate Word is committed to educational excellence in a context of faith in Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God. Thus, through a liberal education, the university cultivates the development of the whole person and values of lifelong learning. To that end, faculty and students support each other in the search for and communication of truth, thoughtful innovation, care of the environment, community service, and social justice.
        The University of the Incarnate Word is a Catholic institution that welcomes to its community persons of diverse backgrounds, in the belief that their respectful interaction advances the discovery of truth, mutual understanding, self-realization, and the common good (UIW Mission Statement, n.d.).

The mission statement of St. Mary's U. is, "St. Mary's University, as a Catholic Marianist

University, fosters the formation of people in faith and educates leaders for the common good

through community, integrated liberal arts and professional education, and academic excellence"

(Mission and Vision, n.d.). St. Mary's U. mission statement is a reflection of the characteristics of

Marianist Universities. There are five elements that characterize the Marianist approach to

education: (a) educate for formation in faith, (b) provide an integral quality education, (c) educate

in the family spirit, (d) educate for service, justice, and peace, and (e) educate for adaptation and

change (Mission and Vision, n.d.).

The following narratives of the participants relate to the mission or the value alignment

with the universities in which they now work. Tanuja finds her personal belief in the power of

education for social change aligning with the charism of the founder of the Marianists, Father

Chaminade, who strove to make education accessible to the poor and the marginalized at a time

education was the privilege of the elite. That progressive idea of the founder, to make education

accessible to those on the margins, she emulates in her personal mission as an educator as well:

> But the idea [education for the poor and marginalized] was very progressive back in the day. . . . So, it just validated my personal belief that I am in higher education because I think this is probably the only profession in which the impact lasts beyond that one individual, right? Once a person gets educated, that, then redefines the trajectory of everybody in that family, and how they live their lives. . . . I think you are really creating the most profound societal change if you are in higher education. There's evidence after evidence after evidence. (Tanuja)

For both Alex & Candace, the values of community, service, justice, and faith in a

provident God enumerated in the core values of OLLU stand out in their personal narratives.

Candace strongly believes that her presence in higher education is "God's calling" and a

"vocation" given to her to be an advocate for the Latino community. Alex finds an intrinsic

relation between his personal mission and the values of OLLU. Speaking about that personal

connection, he said:

> Well, that's what the Sisters [CDPs] is all about, it's to serve the community. They didn't do it for fame and fortune, they did it because they had faith, they did it because they knew that it was necessary, and recognition wasn't a part of their vocation. What they wanted to do is ensure that there was a space available for educating those that needed to be educated. And that's what I'm about, right. I became connected to the university because of that reason, because of that social justice piece that they offer throughout the mission and core values of the university. . . . So, for me, it was easy because that's something that I'm about. It is to ensure that we have opportunities for those that are sometimes not afforded opportunities to receive a quality education and doing so I just

became connected with it, I knew that this is something that I wanted to be a part of. (Alex)

Service, commitment to social justice, giving to the community are common mission elements found in the narratives of Mike, Emily, Steve, Winston, and Terri. Reflecting on why involvement in service initiatives of Mission and Ministry is very meaningful to him, Mike says that it is about "giving back to community" and "making a difference" in the life of people:

> I think for me it's pretty simple. I want to give back, and I just want to give back but at the same time, I want to do it without ego. I don't want this to be an ego trip or this is about me. . . . I don't want me to become . . . my profanity embedded in what I'm doing. What I really want to do is just make a difference. It's kind of probably a hard thing but I just, I just want to make a difference in somebody's life . . . one person, two persons, and I felt I've accomplished that and you see the smiles and it makes you feel good . . . yeah, this is worth it. (Mike)

Asked about the influence that St. Mary's U. has had on his life, Winston says that it has given him "the heart of a servant, really, really cementing that front and center." The biggest learning moment of the time spent at St. Mary's U., he says, is the realization that it is critical to have "the heart of a servant." Steve always had "a soft spot for the underdog." He finds St. Mary's U. itself very much an underdog, just as it is a school for underdogs, one with a strong "tradition to be an avenue for social justice." And that is "deeply appealing" to him. Similarly, for Terri, the values that appealed to her include "teaching about service and justice and finding peace and taking care of other people and looking to help the marginalized."

Emily says she realized in the very first year she was at UIW that "being in the classroom was really kind of a call to service," something that she had not understood before. Being able to make a difference and serving students are aspects that stand out in her narrative:

> To realize that I could actually help students, that I could affect their lives and that really is to me, that's my job, not just teaching them literature and I don't know, being part of UIW . . . and being able to make a difference and think about teaching as service and research is service because research informs my teaching then I feel like my life has been

about service and I never as a young person would have thought about my life that way. (Emily)

Larry spent 45 years in teaching and leadership between the two Catholic universities, UIW and St. Mary's. He finds the Catholic intellectual tradition, social teachings of the Church, and social justice and peace personally very appealing. He chose to teach at Catholic universities because he wanted to be at a university that would allow him "to have one foot in the community and one foot in academia." Being actively involved over the years in the Center for Social Justice and Global Awareness and Marianist Social Justice Collaborative, and being on the boards of many organizations, he finds his career very fulfilling:

> And God, I love Catholic social teaching and working at the Center for Social Justice and Global Awareness and Marianist Social Justice Collaborative. Oh, man, just deeper and deeper and deeper understanding of Catholic social teaching. . . . So I couldn't be more thankful and I think . . . and as I was involved in non-profits . . . or on the boards of different organizations, I always viewed myself as a practitioner of Catholic social teaching. (Larry)

Deepening faith and spirit. Eight of the participants shared the experience of deepening their faith and spirit while being in the Catholic university. The participants were asked to speak about the relationship between their personal faith/spirituality and the mission integration experience. The faith-related experiences for the participants are varied. Eight of the participants speak of a mutual influence of their faith/spirituality and mission integration. For some, coming to a Catholic university has been a return to faith practices in the context of a community of faith.

For Mike who had Catholic school education till eighth grade and public school education thereafter, coming to a Catholic campus has been a "circle back," in his own words. He calls coming to UIW in terms of his faith "a bit liberating." And he adds, "It [coming to UIW] allowed me to embrace some of the spiritual aspects of what I wanted to do with my faith,

but I want to do and I put it into what I'm doing without feeling uncomfortable about it." For him

returning to a space of faith is about "finding that voice" again and "recapturing that spirit a little

bit," and being back in the community:

> But when I jumped back and came back to UIW, I think it was a period of getting used to that [faith] again and finding that voice. But once I got it, I think it was natural, again, okay, but I think it was trying to maybe re-capturing that spirit a little bit. You tend to lose that when you get away from that community. And when I turned 18 and I went to college it is a very different experience; just completely removed away from that community in that type of environment. (Mike)

For Mike, at a personal level, living his faith is by giving back to the community. He adds:

> But the mission challenges us to deepen our faith, to live our faith and to succeed by strengthening the common good and community. That's what it is, it goes back to, "What do I owe society, how can I give back?" (Mike)

> Winston was raised as a Catholic and educated in Catholic schools. He admits to

"straying away from faith" for some years during his high school and undergraduate education,

but later returning. He uses the analogy of his childhood experience of steering a toy boat to

speak about the illusion of control he had in that phase of life, and how after having gone

through that illusory phase, he now lets a higher power "steer the boat." He narrates the

experience:

> I didn't realize I was rowing in different directions. A little bit here, a little bit there, in my head thinking that I control the boat. Years ago in Bombay [Mumbai], I don't know if you had been to Vihar and Powai Lakes, they have these little toy boats you know, they take you out 10–15 people and little kids can go to the front of the boat where there is a steering wheel connected to nothing and the guy in the back has got the tiller, that guy steers the boat and drives the boat, and you are standing up front busy turning the wheel thinking you are taking the boat someplace. All along that is completely an illusion. (Winston)

From that stage of illusion, Winston has moved now to a stage where he lives and walks, "not by

sight, but by faith." He finds "purpose" and has let the "master conductor" take over. He

explains:

I think in some ways that analogy also lives on right now, because we all think we control different things and I'm slowly getting to that place in my head where I don't get to see past my nose, I'm getting much more comfortable not with just taking that on, but also convinced that all of us live and walk, not by sight, but by faith. And every last one of us has got a purpose in this mix. And that we've got a master conductor who understands where all of our pieces fit. And my job is not to try and second guess His will, but to become much more obedient to it and just turn around and pedal. You know, I don't have anything to offer except sweat, that's all I can offer; I can offer sweat, I can offer a good faith effort. (Winston)

And asked about how he relates his faith to his works, he calls the connect spiral: "It's kind of spiral to me. And one feeds into the other. So, the work feeds into the faith which feeds into the work [laughter] which feeds into the faith."

Alex feels his faith is "ingrained with the work" he does. He does not see it separate at all but "literally integrated with everything" he does; "every decision" he makes; "every conversation" he has. He believes in the efficacy of prayer and uses the power of prayer at his work:

My work is integrated with my spirituality, every meeting I have, we pray before the meeting and I offer that to anyone that's around the table. If I feel like a conversation, if it's not going well in a very intense meeting, I find myself stopping the meeting recognizing that there's some tension going on, and with that tension I say to the group, "let's pray and let's pause and let's just pray and then let's continue." It changes the atmosphere. I can't change the way people think but I can certainly change the environment and the atmosphere, and I do that by using the power of prayer. (Alex)

By being at OLLU, Alex says, his spirituality is "strengthened." He prays more, meditates more, and is able to have those conversations with God. He says, "I think it definitely has enhanced my faith, my spiritual walk to really have a more grounded area, more grounded foundation of why I decided to be here." He enjoys "the atmosphere of spirituality." With his deepened "belief in the Catholic traditions" now, and having found a "space spiritually," Alex, who is from a non-denominational Christian background, says he is thinking of becoming a Catholic:

I've always believed that I'm spiritual and I have this non-denominational type situation. But recently I've been strongly thinking about converting to be Catholic because I

strongly believe in the traditions, just the spiritual aspect of it all. And so that's something I can say that's personally impacting me really seriously thinking about and evaluating where I am spiritually. (Alex)

Candace believes in the power of prayer, and she trusts in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. She believes her coming to OLLU is part of the divine plan and that she was "called to be here." She asserts:

And if my story does anything, it validates that the Holy Spirit, when you do present childlike trust and faith that you are being led, I'm perfect example for it, because I didn't seek this position and it kind of sought me. (Candace)

She attends adoration and Masses often. She admits having personally experienced powerful and miraculous interventions in her life through her relationship with Miraculous Mary. She is "unapologetic" about her faith. For instance, when she sends out e-mails to her team members once a week, she sends along "something reminding them of this bigger purpose and vision," often Bible verses. Being spiritual, she says, has made her "compassionate and empathetic, and very considerate of people."

Larry, who came from a Protestant background to a Catholic campus, appreciates the traditional liturgy and other rituals and at the same time relates religion to social justice and peace. He says that "religion has to be a foundation of hope," and "part of the solution." He narrates a profound experience he had while he was in Bangladesh. He visited an organization created by a Marianist priest, Father Mike [pseudonym] and a Bangladeshi Muslim economist, Abdul [pseudonym]. During a dinner, Larry asked the priest, "Well, Father Mike, tell me how many people have you converted?" And he said, "That's not why I'm in Bangladesh, Larry. I'm in Bangladesh to help alleviate poverty. That's why I'm here." And Abdul, the Muslim economist said, "Larry, I disagree with him. He has converted me. I am a much better Muslim today from watching how he lives his Christianity. He has challenged me to live my faith in a much deeper

way." To Larry, "That was conversion." According to Larry, faith experiences should bring

changes to individuals, and his idea of education in faith at St. Mary's U. is for students to question

their faith and return with stronger faith:

> It's showing students that faith is very important and when students come to St. Mary's, whatever their faith—um question and leave with stronger faith than when you first came to St. Mary's. Be a better Muslim, be a better Hindu, be a better Buddhist, be a better Baptist, be a better whatever, and by all means be a better Catholic. (Larry)

> To Tanuja, faith has always been a journey of discovery. Her experience of formation in

faith, she says, was more spiritual than it was purely religious. "Meaningfulness" is the

expression she uses:

> So, that part . . . and at a very personal level, I have read about . . . I've read Bhagavad Gita, I have read the Bible, I've read various, I have read parts of the Quran. To me, it has always been about meaningfulness. And what does it mean to be not just religious, but spiritual? (Tanuja)

> Emily says that the faith-related conversations at UIW make her think of her own faith

and she is inspired by the lived faith of others:

> Being in a place where people talk all the time or at least a lot of the time about lived faith, um as part of whatever we're talking about has just made me realize or think more about my own faith. . . . For me, a lot of my understanding of faith has occurred when difficult things have happened, both at UIW and outside of it. During these moments, my understanding of the power of our community and shared beliefs and traditions is most palpable. It is, however, also in my daily life when I interact with my colleagues and students. It's here that I see how lived faith in others, in oneself, and in God can be manifested. (Emily)

Emily had not been going to church before she came to UIW, and she admits that UIW is the

place she learned more about Christianity and faith than any other place in her life. She says that

she did not really understand faith before because she was not raised in a particularly religious

family. And at UIW she began to understand faith better, she says:

> And so coming here [UIW], I really began to understand um just by talking to people, going to events, um going to Mass sometimes, I began to understand faith a lot better, um not just in a larger sense, but to understand actually that faith was important to me, and

that during any difficult times I might have in my life, small or large that um a faith that I kind of acquired by coming to UIW, with something that gave me strength and that's something I never would have expected or hadn't anticipated finding here. Um, it has been quite astounding to me. (Emily)

Terri, raised in a Catholic household, Catholic educated, has transitioned from a ritualistic understanding of faith to an eclectic integration of embodied spirituality in herself. She remembers as a child religion was "all about the rules;" God was presented to her as "don't make me mad!" in her words. In her spiritual journey, she now feels that she progressed from the traditional ritualistic understanding of Catholicism to an "embodied spirituality" integrating traditions such as yoga, and dance into it. She says, "For me, finding the notion of embodied spirituality has changed pretty much the direction of everything that I do." And she integrates these spiritual elements into her classes as well, especially into her Holistic Wellness class. About integrating meditation into the class, she says, "The last 10 minutes of every class they [the students] will meditate. And so, I do guided meditations. It is about caring. I do some of the compassion ones; I do some of the Celtic spirituality; I use different modalities." And Terri is happy that the university, true to its spirit of inclusiveness, welcomed such non-traditional spiritual initiatives, "But the connecting thread, the golden string running through all of this is that and I tell them [students], 'I can do this because we're at St. Mary's.'" She also recalls that she gave a talk on embodied spirituality in a conference of the Association of Marianist Universities.

Interpretative Findings: Assimilating the Mission

The following are the interpretative findings from the fourth superordinate theme, assimilating the mission.

Rediscovering personal faith. The participants share their experiences of rediscovering their faith, an experience that covers their whole life. Many of them have transitioned from a

ritualistic understanding of faith to a transformative experience of faith. The daily reading of

the Beatitudes from the Bible inspires and motivates Larry in his social justice and peace

involvements. Terri feels that she has progressed from the traditional ritualistic understanding

of Catholicism to an "embodied spirituality" integrating traditions such as yoga, and dance into

it. Furthermore, she integrates these spiritual elements into her classes as well. Tanuja, after

having read the sacred scriptures of major religions, calls herself "spiritual" rather than

"religious." For her, faith is about finding meaning and purpose.

Discovering deeper purpose in life. Most participants say that working for the mission

of a Catholic university answers their deeper purpose in life. After having done different jobs

before, Winston now finds "purpose at a deeper level." He says, "Now, my existence makes

sense." Emily finds "making a difference" and being able to "affect the lives" of students

profoundly satisfying to her. Tanuja recognizes the enduring impact of education, and she says

that she has always been "very driven by the impact that education has on the lives" of those she

serves—the faculty and the students.

Immersing themselves in whole-hearted service. All the participants report that they

are driven by the desire to serve. Winston states that his motto in leadership is to have "the heart

of a servant." Alex says, "My mission is to serve. . . It's really immersing yourself in the space

that you serve." Mike wants to serve without ego. He says, "I don't want this to be an ego trip or

this is about me. . . . I don't want me to become . . . my profanity embedded in what I'm doing."

Practicing Catholic social teaching. Some of the participants also spoke of their love for

Catholic social teaching, an element that contributed to their mission and identity integration.

Larry has taken inspiration from Catholic social teaching and is passionate about social justice**,**

and he says, "I still have this passion at 76. . . . If I have health, I'm going to be working for

social justice. So that is just part of my DNA, who I am now . . ." Furthermore, about Catholic

social teaching, he says, "And God, I love Catholic social teaching and working at the Center for

Social Justice and Global Awareness and Marianist Social Justice Collaborative. Oh, man, just

deeper and deeper and deeper understanding of Catholic social teaching. . . . I always viewed

myself as a practitioner of Catholic social teaching."

  Experiencing a mission-driven environment. The participants recognize that their

experience of a mission-driven environment has been instrumental in the mission and identity

integration. Terri, who has been the chair of several committees in her 29-year-long career at St.

Mary's U. says that the characteristics of Marianist universities and the Marianist charism are

"ever-present in the conversations." She adds, "There is always the question, does it fit, are the

things that we're doing, how do they mesh with and how do they do this?" Tanuja observes a

holistic mission-driven approach to higher education at St. Mary's U., the mission that drives

curriculum, research, and service. Emily observes that at UIW there is a mission-focused culture.

She has witnessed that even at times when financial compulsions may have momentarily taken

the focus off the mission there is usually someone who will redirect the discussion to the

question of mission fit.

Owning the Mission

  Tracing the trajectory of mission and identity integration, the participants move further

from their experiences of assimilating the mission to the stage of owning the mission.

The superordinate theme of owning the mission covers four themes: (a) building relationships,

(b) experiencing mission integration as continuous evolution, (c) experiencing mission-centric

culture, and (d) experiencing challenges of integration. Table 8 presents the number of

participants who have experienced each theme under the superordinate theme of owning the

mission. The experience narratives of participants pertaining to each theme will follow.

Table 8

Owning the Mission: Themes

Theme	Number Experiencing	Participants Experiencing
Building relationships	9	All
Experiencing mission integration as a continuous evolution	6	A,E,L,M,T,W
Experiencing a mission-centric culture	6	C,E,S,T,Te,W
Experiencing challenges of integration	6	C,L,M,S,T,Te

Building relationships. All the participants shared their experience of building

relationships while being part of the Catholic university and they also related relationship

building to the mission integration experience. Alex said that he was intentional about working

in a small university because of the "relationship" factor:

> Um, I come from a large family, but I do understand the importance of connecting with each other, right. So, for me, my decision to come to a small institution was about relationships; it was about being able to connect with people without the nuances of other things that surround your space with a large group of people. So that was it really, it was as simple as relationships. (Alex)

Alex says that he has very strong colleagues among faculty and staff and that he has developed a

relationship with them:

> Yeah, again, I have very strong colleagues that are faculty and staff that I've developed a relationship with them. We often talk about the space that we're in, especially since we're not Catholic and it's always been positive for us . . . what brings us together and what circles back is the fact that we're in a good space, a great environment that are believers and have faith in tradition and all those things. That's been my grace. I have been able to know that this space is definitely inclusive to all. (Alex)

Among the many colleagues Alex relates to, he makes a special mention of Gloria, the vice

president of Mission and Ministry at OLLU with whom he connects at a "much deeper level."

He considers her his spiritual director:

> For Gloria, I have a connection with her on a much deeper level. . . . It's just that Gloria
> and I have a different type of relationship. The fact that we work together in the same
> institution, we understand some of the similar problems and we sit in at least a few
> meetings together and worked together closely on a variety of committees, and so we
> have that type of relationship. And I also use Gloria, if you will, as one of my spiritual
> directors, so I can come to her with an issue or a hypothetical issue, and she's able to
> offer some advice and some recommendations, as it relates to that. (Alex)

> Mike, who is actively involved in community service at UIW, speaks about the

importance of relationship building in the service aspect of mission:

> I think um I think an important aspect of the mission, especially when it comes to what
> I'm interested in, more in the community service and social justice that is about
> relationship building um and I think as someone begins to venture on their own journey
> about exploring how they fit in their identity within the mission, I think one helpful thing
> is to develop relationships. I think that's the only way . . . you can't live in a silo, up in an
> office somewhere, I think it's about being with other people. (Mike)

Mike also recalls two relationships that had the biggest impact on him relating to mission. One is

Thomas, who as an undergraduate student, along with Mike built up the miniGEMS program.

Even after Thomas graduated, the relationship continued. Mike adds:

> So, it's kind of interesting that I'm working with a kid [Thomas] who was 18 then, now
> 24 or 25, that long on the same thing. And I think again, it goes back to the mission and
> relationships, there's a relationship. I had the opportunity to watch him grow up. (Mike)

The second one that Mike mentions is Billy Alex, who had gotten out of the Navy and probably

was in his mid-30s when he joined UIW. Billy was a very strong support to Mike in community

service projects. After graduating from UIW, Billy joined UTSA for his master's in Electrical

Engineering. He had aggressive liver cancer. Within a very short time, Billy passed away. Mike

narrates how impactful that relationship was:

But it was hard because I would drive Sister [Sr. Walter] to see him [Billy]; he was dying quickly and he was over at Fort Sam by that point and I would take Sister every day, to go visit him and it was hard watching him die and Sister and I still talk about it and his father was just horrible. Oh, he was a horrible guy. But it was, I guess, a negative aspect in some ways of the mission. You develop relationships. I told Sister we'd go every day and oh, this is so hard. And the father actually didn't want us to go there. Actually, the mother had passed away, but the father was getting kind of annoyed with us showing up all the time. So, we had to show up when he wasn't around to see Billy. But we were there almost to the end; I know we saw him and he passed away a couple of hours after that. We actually did the funeral for him. The father was not going to do it himself, and he reached out to say, "Could you guys just do this funeral for him?" So we did that and we had a nice memorial funeral over at the funeral home. . . . It was back in 2013, it's been a long time now. And it comes down again to relationships, so relationships are important and you don't quit even when it's ugly. (Mike)

Mike, reflecting on the personal evolution that happened to him over the past 12 years, emphasizes that what he has enjoyed the most in those years is going out to the community and being with others, celebrating "that sense of community and those relationships."

Emily describes how her friendship with a colleague, Lopita, and working with her has changed her in the way she sees the world now:

And so, I'd only thought about the world and those research interests from of course my perspective and my experiences. So getting to work with her [Lopita] on those research topics from sort of the flip perspective has been amazingly enriching because I feel like I can see the whole picture of the world now or at least two sides of it at a certain point in time because she brings her historical knowledge, of her own personal experiences from growing up in India. Then I bring my research interest from the British side and obviously I'm not British but I can bring that perspective and I just have learned so much from her just about um the world that way and then just knowing Lopita because I feel like when we became friends um I really wanted to know more about her world and where she grew up. (Emily)

Winston shares his experience of the personal connection he established with some of the Marianists. He recalls that the relationships went beyond professional, and some of the Marianists played important roles in the events of his family:

Joseph [Winston's son] received his First Communion from Fr. Ruiz [pseudonym]. Mike's [son] graduation from middle school, the Mass was said by Fr. Miller [pseudonym]. . . . And Fr. Miller was Joseph's Confirmation sponsor. So, you find this blanket around you with the Marianists. (Winston)

Experiencing mission integration as a continuous evolution. Six of the participants report experiencing mission integration as a continuous personal evolution. In their narratives the participants used metaphors and other expressions to indicate the evolution: "journey" (E,M), "evolution" (M), "change" (M), "continuous evolution" (M), "adventure" (E), "happy adventure" (E), "growing up" (A), "transforming/transformation" (A,W), "slowly wrap your own experience around it" (M), "assimilated" (T), "still learning" (L), and "deepening the story" (C). Mike articulates that understanding the mission has been a continuous process for him and he adds that his understanding of the mission now is completely different from when he joined the university:

> So, I guess in terms of the evolution, and I'm still not even remotely close if you want. I think the more I work with miniGEMS and what we call megaGEMS now, in the GEMS program, the more I begin to recognize that on this journey of understanding the mission I'm nowhere near achieving a real understanding of it. I think I'm beginning to better articulate my role in my identity in the mission and what I'm doing for it but being able to clearly articulate it. No, I'm not there yet, but I think there's still time. And I think that's what it is, I think the mission is a journey. It's not like one day you're like, "Ya, I know it." And if you do that one, I don't think you understand it. I think it is a journey. I don't think you ever really get to the top. I think it's just a continuous evolution and the way I see the mission now is completely different from when I began. (Mike)

Describing the process of understanding the mission, Emily says that "it's really, really a journey," and she adds, "it's always an adventure but a happy adventure." Tracing the personal evolution that happened to him in the process of integrating the mission of OLLU, Alex emphasizes that over the years he has moved from a stage of "learning the material" to "owning the material," meaning to say that the integration has involved a personal evolution. The stage of "learning the material" for him was obtaining as much information, learning the culture of the place and establishing relationships, and this led to "owning the material" stage of sharing the experience with others and making a difference in their lives:

> At the beginning of my start here at the Lake, you don't know everything, of course, but you do want to obtain as much information as possible. So just like a kid growing up, you

are learning the culture, you're learning the material that you've been charged to teach, you're learning the importance of being a professor and the relationships that you are establishing. So that I had to navigate and try to figure out what does that mean, what does that look like that type of thing, to a point where, owning it is where I'm able to share it and share my experiences with others, being able to offer this is what I have done to make a difference and that type of thing. (Alex)

At the same time Alex acknowledges that it is an ongoing process; that he is a product in the process:

So, I'm not completely there yet, of course, and I don't want to be comfortable related to that but I see myself transforming in a sense of really going from a newbie to really owning some of the conversations and owning some of the materials. And owning my space here at a Catholic institution. (Alex)

Mike adds that he has, over the 12 years of his presence at UIW, evolved from an "intellectual understanding" of the mission into an understanding of mission as a "personal thing":

So, I think it's been interesting over the last 12 years, kind of that growth of being able to go from more of an intellectual understanding of what that mission is, to more of a personal thing. And I think that's what the evolution is. You go from being able to recite it, have a cursory understanding of it, to be able to slowly wrap your own experience around it, and then, be able to express it in your own way, in your own words. (Mike)

In that process of evolution, Mike has been able to "better articulate" his role and identity in the mission. He found his "own voice," and identified engaging the neighborhood community in service as his "portion" in the mission. He elaborates:

I think at least for my portion of it is that engagement within the community, getting to meet UIW students, getting to meet San Antonio, folks in San Antonio that normally I would not talk with and going in the neighborhoods I wouldn't normally go into, and being able to learn their community because as I've learned, every neighborhood is different. (Mike)

Tanuja traces her journey of evolution and observes that after having "assimilated" the mission, as a leader she is also an "advocate" of it:

So, it's an important part that I wanted to make sure that not only was I well assimilated in it, but I was also an advocate for it, I wasn't just a bystander and observer, I was an advocate for why these values matter. (Tanuja)

Larry calls himself a "learner." He insists that there is still a long way to go in deepening the story of the Marianists. And his excitement for continuous learning is an aspect of his life he wishes might inspire his students:

> I have always been a learner. The nice thing about teaching at faith-based, Catholic faith-based institutions is, it enables you to want to be a learner, and that you never stop learning. And so, the deep story of the Marianists. Well, I haven't reached the deep stories, I'm still learning. It's becoming deeper but boy! there is still a lot to go. Same with CCVI [*Congregatio Caritatis Verbi Incarnati,* The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word]. And that to me is important because it enables me to be someone that students can see, "I don't care how old he is. He still has a love of learning, he still gets excited about learning, and he lets us know what he doesn't know, and what he's trying to figure out." (Larry)

In this process of evolution, Mike emphasizes that the mission has personally changed him, and he sees San Antonio differently than he used to, before. Having lived on the more orderly and developed northwest side of town, the new world of other sides of the town he saw, opened his eyes:

> Additionally, just going into a neighborhood that you would never go into; there are places I've never been to. I could tell you just last month I've been into areas like, "Wow, I would never have gone here without unless I had to drop a kid off." There are definitely different worlds out there. And I live on the northwest side. Nice, it's very nice, orderly. And you go to some of this, and it's like, it's a different world just being able to do that and recognizing I don't just stay on the freeway pretending that there is no other world out there. And I think that's a big change. I see San Antonio much differently than I used to before. (Mike)

And this change was made possible because through the mission integration experience Mike has been able to challenge himself. He says, "I really want to challenge myself and put myself into more of positions that are awkward for me, so that I think that putting myself in awkward positions, I'm beginning to see things." And in that process, he wants all those involved in the

GEMS program to "change some way," the campers, teachers, the housekeeping people, and he

himself:

> I wanted something that they grow in some way and that has always been kind of my objective and including myself, I want to change, I wanted it to change me, I want it to change everyone, and I always wanted our UIW students that are part of it. (Mike)

Asked about the personal transformation that happened to him, Winston describes it in

terms of deepened faith in God and Mother Mary:

> The transformation that has really happened has been this Marianist environment, this Catholic university, transforming how I approached my work and life. The transformation has been the realization that you can be deeply flawed and not worth a whole heck of a lot, and God puts you to work and Blessed Mother puts you to work. (Winston)

Experiencing a mission-centric culture. Six participants share that they experience a

mission-centric culture in their universities. Emily explains that mission drives everything at

UIW. She also emphasizes that the mission is the center and the driving force:

> I think the way most faculty look at it is that the mission kind of drives everything and everything we do should serve the mission and serve the students. The whole university I think, I think we try to do that. Sometimes there have been other driving forces, financial forces um or things like that, that maybe have momentarily taken the focus off the mission, um but usually what happens is at some point when somebody says, "Well, but we need to be careful because we don't want to do this thing, grow this way, or create this committee, or whatever it is, if it's not somehow serving the mission or the students." And most of the time, again, we do sort of come back to the goal, to the central mission and certainly, the administration is very mission-focused (Emily).

Winston shares similar experience very succinctly in these words: "What drives decision-making?

It has to be mission, it has to be charism, it has to be vision for the university and then from that, so

you derive order." Terri, who has been the chair of several committees in her 29-year-long career

at St. Mary's U., says that the characteristics of Marianist universities and the Marianist charism is

"ever present in the conversations." She adds, "There is always the question, does it fit, are the

things that we're doing, how do they mesh with and how do they do this?" Talking about the active

involvement of the faculty, staff, and students of the school she leads in the many charity drives of

the university, Tanuja recalls that her mission-centric approach was intentional; it has generated

mission-centric conversations and the approach has paid dividends:

> If you talk to our faculty, talk to our staff, um the Business School, we contribute to
> campus campaign, we contribute to United Way, we do food drives. All I had to do in the
> first few years was make it more intentional. And so we've created a culture now and
> that's a big difference that you create a culture driven by mission. And that is something
> that I hope that they will always have long after I'm gone. It is important, so . . . and I see
> they said, "Oh, you know you raised the most food?" And I said, "I just sent out an e-
> mail and everybody did." And the fact that we did the most, even though we are the
> smallest and it was a big joy that because we talk about it [mission] constantly. (Tanuja)

Continuing to speak about the mission-driven approach, Tanuja observes that the model

the school follows is "a mission-driven approach to curriculum, mission-driven approach to

service, [and] mission-driven approach to research." She cites a few examples for this mission-

driven approach in the school: 70% of the students do extensive community service; the

curriculum has corporate social responsibility as a major element of it; and the faculty research

on mission-centric areas such as social justice, fraud and morality, and environmental issues.

Steve, the dean of the Law School at St. Mary's U., observed that President Mengler, was

"much more clear about what a Law School does and does not do," and also that he was very keen

as the second lay president to do more to articulate the mission. Steve articulates how he has been

intentional in integrating the core values and virtues in the formation of the lawyers:

> So he [President Mengler] has done more to try and have the mission as something
> discussed across the whole campus, but also I came and I brought with me this very
> strong sense, one of the great opportunities of a faith-based institution Law School is, to
> be honest about the needs of these core values and virtues in the formation of lawyers.
> (Steve)

Candace, at a personal level, uses "the mission and core values to guide everything else" in her

teaching, leadership, and research. She observes that the revised faculty evaluation at OLLU has

a reflection component on mission and ministry:

The revised faculty evaluations that happen every Spring now incorporate how you reflect on mission and ministry. And you don't get weighted on it; it's just an opportunity to reflect about the core values and how you're living it this academic year. It wasn't that way, the first couple of years, so I was excited to see them bring that back. (Candace)

Experiencing challenges of integration. All the participants reported their experiences of challenges in the process of mission and identity integration. The experience of challenges has been ongoing, and they vary from participant to participant. However, all have experienced one challenge or the other. To some, the challenges have been at a personal level, and to others, at the institutional level. Larry describes the challenge of work and family balance on a personal level. He admits that he "never mastered balance" while wearing the different hats of a social justice and peace activist, an academic, a son, a brother, a husband, a father, and a grandfather, although he traveled the world in looking for ways to be a part of the answer to injustice. Personally, he feels the balance "has always been a challenge" to him. For Emily, the biggest challenge is making the right choices of mission related activities:

I think the biggest challenge I can think of is actually [*laughter*] is actually trying to determine how to pick and choose what to do, um because there are so many opportunities at the university for integrating the mission into every aspect of teaching and research and service in life that sometimes it's tempting to want to try to do it all. Um and the biggest challenge I've had is trying to figure out what I can actually manage to do, to do sort of one thing at a time meaningfully rather than to try to, for example, attend every workshop on the mission or um incorporate service learning into every class um that's been one of the big challenges is actually how to sort of not do everything. (Emily)

Alex who comes from a non-Catholic background shares the experience of frustration he faced initially "attending chapel and really not knowing the protocol when it comes to service in the chapel." Another challenge that Emily experiences is fostering mission consciousness among the students. She explains:

I think a big challenge has been actually sometimes talking about the mission with the students, because I know that they hear it when they come to UIW, but sometimes I feel like there's a disconnect between the way the faculty and the administrators think about and talk about mission and then the students experience; they're not, I don't think they

are as connected with it as I expected them to be. So sometimes talking to them about it in class or even in office hours or something can be really challenging because they just don't know the mission maybe in the same ways that the rest of us do. And I know we've had the faculty, we've had lots of discussions about how to work on that, but that is a big challenge um because I think they're living a different experience sometimes at UIW than we are. Not all of them, but a lot of them. (Emily)

Willingness to be vulnerable and to break out of his comfort zone was a challenge that Mike experienced when he began engaging neighborhood communities for mission involvements. From his experience of engaging the neighborhood community in service projects, Mike says that the "mission challenges one's own expectations, prejudices, and mindset." Taking students into communities, taking a city bus for transport, getting wet in the rain, visiting facilities and places where they have never been before, he remembers how all of this required the students and him to really "kind of break out of their comfort zone" to connect with people they would not usually connect with. He says the mission at UIW required him to push himself into situations he was not usually comfortable with, "challenging his own expectations, his reservedness, prejudices, and mindset." Mike explains how stressful the mission work can get sometimes:

> Additionally, doing mission work, doing something that fits in with the mission of UIW I always stress it's hard, it's dirty, it's stressful, it doesn't always work out the way you want; the people may not like you anyway, you may be being used. So this is all kinds of stuff, but that's not the point, it's trying to make a difference somewhere and it doesn't always work out the way you want it, and the people may not be appreciative or they may just be flat out using you and that's just what it is. (Mike)

Candace and Terri notice a decline in the commitment to the Catholic identity and mission of their campuses given the change of leadership from religious to lay people, and the declining number of members of the religious order in the campuses. Candace laments the dearth of Catholics on the campus. She feels it is important to have "practicing Catholics" in leadership positions because they bring a different perspective:

> I just think that having someone who's a Catholic, who understands like what adoration is or having testimony, it matters. . . . And that time will be allowed for prayer and reflection, and the Mass. And what a beautiful thing it would be that every day, all of these people could go to Mass together and truly celebrate Mass together, even non-Catholics. I think that we've been such a richer environment to this space. I think that's what the Sisters ultimately were thinking. And so, yeah, I think it matters to have Catholic people in these positions. (Candace)

Terri had been in the St. Mary's U. campus when more Marianists were present there.

Now, with the transition to lay leadership, and the growing challenges of competitive higher

education environment, tuition-driven programs, complex financial environments, she feels that the

lay administration is not able to give as much focus on sustaining the Catholic Marianist mission

and identity. She feels the voice of the few professed Marianists who are still in the campus is "not

really that loud." She feels, "they do not assert enough." Larry insists that in this transition from

religious to lay leaders, it is very important to institutionalize mission and values into the very

structure of the university. He observes, "When that [institutionalization of mission] does not

happen, it's not a failure of the individuals, but a failure of the institution." He recalls when new

faculty comes to St. Mary's U., "there is 1 year of Friday afternoon three-to-five meetings where

they get the Marianist story, where they get the Catholic story." Although he appreciates that

program, he also remarks that there is nothing much after that in terms of continued formation.

"You can be in 20 years and haven't gotten much else," he adds. Larry calls for an institutionalized

and structured effort to maintain the learning:

> So, I mean several of the Brothers and Priests we've talked about, it's just not institutionalized that we need to structure how you deepen your understanding and love for the Marianist story or for the Catholic intellectual tradition, Catholic social teaching. We need to deepen it, so we need to have some organized way of maintaining the dialogue, maintaining the learning from one another, so that all the faculty are growing that we're growing together and that we're deepening our faith story. (Larry)

Mike of UIW feels the university relies too much on the Sisters for mission transmission and is concerned about the near future when there may not be the presence of any of them. He expresses the challenges ahead for lay members in transmitting the mission:

> I think there could be more, especially is a big concern as the number of Sisters disappear here at UIW, we don't have a lot left, we have to be able to not rely . . . I think we rely on the Sisters too much for the mission transmission, and that it's going to be very soon where we may not have a single Sister here. And we need to be able to address as faculty members, the lay members have to be able to take over that role and then train the younger ones. If we don't, we are going to lose, we're going to lose UIW as it is now, and we'll just become another school. . . . So we, as the lay community, we have to rise up and do something, stand up and do something and take the mantle and be able to take the role of Sister Walter or the role of the other Sisters about talking about the mission and being able to articulate it. (Mike)

Yet another challenge expressed by some of the participants relate to financial resources and administrative issues. Steve, the dean of Law school at St. Mary's U. says, "We are a financially poor program, in a financially poor university. Our budgets are tight. And these jobs are very challenging." Similarly, Tanuja of St. Mary's U. explains the financial challenge in a practical scenario. Given the limited money when allocating resources, she faces the challenge of making a decision to direct it to academic related areas or send students on a mission trip. Emily from UIW attempts to see the financial challenges from the perspective of the administrators:

> I do think sometimes the administration of the university um because they're thinking about running the university . . . you know from the business perspective, sometimes are not as tuned in to the mission or maybe they don't have the luxury of being tuned into the mission. (Emily)

Mike who leads GEMS, the community service initiative program at UIW, has experienced the pressure sometimes from various schools of the university that want to use the data that the program has for their own promotion. But the vice president of Mission and Ministry, Sister Walter, has been very clear about the program not being a promotion tool for UIW. Mike explains:

> We have large databases of students, parents, addresses or a lot of pressure to see that. "Can we see that so we can call them and send them a gift or something like that?" Again, this is like, "No, you're not going to do that." (Mike)

Leading the GEMS programs for 12 years now, Mike has also learned that the GEMS program, since it brings in grant money, gets attention and, as he points out, "there's that level of jealousy; there's that level of claiming credit." Candace remembers how broken faculty were when at a certain time OLLU had to close nine programs because they were not sustainable. And she, as a leader, has faced the challenge of "providing healing" to those that have gone through the trauma and pain.

Interpretative Findings: Owning the Mission

The following are the interpretative findings from the fifth superordinate theme, owning the mission:

Weaving a web of impactful relationships. Meaningful personal relationships have nourished participants and made an impact as a factor in the integration of the mission and identity. Emily considers her friendship with Lopita has mutually enriched them and has helped expand her worldviews. Alex connects with Gloria at a "much deeper level." He considers her his spiritual director. Mike says that in his journey of exploring his personal fit within the mission, an essential part was developing relationships. He says, "You can't live in a silo, up in an office somewhere; I think it's about being with other people celebrating that sense of community and those relationships."

Evolving continuously. Regarding the process of mission integration, the participants consider themselves a product in the process, reflecting continuously and learning unceasingly. They sense a continuous evolution of understanding of the mission. Regarding mission integration, Mike says, "I don't think you ever really get to the top. I think it's just a continuous

evolution, and the way I see the mission now is completely different from when I began." Alex said he has moved over the years from a stage of "learning the material" to "owning the material," meaning to say that the integration has involved a personal evolution. Larry says that he has always been a learner. About his understanding of the mission of St. Mary's U. he says, "Well, I haven't reached the deep stories, I'm still learning. It's becoming deeper, but boy! there is still a lot to go."

Finding personal voice in mission. In the process of mission and identity integration, the participants discern and identify their personal role within the mission of the university. Mike, from the initial intellectual understanding of the mission, progressed towards personalizing it. He said, "You go from being able to recite it, have a cursory understanding of it, to be able to slowly wrap your own experience around it, and then, be able to express it in your own way, in your own words." In that process of evolution, Mike has been able to "better articulate" his role and identity in the mission. He found his "own voice" and identified his "portion" in the mission was to engage the neighborhood community in service. To Larry, his personal call in the mission has been to be an advocate of social justice and non-violence.

Challenging self to change and adapt. In the process of integrating the mission and identity of the university, the participants recognize transformations in their values, behaviors, and attitudes. Mike, through his engagement with the San Antonio community, was open to change himself, challenge his comfort zones, and was willing to be vulnerable. Having stepped into the more impoverished areas of the town for community engagement, he now sees San Antonio differently, much more so than before. He says, "I really want to challenge myself and put myself into more of positions that are awkward for me, so that I think that putting myself in awkward positions, I'm beginning to see things." He says, "I want to change; I wanted it to

change me." Similarly, Winston speaks of how the Marianist environment has transformed him, "The transformation that has really happened has been this Marianist environment, this Catholic university, transforming how I approached my work and life."

Developing critical self-awareness. The academic lay leaders also developed critical self-awareness. They recognize that they are lifelong learners; they are also aware of their flaws. Larry acknowledges that he has never been good at balancing family and work. He admits that he "never mastered balance." Mike recalls that the mission at UIW required him to push himself into situations he was not usually comfortable with, challenging his expectations, his reserved self, prejudices, and mindset.

Recognizing the challenges as laity. In the context of the dwindling number of religious, the academic lay leaders recognize the challenges of leadership that they face in a Catholic university. Mike says that now the university relies too much on the Sisters for the mission transmission. About the roles of the laity, he says, ". . . the lay members have to be able to take over that role [of Sisters] and then train the younger ones. If we don't, we are going to lose, we're going to lose UIW as it is now, and we'll just become another school." He adds, "So we as the lay community we have to rise and do something, stand up and do something and take the mantle and be able to take the role of Sister Walter or the role of the other Sisters, about talking about the mission and being able to articulate it." The participants dread the danger of the loss of the mission and identity of the university in the absence of the members of the founding congregation.

Championing the Mission

Having lived through the experiences of forming values and beliefs, disorienting dilemmas, nurturing the mission consciousness, assimilating the mission, and owning it, the

participants, in this superordinate theme of championing the mission, share their experiences of disseminating the mission in their roles as faculty, leaders, and in their personal lives. The superordinate theme covers four themes through which the participants disseminate the mission: (a) integrating the mission in academia, (b) imparting ethical and moral values, (c) advocating social justice, and (d) living by example. Mike, for example, feels he has a twofold responsibility of introducing the mission to the students and to the new faculty as well:

> And additionally, I think, just thinking it's me as a faculty member here at UIW that it is my responsibility to do two things. One, make sure I introduce the mission to students, and the students that really want to understand it. I help them on that. . . . So, I feel like it's my responsibility to make sure that the new faculty members have an understanding of what that mission is. (Mike)

Table 9 presents the list of participants who experience the four themes under the superordinate theme, championing the mission.

Table 9

Championing the Mission: Themes

Theme	Number Experiencing	Participants Experiencing
Integrating the mission in academia	7	C,E,L,M,S,T,Te
Imparting ethical and moral values	7	C,L,M,S,T,Te,W
Advocating social justice	9	All
Living by example	7	A,E,L,M,T,Te,W

Integrating the mission in academia. Seven of the participants share their experiences of integrating the aspects of mission in academia. They report that they have been purposeful and proactive in integrating the mission in their roles of teaching and leadership. One of the strategies Candace uses in her English classes to integrate the mission is to make sure the additional readings she selects model the values of OLLU. For example, she selects reading material from James Baldwin, Martin Luther King Jr. or Mother Teresa or from contemporary literature and

connects those to the student assignments. Emily, a full-time English faculty, finds it easy to integrate social justice into her teaching because of the human stories she teaches. She elaborates:

> Every literature class I'm teaching, we're talking about people who before this story was written weren't represented or . . . I teach post-colonialism, so I spend all my time talking about groups of people who have been oppressed and then perhaps they're given independence and then the oppression affects their independence. (Emily)

And she tries to relate what the students are reading to what goes on around them in the contemporary world. Many times, she would ask the students to pull up the internet and find something that happens in the present day which relates to what happened in 1900s and ask questions: "What can we do about it? Why is it happening? Um if people don't want to do anything about it, why don't they want to do anything about it?" She also brings speakers in who have direct experience with some of the social justice issues that are discussed and "can give a human face" to what is discussed. Another effective means she finds is to take her class to different parts of UIW campus that have something to do with the mission like the Heritage Center or the Blue Hole or the Grotto, or even to the Motherhouse. For example, she took her Brit. Lit. survey class to the Motherhouse Chapel to read a post-World War II poem, reading it in a "sacred space." Emily says, "So, there's just all kinds of interesting fun ways to bring the mission into the classroom."

Candace looks for providing students "a sense of agency" and she begins classes with "a lived experience narrative" in her freshman classes. She narrates an instance in her freshman class when a student presented an autobiographical narrative focused on issues of social injustice. The 17-year-old student wrote about her father, an undocumented immigrant from Honduras, and on the amount of racism and emotional trauma she went through. This class has been structured in such a way that eventually the discussion moves from the subjective to the

objective. There are discussions on the defining issues and then the solutions. The last paper in

the class is on advocacy, on who solves the issues. Candace says the class "completely aligns

with the mission and vision of this university [OLLU] and what the Sisters were trying to do."

And Candace has watched what was once a shy young lady from Honduras now growing very

confident. She says that now the student is "guided with this understanding that maybe she has a

calling to be an immigration attorney to help people like her father find justice." In whatever

class possible, Candace "talks about the Sisters of Divine Providence and kind of that mission

and this idea of fighting injustice."

> According to Tanuja, the mission drives all the aspects of academia: curriculum, service,

and research. She summarizes the mission-driven approach:

> So, I think it's [mission] being translated because it's so front and center, right. We talk
> about it all the time. It's hard not to get a little . . .. Even if you were completely a
> skeptic, it's hard not to get involved in this. So, I think it's reflected in everything: in our
> curriculum and our service, in our research, in our just day-to-day lives. And we do that a
> lot.

Leading a school for 10 years, Tanuja has been able to integrate the "faith part in a much more

intentional, systematic, and strategic way" into the curriculum, into the strategy, into how they

support the outcomes into the strategic plan. She also provides evidence for how faculty

members integrate the mission. While classifying in what kind of journals and what kind of

topics the faculty was publishing, she was pleasantly surprised that "40% of the topics were on

social justice, corporate social responsibility, impact investing, how investing in good social

practices actually is better for triple bottom line, environmental issues, compliance regulation,

fraud, and morality." And she says that it "was not dictated at all." Those research and

publishing areas reflect the mission integration, according to her. She calls this the best example

of "mission fit."

Imparting ethical and moral values. Seven of the participants report that they impart ethical and moral values to the students through various activities. Steve, the dean of the School of Law at St. Mary's U. says that he has been purposeful in integrating the core values and virtues in the formation of lawyers, and in having mission-centered discussions across the whole campus. Likewise, Terri reports that in her classes such as Ethics in Sports, Holistic Wellness and Living Yoga, the questions most repeated are:

> How has your education at this Catholic and Marianist university how, how will this make you a different type of professional when you go out into whatever profession you choose? How will that make you a different professional from someone else who went to any other school, even if it's another Catholic school? (Terri)

Terri is also assertive about universal values in her Ethics in Sports class that she teaches, "the values of human dignity, respect for others, personal integrity, and responsibility."

Mike cites the examples of ethical questions raised in the science lab where he hires undergraduate students. While he wants the students to be lifelong learners, he also wants them to continue to ask questions and challenge the status quo. He guides the students to reflect:

> Just being here at UIW we have the benefit of being able to ask more thought-provoking questions from an ethical standpoint that you can't do at a state school. Like, say, "Is this ethically appropriate to be developing this type of technology like AI?" "Why are we doing it," as opposed to just doing it without question. (Mike)

Winston remembers a bio-ethics conference the School of Science, Engineering and Technology organized, and one of the topics explored was stem cell research. On the day of the conference, he wanted to take his Robotics class to the session on stem cell, and a group of students asked him, "How the heck is this related to my Robotics class or my engineering degree?" And Winston's response was, "You're going to be an engineer 8 hours a day; you're going to be a human being 24 hours a day, and you need to really immerse yourself in things that are much broader."

Tanuja shares the story of an undergraduate who sought her guidance on accepting a job offer from a top finance company which had some ethical lapses. The undergraduate said she was "hesitating" because "they've had some serious ethical lapses, and while they claim it has been taken care of," she was not entirely sure. And she said, "I don't want to go work for a company whose values I may suspect." Tanuja calls such conviction, "witnessing the power of your mission."

Larry recalls several students who resigned from the State Department and various other agencies because they felt they just could not stay and support a policy. He has encouraged students to go into government organizations such as CIA if they are leaning in that direction because he says, "we need people with values; we need people grounded in faith in that organization." "They should go in there with a clear sense of values," he adds. When students go to Larry for a letter of recommendation, for example, to a law school, he forces them to think; asks them to write a 500-word essay on why it is metaphysically important for them to be attorneys at all. He challenges them:

> Why do you want to be an attorney? Status, prestige, money? What are you looking for? Or are you going into law because you want to make a difference? And what, what difference do you want to make? Because we have way too many lawyers in this country, but we will never have enough attorneys who metaphysically understand why it is important to be an attorney, and so I think whatever one wants to be, whether it's a teacher, a doctor, or a nurse, computer scientist, whatever. We have to understand how that fits into the common good. . . . And so that is the center of Marianist Catholic Liberal Arts. That's critical. (Larry)

Advocating social justice. All the participants share their experiences of advocating social justice. Two weeks into St. Mary's U., Larry was invited to be a member of a Marianist organization on social justice and global awareness. He recalls that it was the beginning of many years of his strong and active involvements in social justice, peace through the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative—MSJC. Larry, over his 45 years of career spread at UIW and St. Mary's

U., has been transmitting his passion for social justice and peace to the students. He took

students on several mission trips to different parts of the world. He talks about some of those

mission trips:

> To do what I was doing, and I was taking students when I went on those trips to Central America. After these Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico I took a group of students the next summer to Chiapas, and we met with an interview, some Zapatisters and learned about indigenous issues in Mexico.
>   I took students to Bangladesh, to look at incredible poverty. With Brother David Smith [pseudonym], who had lived in India for 12 years, we organized the trip, and he primarily organized it. And we went to India over in the region of Ranchi and Bar in Bihar and looked at tribal poverty, and then as well as looking at some of the poverty in Bangalore as well as the Silicon Valley. But what a growing experience! (Larry)

Mike's mission engagement focus has been mostly in social justice and community

service projects, guiding the students in mission initiatives and explaining to the students how

they fit into the mission of UIW. Similarly, Emily, reflecting on the tenets of mission,

emphasizes that "social justice absolutely stands out" for her. Being raised with focus on social

justice from her family, she feels strongly for social justice, human dignity, and fairness: "that

everyone should be treated fairly, that every single person is valuable and should be treated with

dignity that no one is any better than anyone else." And at UIW she feels fortunate to be in a

community that values justice. She observes:

> And so, that is my most favorite thing about the mission that stands out to me is that in my job, in my workplace, I get to be surrounded by people who believe those same things that I believed all my life, and that here um if an injustice happens in the world, automatically here you can find a group of people if you want to join with them, to work against that injustice. (Emily)

Alex, from his background of being a first-generation graduate from an African

American family, says that he became connected to OLLU because of the social justice focus of

CDPs and he wanted to be part of it:

> What they [CDPs] wanted to do is ensure that there was a space available for educating those that needed to be educated. And that's what I'm about, right. I became connected to

the university because of that reason, because of that social justice piece that they offer throughout the mission and core values of the university, and of course, through the missions that they do within the convent. So, for me, it was easy because that's something that I'm about. It is to ensure that we have opportunities for those that are sometimes not afforded opportunities to receive a quality education and doing so um I just became connected with it, I knew that this is something that I wanted to be a part of. (Alex)

Steve, the dean of St. Mary's U.'s Law School, cites many living illustrations of the mission fulfilled in the life of lawyers from St. Mary's U. and over 500 judges and public servants in office right now who are St. Mary's U.'s law graduates. Steve has been personally advocating the cause of the underdogs by arguing their cases. He cites an example of a case related to social justice he is arguing for no pay:

And the case is about a young man from Rio Grande River who was shot and killed by Border Patrol. As part of appeals, it was said that there will be no action to term it lawful or unlawful because the Constitution does not apply outside the United States to the actions of the Border Patrol. This is a very offensive concept.

And so, we have a graduate in Bar, Bob Hillard, who has been involved for some years in this case. It was already in the Supreme Court once. It was heard once and we won. It went back to court and we lost. And we went back to the Supreme Court again and so we are working on new arguments in that case. So again, this is kind of underdog, social justice issues. I am looking at I can do what I can do. (Steve)

Living by example. Seven of the participants talk about their experiences of living by example. The participants use varied expressions to articulate the theme of living by example: "be an example to students" (L), "living by example" (W), "role model" (L), "be an exemplar" (L), "I want to give back" (M), and "make a difference" (M). Tanuja talks about a village school in India that she supports from her resources:

So, there's a school in India I support. . . . There's a village school and we started with 23 people and now there are 360 people and they're all graduating and it's a group of us, we don't take any money from any government agency, nothing. We just, it's personal; it is actually personal funds. So that translates into, to me that's a commitment for life, this is something. So, I think that part has helped me, I think the difference here is, it's much more intentional. It was always in my life. (Tanuja)

Tanuja finds connections between the charitable causes that she supports and the mission of St.

Mary's U. she is now part of:

> But I think here it is also connected with the mission of the university, who I am as a person. Whatever cause I support, environmental causes, animal causes, educational causes, and I do that because it's meaningful and it is just something that gives you more joy in what you do. (Tanuja)

> For Larry, the living of the mission is through a balanced integration of faith, social

justice practice, non-violence, and academia. The spirit of the Beatitudes from the Bible drives

his passion. And says that he is trying to be an example to the students through his passion for

learning, social justice, and non-violence:

> For me, um I simply wake up every day and say, 'I'm going to read the Beatitudes first and then I'm going to go about my day hoping that they remain present in what I do, what I say, who I am,' and without, subconsciously, it's subconsciously that they're there. But trying to again be an example to students, be an exemplar, that is really important. . . . They are not going to remember anything I say in class, but they might remember I had this Prof who had this love of learning and was trying to always deepen his faith in a way that was oriented around social justice and non-violence. (Larry)

Larry continues why being an example is very important to him:

> And that [being an example] to me is important because it enables me to be someone that students can see, 'I don't care how old he is. He still has a love of learning, he still gets excited about learning, and he lets us know what he doesn't know, and what he's trying to figure out.' . . . And that's the example I can give to my daughter and my grandchildren, and that's pretty exciting, that's pretty exciting. (Larry)

> Mike, over the years, developed the GEMS program at UIW into a very successful

community service program. He explains his personal reasons for his engagement in community

service as his desire to "give back" and "make a difference." He expresses his sense of

accomplishment thus:

> I want to give back, and I just want to give back but at the same time, I want to do it without ego. I don't want this to be an ego trip or this is about me. . . . What I really want to do is just make a difference. It's kind of probably a hard thing but I just, I just want to make a difference in somebody's life, one person, two persons, and I felt I've accomplished that and you see the smiles and it makes you feel good, yeah, this is worth

it. . . . I just want to be able to give back my time, I guess, a little bit to the community and see if that time can make a difference to someone. . . . I can't really imagine working or doing something that didn't in some way contribute back to society. I think that would be kind of soulless for me [laughter] and no fun. (Mike)

Emily shares an experience of community engagement motivated from her World Lit. class. The context was summer 2018, the time of all the struggles with the immigration at the border when a lot of children were placed in detention centers. While the issue was discussed in the class one of the students said, "I bet the kids really would like some toys. I wish there was a way we could get them some toys or some books or something." And Emily responded, "Okay, well, let me see what we can do." Emily contacted the Ettling Centre and made arrangements for the toys to be delivered to the border. By the next class, she had her office filled with toys and books from the students and was able to send those to the border through the Ettling Center. Emily recalls, "And so, just by having the conversation with my students, we were able to do a little bit to maybe help the situation, at least for a few kids, for a moment in time."

For both Winston and Emily, living a life of service has been a prominent aspect in their personal living of the mission. Winston makes himself available to the student body and they see him "as a trusted sounding board, mentor in some cases, a friend in others, a guide in others, [and] a dad." He understands his job is "more of being there, being present and being present as a community member saying, 'What can I do to support you?'" Though he is not professionally trained to handle any of these things, he has tried to support people through mental illness, through divorce, through abuse from a spouse or significant other, and poor financial circumstances. Emily's personal living is through "service in different ways." She remembers how, at a younger age, she was thinking more about "success in monetary terms" or about how people saw her, but as she got older, the thought has been about how much she has contributed.

Winston says he is inspired by the "living-by-example piece" of the Marianists who "tend to be very quiet about any good that they do." He adds, "and I love that way of living because I look at it saying, that's very consistent with my own personal philosophy." Alex relates a memory of inspiring a student by his very presence in OLLU:

> I had a student, African American female student that passed by my office. My office is full of glass; I am in a fishbowl, so you can see me. She stopped me in the hallway, and she said, "So, you're the Dean of Student Success?" And so, I was like, "Yeah, yeah, blah blah." We have a conversation. She says, "I want to say thank you for being in that office because it's so good to see another person that looks like me in that space." You know, I'm like, wow, I never. You think about it, but you don't think about it on a daily basis. But how inspiring it is to know that even your presence inspires students regardless if they look like me or not, to continue on. So, it's not about me. And I realized that a long time ago, it's not about me, but it's really about the students that we serve, and also the ones that will come after me. (Alex)

Tanuja summarizes the everyday living experience of mission in the following words, "We are living it every day and I believe that's why people here are happier because they are doing, they know they're doing something that's more than just getting a paycheck at the end of the day."

Interpretative Findings: Championing the Mission

The following are the interpretative findings from the sixth superordinate theme, championing the mission:

Owning responsibility for mission dissemination. Having integrated the mission and identity of the university and being conscious of the challenges they face as academic lay leaders; they own responsibility for mission dissemination. Mike, for example, recognizes that it is his responsibility, as a faculty member at UIW, to first make sure that he introduces the mission to the students and helps them understand, and secondly to make sure that the new faculty members have an understanding of what that mission is.

Developing a mission-centric culture. The participants say that in their leadership roles, they are intentional in building a mission-centric culture. Tanuja considers that one of her biggest accomplishments is the conversation about the idea of purpose in the school she leads. She was intentional in building that mission-driven culture in the first few years. Now the very environment creates a sense of purpose in others. About the mission-centric culture at UIW Emily says, "I get to be surrounded by people who believe those same things that I believed all my life, and that here, if an injustice happens in the world, automatically here you can find a group of people if you want to join with them, to work against that injustice." The participants sense that the mission permeates into all aspects of the education: curriculum, research, service, and in day-to-day matters.

Seeing mission integration evidence in students. The participants say that they have witnessed mission and value integration in the students. Tanuja shared the story of an undergraduate who was unwilling to accept a job offer from a top finance company which had some ethical lapses. Tanuja calls such conviction "witnessing the power of your mission." Larry recalls several students who resigned from the State Department and various agencies because they felt they just could not stay and support a policy. Steve cites the examples of several graduates from the law school who choose to argue cases for immigrants and those on the margins for less or even no pay.

Forming mission consciousness in students. The participants shared their experiences of forming mission consciousness in students. They cite examples of impacting the life choices of students, empowering them, and giving them a sense of agency. They inculcate in them the values of social justice, peace, respect for the dignity of the human person, diversity, and inclusion. Candace brings to class defining issues of social injustice which completely aligns

with the mission of OLLU. In whatever class possible, she "talks about the Sisters of Divine Providence and kind of that mission and this idea of fighting injustice." Larry has taken several groups of students on mission exposure programs to the developing world.

      Immersing themselves in social justice initiatives. The participants immerse themselves in social justice initiatives and advocate the cause of the marginalized. Larry spoke about the many mission trips he made with the students to different parts of the world, witnessing poverty, and trying to find solutions to economic and social problems. In the school that Tanuja leads, they initiate community service activities such as the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. They ensure the involvement of the newly hired faculty in the program so that they understand and integrate the mission quickly. Steve, the dean of Law School at St. Mary's U., spoke about personally advocating for people who are discriminated against. Mike finds his personal role in the mission of UIW is community engagement programs such as miniGEMS and megaGEMS.

      Modeling the mission in personal life. The participants say that they have been trying to be exemplars and models of mission in their lives and behaviors. Tanuja supports a village school with 360 students in India from her own resources. Additionally, she also supports environmental causes, animal causes, educational causes because she finds doing them meaningful. Winston says that he is inspired by the "living-by-example piece" of the Marianists and he wants to set example himself. Emily's personal living is through "service in different ways." She remembers how at a younger age, she was thinking more about "success in monetary terms" or about how people saw her, but as she got older, the thought has been about how much she has contributed.

The Key Behavioral Competencies Model

I began this interpretative phenomenological inquiry with the research question: What are the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities of San Antonio who integrate the mission and identity of the university they are part of? The progressive six-stage model of the mission and identity integration discussed in this chapter answered the question of *what* those lived experiences have been. IPA, being an interpretative enterprise, provides me the scope to engage the data at a deeper level, and interpret it from the background of my own experiences and the meanings that the participants assigned to their experiences. Regarding IPA's different levels of interpretative engagement, Smith et al (2009) said "IPA is always interpretative, but there are different levels of interpretation. Typically, an analysis will move through those levels to a deeper analysis, as it progresses" (p. 36). Taking advantage of the method's flexibility and openness to insights, interpretations, and reinterpretations, I moved deeper from the question of *what* to the question of *how* regarding the lived experiences of the participants. I revisited the data and the six-stage model with the following question: How do the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders serve in sustaining, strengthening, and transmitting Catholic universities' mission and identity? In this second level of analysis, I focused on identifying the actionable behaviors of the academic lay leaders that emerged from their mission and identity integration narratives. This analysis yielded a key behavioral competencies model with five key behaviors: (a) moral self-identity development, (b) engaging new experiences, (c) critical reflective practice, (d) impactful relationships building, and (e) immersion in whole-hearted service. Figure 2 presents the key behavioral competencies model of mission and identity integration of academic lay leaders.
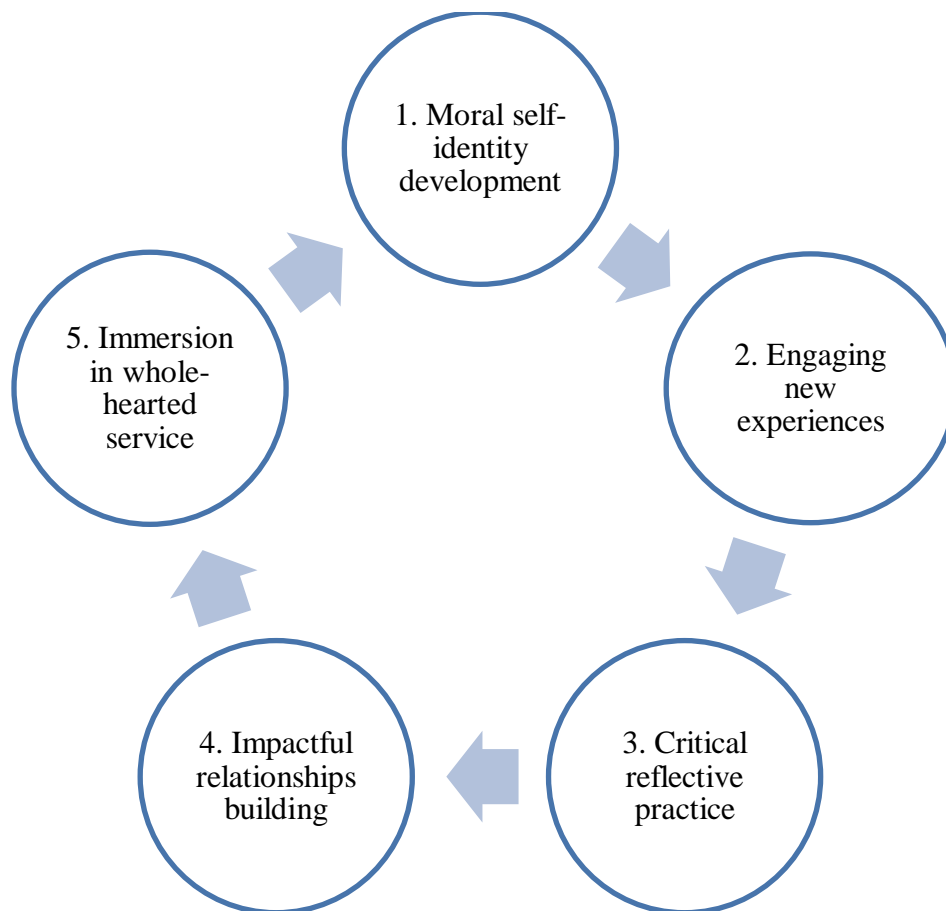
Figure 2. Key behavioral competencies model of mission and identity integration.

The behavioral model, however, is not entirely a new finding; it emerged from the six-stage progressive model of mission and identity integration. The first key behavior in the behavioral model, moral self-identity development, for example, relates directly to the first stage in the six-stage model, forming values and beliefs. Similarly, critical reflective practice is a key behavior observed at every stage of the mission and integration experience in the progressive stage model. Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between the six-stage progressive model and the key behavioral competencies model of the mission and identity integration.

In the next chapter, I present an integrated theoretical framework of relevant theories that can shed light on the findings of the study. Then in chapter 6, I present and analyze the key behavioral competencies model mentioned above, in relation to the theoretical framework and
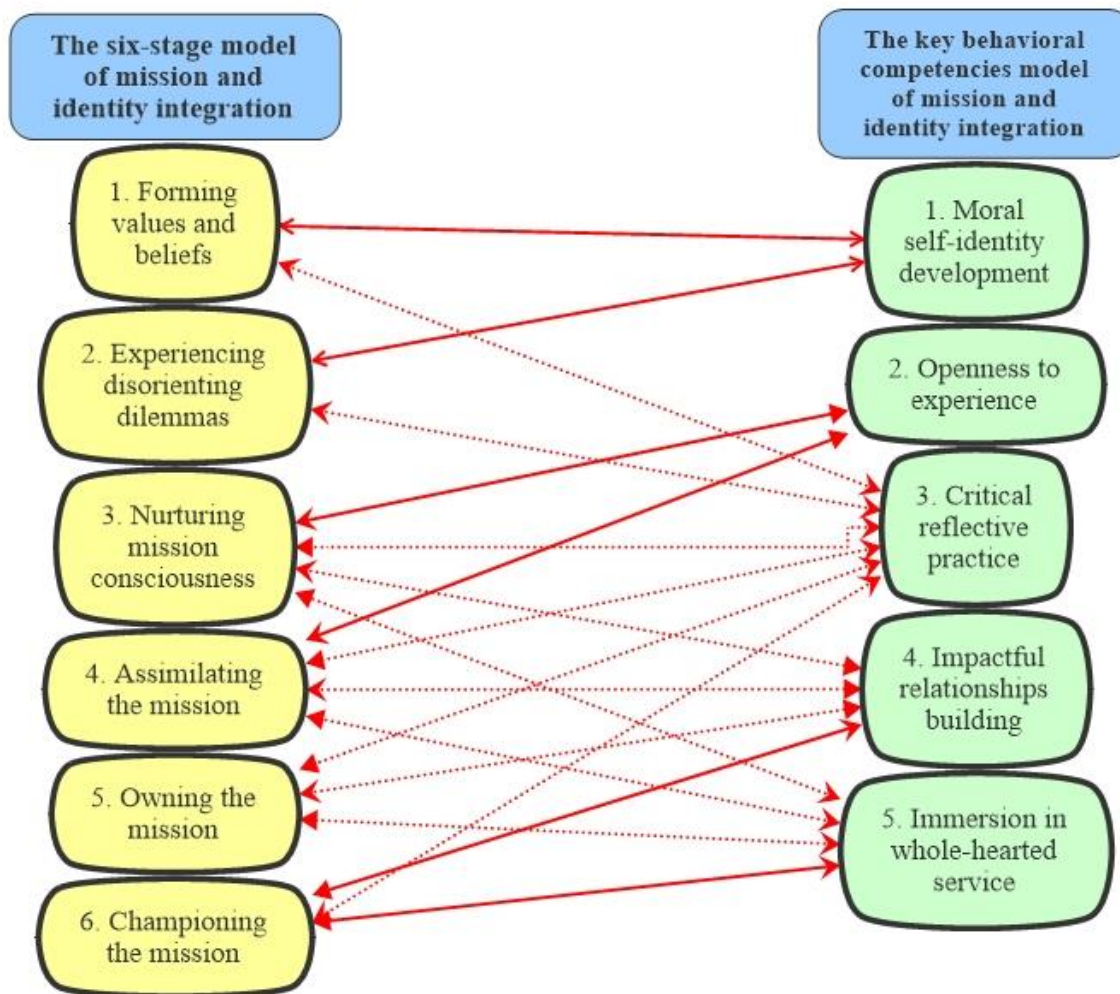
Figure 3. A visual presentation of the relationship between the stage model and the key behavioral competencies model of mission and identity integration. Solid lines indicate direct and robust relationships while dotted lines indicate less direct, yet significant relationship.

the extant literature. I will also discuss the implications of the academic lay leaders' behavioral competencies in sustaining, strengthening, and transmitting the mission and identity of Catholic colleges and universities.

Chapter 5: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I present a theoretical framework of relevant theories that I will utilize to discuss the findings of the study in chapter 6. I began the study with no preconception of an explicit theoretical or conceptual framework. Approaching this exploration without a preconceived framework gave me the freedom to develop this theoretical framework from the findings of the study and from the most relevant theories in the extant literature that could illumine the findings. Going forward to chapter 6, this theoretical framework, drawing upon the existing knowledge, will serve as an epistemological device and a dynamic tool to help me interpret the findings at a higher level.

A theoretical framework is a system of concepts and theories that explain the social or psychological process which could be applied in understanding the phenomena (Anfara & Mertz, 2015; Maxwell, 2013). Utilizing the existing theories as a lens to view and interpret data is an accepted approach in qualitative studies (Collins & Stockton, 2018; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Maxwell, 2013). Saldaña (2015) articulates that constructing new theories need not be the primary purpose in qualitative research; instead, qualitative researchers should use the frameworks of existing theories to guide their studies. According to Collins and Stockton (2018), interpreting the findings in reference to the current knowledge makes sense-making process explicit and guides the researcher in producing new meaning.

The theoretical framework I applied in analyzing the findings was an integrated framework of five theories: (a) virtue ethics (Aristotle; MacIntyre, 1981); (b) organizational assimilation (Jablin, 1982; 2001); (c) reflective practice (Dewey, 1933; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983); (d) person-organization fit (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996; Pervin, 1968); and servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2003). Through a synthesis of these different theories, in chapter 6, I will present a

map of relationships found in the phenomenon of the mission and identity integration experiences of the academic lay leaders in the Catholic universities. The theoretical conceptualizations of the five theories are discussed in this chapter. Figure 4 presents a visual image of the interrelationships among the theories in the theoretical framework.

Figure 4. Diagram depicting the interrelationships of theories that form the theoretical framework.

From among the many applicable theories found in the literature, I chose to include the five in the theoretical framework as I consider them the most relevant to the findings discussed in chapter 4. Table 10 presents the five theories and illustrates the rationale for their inclusion in the theoretical framework, connecting them to the key findings in chapter 4.

Virtue Ethics

The primary concern of virtue ethics is what it means to be a good person. The origin of virtue ethics is traced back to ancient philosophers, Aristotle and Plato (Rowan & Zinaich, 2003). Aristotle defined virtue as an acquired disposition that promotes excellence in actions

Table 10

Rationale for Inclusion of Key Theories in Emergent Theoretical Framework

Key Theories	Rationale for Inclusion
Virtue ethics	• The theory explains the formation of values and beliefs through socialization and the development of participants' moral self-identity. • Explains the internalization of virtues as a lifelong process. • Underscores the role of relationships in human flourishing.
Organizational assimilation	• The process of organizational acculturation found in the participants aligns with the theory. • Explains the mutually influential and transformative relationship between the participants and the university.
Reflective practice	• The participants identified critical reflective practice as an effective tool for self-development and problem-solving. • The study found a strong connection between reflective practice and effective leadership praxis. • The theory explains the process of reflective practice to identify one's own theories of action and control over behaviors.
Person-organization fit	• The theory explains the participant-university value congruence as an evolving process. • Explains the interconnection between the participants' quest for meaning and their engagement with the university's mission.
Servant leadership	• The traits of developing followers, building community, humility, authenticity, and stewardship found in the participants are servant leadership key behaviors. • The theory explains the participants' quest for inner life transformation and desire to live a purpose beyond themselves within the framework of the values of service and altruism.

(Aristotle). As one of the three major normative ethical theories, virtue ethics is often contrasted

to deontology, which focuses on following rules; and consequentialism, which emphasizes that

the consequences of the action determine the morality of an action. Aristotle finds rationality as the distinguishing feature of a human person, unlike material objects and animals. Because of this innate rational ability, human beings can pursue the highest form of life, which Aristotle calls *eudaimonia*, translated as the highest good or flourishing (Aristotle). According to Aristotle, "happiness is an activity of the rational part of the soul in accordance with virtue" (quoted in Rowan & Zinaich, p. 42). So, a good person performs his functions by exercising his rationality according to virtues, and it will lead the person to a good life of *eudaimonia*.

According to the theory, virtues are dispositions or ways of acting a person has developed as part of one's habit. A virtuous person faced with an ethical dilemma does not need to engage in philosophical procedures like measuring consequences as utilitarian theory suggests. If the person is a virtuous one, then in most cases, because of the acquired good moral character, the person does the right thing. Virtue ethics also places great emphasis on the development of one's moral identity (Jeong & Han, 2013; Martin, 2011). Knowing the right thing to do is not just a matter of internalizing virtues, but a lifelong process of continual moral learning that will provide greater clarity as one reaches moral maturity. The internalization of virtues, according to virtue ethicists, comes through reasoning, parenting, education, training, will, and self-discipline.

Relevant to my study is the recent surge and contextualized interpretation of virtue ethics by contemporary philosopher, MacIntyre (1981). According to MacIntyre (1981), the practice of virtues helps us increase our self-knowledge and the knowledge of good. In his seminal work, *After Virtue*, MacIntyre (1981) defined virtue as "an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods" (p. 191). His definition of virtue is based on a fundamental distinction he makes between gaining goods internal and

external to the practice. Goods internal to practice can only be acquired by pursuing excellence in the given practice. To illustrate the distinction between gaining goods internal and external to practice, he cites the example of a chess-playing child. When an intelligent child learns to play chess only to win a candy, the child may not mind cheating to win more candies. However, if the child desires and pursues goods internal to playing chess—such as developing the skills and abilities—it would know that cheating is irrational and that only through an honest pursuit of excellence the internal goods can be gained. Goods external to practice can be wealth, power, and prestige, which can be earned or purchased either honestly or through deception. MacIntyre (1981) says that there is a constant conflict between the goods internal and external to practice.

MacIntyre's unique contribution to virtue theory is his articulation of practice as relational and communitarian. He argued that an individual acquires virtues from community environments such as families, schools, and churches—environments noted for the practice of gratuitousness and solidarity. He affirmed that virtues are embedded in the social, context-specific, and historically influenced communitarian practice (MacIntyre, 1981; 1999). Excellence or virtue pushes individuals to be accountable to society as a whole (Martin, 2011). MacIntyre (1981) asserts that today's generation is responsible as members of a community and should repay the people of the present and future for the debts incurred by the unjust actions of people of the past. He cites the examples of racial oppression of the African Americans, genocide of Jews in Europe, and subjugation of Ireland and urges the citizens of the U.S., Germany, and Ireland to repay in different ways. Vogt (2016) relates the cultivation of virtues in individuals to the transformation of societies. The cultivation of personal practices and building interpersonal relationships lead to solidarity and social change.

Organizational Assimilation

Early research in organizational assimilation (e.g., Jablin, 1982; Schein, 1968; Van Maanen, 1978; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) emerged in the latter half of the 20th century. Various assimilation related matters including leadership support in socialization outcomes (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009), the roles of the incumbents in assimilation (Slaughter & Zickar, 2006), the influence of members on organizational changes to fit their needs (Scott & Myers, 2010) continue to be studied in recent times. I focus on the developmental assimilation model of Jablin (1982; 2001) as I discover in it an alignment with the findings of the current study. Jablin (1982), one of the pioneering scholars in the assimilation studies, explained organizational assimilation as a dynamic communication process between the newcomers and the incumbents; the organization's attempt to orient the newcomers and develop them through training and the newcomers' effort to negotiate and fit into their organizational roles.

Jablin (2001) defined organizational assimilation as "the process by which individuals become integrated into the culture of an organization" (p. 755). The assimilation is composed of two dynamic, interrelated, and reciprocal processes: (a) intentional and unplanned interventions by the organization to "socialize" the employees and (b) the efforts by the employees to "individualize" or alter their roles and work environments to fit their values, attitudes, and needs. Successful assimilation involves proactive functions from both the organization and the newcomers (Myers & Oetzel, 2003). Jablin (1982; 2001) found a three-stage model of progressive assimilation that begins with *anticipatory socialization*, referring to all assimilation efforts prior to the entry into the organization. In this stage, the prospective employees gather and process information on the organization from the media, from educational institutions, family, peers, and friends and exchange information with interviewers, other members in the

organization (Jablin, 2001). It is a stage of forming expectations about their roles in the organization. The second is the *encounter stage*, which begins as one enters the organization, and is a time of information exchange between the organization and the newcomer. The encounter stage is a time of developing relationships with peers and leaders and forming communication networks through interactions. Formal and informal mentoring, training, and orienting (Waldeck & Myers, 2007) play essential roles in this stage. The third is the *metamorphosis stage*—the long process of settling through which the employee gets well integrated into the organization. It is the stage of discovering more consistency between the employee's attitudes, beliefs, and values and that of the organization (Jablin, 1982).

Scholars have criticized Jablin's assimilation model because the theory could inaccurately present assimilation as a linear process (Clair, 1996; Smith & Turner, 1995). Moreover, the theory does not explain how the transition from one stage to another happens (Waldeck & Myers, 2007). However, even the critics (e.g., Clair, 1996; Kramer & Miller, 1999) acknowledge that the model contributes to our understating of the socialization experiences of individuals, thus providing answers to questions of practice rather than theories. In advancing a theory of organizational assimilation, this progressive model may lack explanatory power; however, it serves well as a pedagogical tool to share and understand the emotions, interactions, and experiences of the employees in the process of assimilation (Waldeck & Myers, 2007).

Reflective Practice

Reflective practice is a process in which an individual reflects critically on a thought, experience, or action for increased self-awareness, continuous learning, and professional improvement (Epstein & Hundert, 2002). John Dewey (1933), the father of 20th century progressive movement in education, for the first time, described relationships among experience,

reflection, and learning. Reflection, according to Dewey (1933), is an intentional action of examining prior beliefs and assumptions and their implications. He defined reflective thought as "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (Dewey, 1933, p. 118). Later, inspired by Dewey's philosophy of learning and Lewin's experiential learning model, Kolb (1984) proposed the experiential learning theory, about how adults learn. Kolb suggested that, "All learning is relearning." (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, p. 194). He (Kolb, 1984) explained learning as a cyclic process that generates more learning. He proposed a four-stage cyclic process of learning: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Around the same time, Schön (1983) detailed the benefit of reflective practice for professional practitioners to build their knowledge and expertise and improve their professional practice. All of them—Dewey (1933), Kolb (1984), and Schön (1983)—included reflection as an integral component in their theories of learning from experience.

Schön (1983) challenged the utility of the traditional technical rationality approach of pre-fixed theories in teaching professional practitioners. He argued that the epistemology of technical rationality operates from the assumption that problems faced in professional practice are clearly defined; they are prescriptive, predictable, and solvable through a pre-defined procedure. As against this ill-suited, pre-determined approach, Schön noted that the problems faced by practitioners in the "swampy lowlands" (Schön, 1983, p. 42) of concrete experience are usually "puzzling, troubling and uncertain" (Schön, 1983, p. 40). He argued that an approach to solving these problems could not be linear, pre-determined, or techno-rational because the contexts and parameters of the problems are not linear. Rather than beginning with the

application of theoretical frameworks in problem-solving, Schön (1983) suggested observing what the practitioners are doing as the first step and subsequently developing theories based on those observations. Practitioners become active agents of evolving an epistemology of practice based on their often intuitive, unarticulated, or subconscious knowledge (Raelin, 2007). Schön (1983), thus defines reflective practice as a critical process in refining one's artistry and craft in a specific discipline. Reflective practice, according to Schön (1983), is essentially an individual's process of identifying one's own theories of action so that they would exert greater control over them and consequently improve their practice.

Process of reflective practice. Schön (1983) highlighted two ways of reflecting: *reflection-in-action* and *reflection-on-action*. Reflection-in-action is an internal thought process happening while a given task is underway. When a new task is underway, the experiences of similar tasks performed in the past and the theoretical framework that informed those tasks intervene in the process. Reflection-on-action refers to the thought process of evaluating a completed task, often carried out through reflective journals, debriefing sessions with colleagues, and the use of questionnaires. Thompson and Thompson (2008) added a third way, *reflection-for-action*, which refers to conscious forethought and planning carried out prior to an action.

Later, scholars such as Van Manen (1977) and Valli (1997) developed frameworks for understanding different levels of reflectivity. Van Manen (1997) proposed a three-level reflectivity—(a) technical rationality, (b) practical action, and (c) critical reflection—which Valli (1997) expanded into the following five levels of reflection:

1. *Technical reflection* in which the practitioners evaluate themselves, matching their performance to the pre-established guidelines in their profession.

2. *Reflection-on-action*, which is a retrospective examination of the action in the past.

3. *Deliberative reflection,* which examines the practitioners' decision making, taking into account the multiple and often competing voices—experience, research, advice of others, personal beliefs, and values.

4. *Personalistic reflection,* which is reflecting on the practitioners' mission, lifegoals, and meaning. Reflections at this stage go beyond one's life towards those impacted by their practice. For example, an educator will be interested in the holistic development of the students, beyond the academics, matters concerning their desires and hope for their future.

5. *Critical reflection*, the most challenging form of reflective practice which focuses on the social, moral, and political consequences of practitioners' belief system and how it affects their practice. Critical reflection will lead practitioners to fundamental self-criticism and social action.

Empirical studies on reflective practice. Researchers have investigated the benefits of reflection for practitioners, especially for educational administrators (Dana, 2009; Day, 1993; El Ashi Shabeeb & Akkary, 2014; Hart, 1993; Marcela, Gutierrez, & Aldana, 2015; Raelin & Coghlan, 2006; Sellers, 2012; Short & Rinehart, 1993; Thorsen & DeVore, 2013; York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, & Monthie, 2006). These researchers found that engaging in reflective process has shaped and reshaped the theories of practitioners and enhanced their effectiveness. The practitioners report experiencing changes within themselves in terms of personal values and frames through reflective practice. Osterman and Kottkamp (2004); and York-Barr et al. (2006) also conceptualized reflective practice as problem-solving strategies in addition to fostering professional development. Sellers (2012) states that reflective practice aids in the development of further self-knowledge and understanding through a process of examining and re-examining

assumptions to improve practice. According to Sellers (2012), an essential aspect of reflection involves decisions about change, adaptation, and modification of professional practice with an intentional focus on professional improvement.

Person-Organization Fit Theory

The concept of person-organization (P-O) fit is grounded in interactional psychology, which views human behavior as the result of interaction between an individual and environment (Grobler, 2016; Leonardo Blanco & Silvia Marcia Russi, 2015). To understand P-O fit, first its parent concept, person-environment (P-E) fit needs to be discussed because P-O fit is a subset of the broader person-environment (P-E) fit literature which also includes other fit categories such as person-vocation (P-V) fit, person-group (P-G) fit, and person-job (P-J) fit (Kristof, 1996). The underlying assumption of P-E fit is that people look for and create environments that would allow them to behaviorally manifest their traits (Westerman & Cyr, 2004). The origin of the P-E fit concept is traced to Parsons (1909), who initiated the vocational guidance/career counseling movement and was instrumental in generating the trait-and-factor theory. He theorized that when there is a good fit between the person and the occupation, there is better satisfaction and success (Parsons, 1909). This trait-and-factor approach focused on supporting an individual's needs, and skill enhancement dominated until the 1950s when more developmental approaches emerged (Super, 1957; Su, Murdock, & Rounds, 2015). In 1968, Pervin improved upon the static conceptualizations of the trait-and-factor approach and introduced a more dynamic approach, associating performance and satisfaction to the reciprocal process of individual-environment fit (Pervin, 1968). Rounds and Tracey (1990) defined P-E fit as a reciprocal process where individuals shape their environments and environments shape individuals. Empirical studies have

proved that P-E fit has positive outcomes, for example, in the areas of work satisfaction, productivity, overall well-being, and turnover (Ostroff & Schulte, 2007; Su et al., 2015).

Chatman (1989) was the first to consider the value alignment of person-organization (P-O) as an essential aspect of determining P-E fit. She defined P-O fit as the congruence between one's values, and the norms and values of the organization one is part of (Chatman, 1989; 1991). According to Chatman (1991), P-O fit can be achieved either through hiring people whose values align with the organization or through the socialization process of influencing employees' values to align with the organizational values. In 1996, Kristof compiled the existing literature on P-O fit and defined P-O fit as ''the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both'' (pp. 4–5). Later Mitchel, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, and Erez (2001) defined P-O fit as "an employee's perceived compatibility or comfort with an organization and with his or her environment" (p. 1104).

Different conceptualizations of P-O fit. Person-organization (P-O) fit focuses on the compatibility between the individual and the organization, and the compatibility is conceptualized in a variety of ways. Traditionally there are two broad conceptualizations: supplementary fit and complementary fit. Supplementary fit occurs when an individual "supplements, embellishes, or possesses characteristics which are similar to other individuals" (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987, p. 269) in an environment. Supplementary fit happens when the person and organization have the same values. Complementary fit "occurs when a person's characteristics 'make whole' the environment or add to it what is missing" (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987, p. 271). Complementary fit happens when one entity provides characteristics that the other one needs (Grobler, 2016).

Another conceptualization of P-O fit is congruence in terms of needs-supplies and demands-abilities (Edwards, 1991). Needs-supplies fit occurs when the organization supplies an individual's needs—biological needs, psychological desires, motives, and goals (Cable & Judge, 1996; Edwards & Shipp, 2012; Kristof, 1996). On the contrary, demands-abilities fit occurs when the individual possesses what the organization demands—knowledge, skills, attitudes, and other characteristics (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Edwards & Shipp, 2012). Edwards (1991) brought these two perspectives together and suggested that needs and abilities relate to the "person" angle and supplies and demands the "job" angle of overall P-O fit research. He described "needs" as an employee's desires, motives, values, interests, and preferences, and "abilities" in terms of aptitudes, experience, knowledge, and skills. Regardless of a variety of conceptualizations of P-O fit, the broader idea is the compatibility between individuals and organizations.

Outcomes of P-O fit. Although it is not the intent of this review of the literature to present a detailed report of outcomes of P-O fit theory, I feel it is fitting to look at some empirical studies in order to establish P-O fit's relevance to the context. Leonardo Blanco and Silvia Marcia Russi (2015) reported an increasing interest in P-O fit in recent years, observing the growing number of empirical studies published from the 1990s (e.g., Autry & Wheeler, 2005; Kristof-Brown & Jansen, 2007; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). Researchers report that P–O fit is positively related to employee work attitudes and behaviors, including job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003), job performance and organizational citizenship behavior toward organizations (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Kim, Aryee, Loi, & Kim, 2013), employees' extra effort to work and satisfaction with the supervisor (Min-Ping, Cheng, & Li-Fong, 2005), organizational citizenship behavior and innovative work behavior (Suwanti, Udin, & Widodo, 2018), perceived

organizational support and occupational commitment (Kristof-Brown, 2000), job performance, career satisfaction, turnover intention, and contextual performance (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

Of particular interest to this study is an emerging body of research that considers P-O fit not as any static reality but as something that evolves and develops over time (Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006; Shipp & Jansen, 2011; Yu, 2013). For example, Cable and Parsons (2001) examined the degree to which different socialization tactics over time predict changes among newcomers as regards congruence between individuals' values and organizational values. The P-O fit theory outcomes are relevant to the current study as the academic lay leaders' integration of the mission and identity of the Catholic university is a process that developed over a period. Discussions connecting the theory and findings of the study will be presented in chapter 6.

Servant Leadership Theory

Robert Greenleaf conceptualized servant leadership from the intuitive insight he received after reading the novel, *Journey to the East* (Hesse & Rosner, 1956). The novel is an allegorical tale of a band of men and their servant Leo who are on a mythical journey to an unspecified destination. Along the journey, Leo does menial chores for the travelers and engages them through his spirit and singing. In the middle of the journey, Leo disappears. In his absence, there is so much dissension in the group and the men disintegrate. Years later, the narrator discovers that Leo, who joined the journey as a servant, is, in fact, the leader of the Order that sponsored the journey (Greenleaf, 1977). Leo portrayed at once the seemingly antithetical roles of both servant and leader. Combining servant and leader, Greenleaf challenges the long-standing practices of hierarchical power relationships between leader and followers in organizations. A servant leader's priority is the well-being and growth of followers (Liden, Wayne, Liao, &

Meuser, 2014; Parris & Peachey, 2013). It is a holistic leadership approach that empowers the followers to grow into their highest potential. Unlike the many top-down hierarchical approaches to leader-follower relationships, servant leaders perceive themselves as stewards of the organization and its people (Linuesa-Langreo, Ruiz-Palomino, & Elche-Hortelano, 2018; van Dierendonck, 2011). The assumption is that when leaders engage the needs and desires of followers, they will reciprocate through increased commitment, teamwork, and better performance (McClellan, 2010).

In his conceptualization of servant leadership, Greenleaf (1977) provided no fitting definition for empirical research. His open-ended definition was, "the servant leader is servant first" (p. 27). And the best test of servant leadership according to Greenleaf (1977) was answer to the question, "Do those served grow as persons: do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?" (p. 27). Greenleaf (1977) himself admitted to servant leadership's unorthodox approach when he wrote, "it [servant leadership] is meant to be neither a scholarly treatise nor a how-to-do-it manual" (p. 49). Given the lack of a clear definition, there have been multiple conceptual papers on servant leadership where authors defined the concept to fit their arguments (Parris & Peachey, 2012). The most recent of the many definitions came from Eva, Robin, Sendjaya, van Dierendonck, and Liden (2019). Based on the outcomes, they defined servant leadership as "an 1) other-oriented approach to leadership, 2) manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, and 3) outward reorienting of their concern for self towards concern for others within the organization and the larger community" (p. 114). The definition features three key aspects of the servant leadership model: (a) the underlying orientation towards others, to serve and to be altruistic, (b) paying attention to every follower's needs, interests, and to treat

each follower as a unique individual, and (c) an overarching concern for the stakeholders in the organization and for the wider community (Eva et al., 2019).

Eva et al. (2019) who reviewed 205 empirical papers, 68 conceptual papers, and 12 literature reviews on servant leadership that were published between 1998 and 2018, divide the servant leadership research into three different phases: first, the conceptual development phase of the theory based on the works of Greenleaf (1977) and Spears (1996); second, a measurement phase of developing instruments and testing outcomes in cross-sectional research; and third, the current phase of establishing servant leadership research with more complex and sophisticated research designs. Servant leadership research has come a long way from being a conceptual idea in the 1970s to a tenable theory of leadership today.

Attributes of a servant leader. Over the years, researchers have proposed many lists of attributes and characteristics of a servant leader. For the purpose of this study, I will list a couple of them. Spears (2003) analyzed the works of Greenleaf and summarized the characteristics of servant leadership into 10 attributes. They are: *listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.* This list, Spears (2003) mentions, is not an exhaustive one but it communicates the power and promise that this leadership model has, to those who are open to the invitation and challenge to serve and lead. Strong leader ethics, principles, and values form the core of the theory, and they are key to the realization of the organizational objectives.

Sun (2013) and van Dierendonck (2011) identify the following five attributes that constitute the identity of a servant leader: *agape love, humility, empathy, calling to serve, and sense of community.* Agape love is selfless and unconditional love mentioned in Christian tradition referring to God's unconditional love for humans (Ayers, 2008). In servant leadership,

agape love is the pure motive from one's heart to serve. Humility refers to recognizing one's limitations, willingness to learn from followers and placing the interests of others ahead of one's own interests (van Dierendonck, 2011). Empathetic leaders listen to others, are warm-hearted, compassionate, and generate a trusting atmosphere (van Dierendonck, 2011). These leaders find serving others as the purpose of their lives, even when it involves sacrifice. They find serving others deeply meaningful to them (Sun, 2013). Servant leaders have a high sense of community and a strong drive to build community. They participate in community, establish strong relationships, and create solidarity among people (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2010; van Dierendonck, 2011).

Van Dierendonck (2011) distinguished the major differences servant leadership has with the existing value-based leadership theories. When compared to transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1990), the main distinction is, servant leadership's purposeful focus on the multidimensional growth of the followers as an end in itself whereas in transformational leadership the needs of the followers stand as secondary to the organizational goals (van Dierendonck, Stam, Boersma, De Windt, & Alkema, 2014). Both authentic and servant leadership theories give importance to leaders being authentic and true (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). The difference is, a servant leader's authenticity is driven by a purpose such as a sense of higher calling, a spiritual motive, an inner conviction to serve, and the drive to make a positive difference. This purposefulness in being authentic is missing in authentic leadership framework (van Dierendonck et al., 2014). When related to the prescriptive and largely rule-based ethical leadership, servant leadership's explicit focus on stewardship—intending the long-term well-being of all stakeholders—stands out as a big difference (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Eva et al. (2019) say that more studies are needed to conclude that servant leadership is empirically distinct

from transformational, authentic, and ethical leadership theories. However, in its overarching

motive and objective, servant leadership is distinct from other value-based leadership theories

(Eva et al., 2019).

      Outcomes of servant leadership. This section presents a summary of outcomes of

empirical studies relevant to the current study conducted in servant leadership in recent years.

Majority of these studies relate to how leaders influence follower outcomes in organizations.

Regarding follower behavior outcomes, a positive relationship is found between servant

leadership and organizational citizenship behavior including commitment to community service

(Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008), helping behavior (Neubert, Hunter, & Tolentino,

2016), and proactive behavior (Bande, Fernández-Ferrín, Varela-Neira, & Otero-Neira, 2016).

These are outcomes very consistent with Greenleaf's (1977) conceptualization of demonstrating

altruism by servant leaders (Parris & Peachey, 2013). There are significant findings as regards

servant leader and organization outcomes. Servant leadership is positively related to employee

engagement (van Dierendonck et al., 2014), job satisfaction (Mayer, Bardes, & Piccolo, 2008),

thriving at work (Walumbwa, Muchiri, Misati, Wu, & Meiliani, 2018), and psychological well-

being (Gotsis & Grimani, 2016). When servant leaders are present, followers are more likely to

view the organization positively (Eva et al., 2019); employees identify with the organization

better (Zhao, Liu, & Gao, 2016); there is increased level of perceived person-organization fit

(Irving & Berndt, 2017), and person-job fit (Babakus, Yavas, & Ashill, 2020). Servant leadership

is positively related to organizational commitment (Miao, Newman, Schwarz, & Xu, 2014).

Regarding leader-related outcomes servant leadership is positively related to perceived leader

effectiveness (Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, & Jinks, 2007), perceived leader integrity (Bobbio,

Dierendonck, & Manganelli, 2012) and perceived higher quality of relationships between the

leader and followers (Hanse, Harlin, Jarebrant, Ulin, & Winkel, 2016). And at the organizational level, servant leadership is positively related to strong performance through service environment (Huang, Li, Qiu, Yim, & Wan, 2016).

Summary

Although seemingly disconnected, the five theories discussed in this chapter, come together as an interpretative device to make meaning of the study's findings. Virtue ethics theory (Aristotle; MacIntyre, 1981) relates to the individual disposition and development of moral self-identity in the participants. It also explains the internalization of virtues and forming of character as a lifelong process. The theory of organizational assimilation (Jablin, 1982; 2001) describes the process of university mission integration and explains the mutually influential and transformative relationship between the participants and the university they are part of. Reflective practice (Dewey, 1933; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983) provides a theoretical framework to discuss the key finding of the strong connection between critical reflective practice and effective leadership praxis that emerged from the study. Similarly, person-organization fit (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996; Pervin, 1968) provides a theoretical base to discuss the key finding of the participant-university value congruence as an evolving process. It also explains the interconnection between the participants' quest for meaning and their engagement with the mission of the university. Among the many leadership theories in the literature, the servant leadership model (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2003) is the most relevant and the closest to the leadership behaviors such as developing followers, building community, humility, authenticity, and stewardship identified in the participants. In the next chapter, I will utilize this theoretical framework as a dynamic device to interpret the findings.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological study was to explore the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders of the three Catholic universities in San Antonio. As presented in chapter 4, my data analysis revealed a six-stage model of progressive mission and identity integration experience common to all the participants. The six stages are: (a) forming values and beliefs, (b) experiencing disorienting dilemmas, (c) nurturing mission consciousness, (d) assimilating the mission, (e) owning the mission, and (f) championing the mission. Further analysis with a special focus on the participants' behaviors involved in the mission and identity integration experiences of the Catholic university yielded five key behavioral competencies. Those competencies are: (a) moral self-identity development, (b) engaging new experiences, (c) critical reflective practice, (d) impactful relationships building, and (e) immersion in whole-hearted service. In this chapter, I discuss how each of these behavioral competencies relates to the theoretical framework and the extant literature. I also discuss implications for leadership theory and practice, suggestions for future research, and the limitations and delimitations of the study.

The Dynamic Relationship among the Key Behavioral Competencies

The key behavioral competencies model emerged from my analysis of the data focusing on the behaviors of the participants relating to the mission and identity integration of the Catholic university. I examined the data from the perspective of the participants' behavioral responses to various situations of leadership praxis as academic lay leaders in Catholic universities. The emergence of these behaviors is influenced by the participants' social environments, past and current experiences, values, attitudes, and beliefs. Figure 5 illustrates

how the five key behavioral competencies of the participants dynamically interconnect with each other.
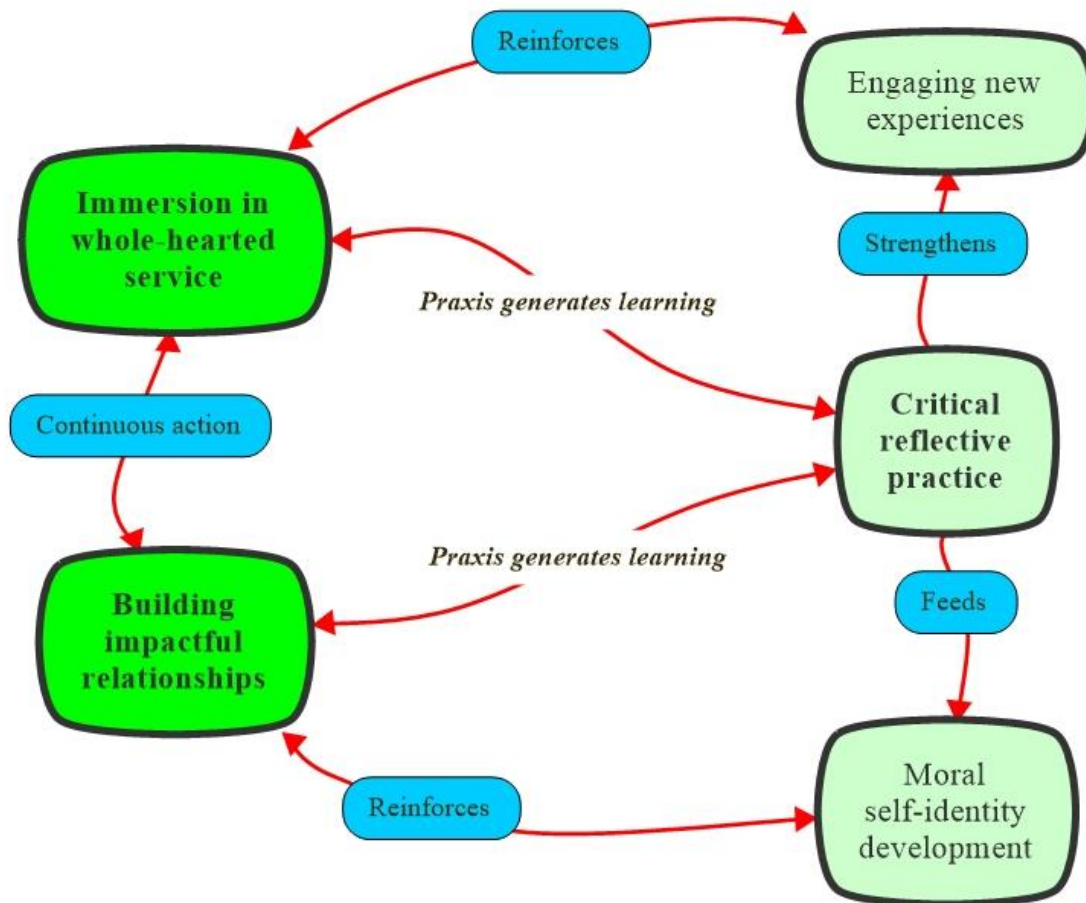
Figure 5. A model illustrating how the key behavioral competencies dynamically interconnect.

Central to the key behavioral competencies model is the idea of praxis conceptualized by Freire (2000). Freire (2000) saw praxis differently from its usual meaning of applying theories, ideas, and concepts in practical contexts, and defined it as "reflection and action directed at the structures to be transformed" (p. 127). The two key interactive elements involved in Freire's conceptualization of praxis are continuous action and reflection. He describes praxis as a way of transforming social reality through a constant process of action, critical reflection, and further

action (Freire, 2000). Freire was inspired by the earlier theories of experiential learning (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984), which defined learning as a process of knowledge construction through the transformation of experience.

In figure 5, the three behavioral competencies on the right side—moral self-identity development, engaging new experiences, and critical reflective practice—together constitute the formative behaviors of the participants in the process of the mission integration. Through these behaviors, the academic lay leaders develop skills, knowledge, and tools required for effective mission integration. The participants' behavioral use of critical reflective practice nourishes the development of moral self-identity, a lifelong and continuous process. Critical reflection also brings about increased awareness of the self, the other, and the deeper purpose and meaning of life. Reflective practice also deepens their ability to engage in and integrate new experiences as they respond to the mission, vision, values, and traditions of the Catholic university in creative ways. Reflection, therefore, is the critical intervening element in their moral identity development and transformation at the personal and organizational level. On the left side of the figure, the two key behavioral competencies—impactful relationship building and immersion in whole-hearted service—are continuous action behaviors. While the first three behavioral competencies pertain to the formation and development of mission orientation in the participants, the last two are focused on constant action. This study finds the academic lay leaders to be experiential learners who learn through a lifelong cyclic process of action, reflection, and more action (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). This process of lifelong learning continues to reinforce and strengthen their leadership praxis. In the following sections, I discuss the key behavioral competencies and relate each of them to the theoretical framework and relevant literature.

Moral Self-identity Development

The IPA analysis revealed the development of the participants' self-concepts through a longitudinal and multi-level learning process grounded in their social environment. Their value system, worldviews, skills, and attitudes that had developed through social interactions were integral to their moral self-identity development and to the mission integration. The behavioral competency of moral self-identity development emerged across multiple superordinate themes, but predominantly in the stages of forming values and beliefs and experiencing disorienting dilemmas. This behavioral competency will be discussed under the following subsections: (a) forming of self through socialization, (b) developing criticality, (c) developing relational awareness, and (d) pursuing a compelling sense of purpose.

Forming of self through socialization. The current study found in the participants the positive influence of family, faith, education, and prior experiences in the integration of the mission and identity of the Catholic university. In their self-identity development, they drew inspiration from the example of their parents, community leaders, teachers, and role models. Through the socialization process, they integrated the spirit of service, sacrifice, gratitude, respect for people, compassion, team spirit, and a sense of giving back to the community. Even though the faith traditions of the participants are diverse, the value enculturation experience has been identical. These experiences, prior to entering the Catholic university, generated in them an initial resonance with the values of the university, which they will later come to be part of. These values included a sense of community, diversity and inclusion, service, and social justice. This finding aligns with the studies of Luciano (2013) and Meeker (2008). They report that a combination of different elements—family, education, religion, backgrounds, academic preparations, prior professional experiences, ongoing professional development experiences,

travels, relationships, the influence of role models, mentors, and life experiences—prepared the laity for leadership roles in CHE.

The finding of socialization as a means of developing moral self-identity is consistent with the virtue ethics theory of Aristotle. The academic lay leaders in this explorative study report their purposive disposition toward virtues that were influenced and nurtured by their experiences from their environment. Virtue ethics focuses on a person's dispositions and development (Weaver, 2006). According to the virtue theory, every act performed by an individual contributes either to the further development or undermining of the individual's virtue (MacIntyre, 1981). In the current study, the internalization of virtues has been a lifelong process of learning that gains greater clarity as the participants grow towards moral maturity. The leaders are open to integrating the institutional values in themselves and, in turn, uphold and foster the institutional values of integrity, cooperation, respect for human life, and compassion. The participants' enthusiasm for lifelong learning and constant renewal contributes to the development of an innovative institutional environment and influences their colleagues and students to be lifelong learners.

The study found that the self-identity of the participants is defined by their moral sensibilities and virtuous behaviors. The participants have demonstrated moral and ethical consistency in their behaviors. Through years of consistent moral and ethical actions, they have become role models of institutional mission and values worth emulating. Empirical studies find a relationship between virtue ethics theory and moral identity development in individuals (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Erikson, 1964; Weaver, 2006). Many priests and religious in Catholic universities have, over the years, inspired students, faculty, and staff through their virtuous lives, personal integrity, and passion for social justice. To sustain and strengthen the mission and the legacy of

Catholic universities, it is essential that the lay leaders fill the void that the shortage of qualified priests and religious creates, demonstrate moral and ethical integrity, and be exemplars of the mission and values of the institution (Francis, 2013). For the preservation and promotion of the mission of Catholic universities, it is therefore, vital to have a critical mass of lay faculty and administrators, both Catholic and non-Catholic who respect, support, and remain faithful to Catholic traditions (McBrien, 1994).

Developing criticality. A very noticeable aspect of forming moral self-identity is the participants' development of critical thinking. Many of them developed a critical examination of economic, social, and political inequities, race relations, and belief systems. In some, it was their parents who guided them to look at the social realities around them critically; in others, it was their education and mentors who instilled critical thinking skills. The development of criticality was not limited to social situations. They developed a critical approach to themselves, their behaviors, assumptions, and attitudes as well. Many of the participants became conscious of their privilege when they encountered the social and economic adversities of others. The participants' behavior of critical thinking prepared a fertile ground in them for the integration of the mission and identity of the Catholic universities. In the case of some of the leaders, a critical approach to their religious beliefs transformed their faith into a more holistic one, nurturing themselves, and contributing to the wellness of others and all God's creatures.

To the participants of this study, developing criticality contributed to an honest examination of their assumptions and biases that brought about clarity of purpose and personal vision. They became aware of their strengths and shadows. They became observant, inquisitive, reflective, and analytical in their approach to problem-solving. A critical approach also served solution-centric and strategic thinking for institutional mission effectiveness. The participants'

criticality behavior contributed to a contextualized discernment of the meaning and application of the institutional mission to the changing social milieu, enabling the university community to respond through meaningful action. Similarly, these educators also carried their critical thinking skills to the classroom to educate a generation that will critically analyze and synthesize the social realities around them (John Paul II, 1990). This finding aligns with Gallin's (2000) observation that lay leadership in CHE provides more critical approaches to learning from their diverse experiences, and that it is a source of growth and strength for CHE. This finding implies the need for a renewed commitment to imparting education in critical thinking, inquiry, reflection, and scientific research, in an environment of genuine autonomy and academic freedom (John Paul II, 1979; Land O'Lakes Statement, 1967; McCormick, 2000; Paul VI, 1965b). The expected outcome of this educational approach is the development of responsible citizens who are conscious of the Catholic intellectual tradition and Catholic social teaching and demonstrate responsibility for the society in which they live (John Paul II, 1990). Critical reflective practice, a key behavioral competency, and a significant finding of this study, will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Developing relational awareness. The data analysis revealed that the participants, influenced by their social context, developed a relational disposition. Many of them express concern for the welfare of the victims of poverty and social injustice and find fulfillment in community service and volunteering. They report experiencing real joy in life by becoming part of causes that are larger than themselves and something that brought greater good to the community. Tanuja, for example, says growing up her family used to ask her, "What are you doing that's more than just you?" and "What have you done to make a difference in somebody?"

MacIntyre's (1981; 1999) articulation that the practice of virtues is relational and communitarian

is relevant to this finding. About the relational aspect of a virtuous self, Punzo (1996) writes:

> The portrait . . . of the virtuous agent remains incomplete until the canvas is expanded to include the presence of the other individuals who make up the community in and through which moral lives are played out. The presence of this moral community renders the idea of an autonomous, disengaged self both unobtainable and undesirable. A fully-developed virtuous life presumes the necessity of a relational view of the self. (Punzo, 1996, 7)

The findings of the study confirm that the cognitive, affective, and behavioral qualities

that formed the virtuous self of the leaders were developed and maintained in the context of

relationships, not in isolation. The other-oriented virtues such as justice, altruism, respect,

inclusion, and care that the leaders demonstrate are primarily rooted in relationality. Dewey

(1908/1960) says that with each virtuous act, "The real moral question is what kind of a self is

being furthered and formed. And this question arises with respect to both one's own self and the

selves of others" (p. 159). The findings support the fact that the participants did develop their

self-identity of being relational and interconnected selves. In their leadership roles, they become

open and inclusive, appreciating diversities, of people, views, cultures, opinions, and

perspectives. This finding of relational awareness in the academic lay leaders is a useful behavior

that helps them to be mentors to students and junior faculty, and develop in them the mission

consciousness (Wheeler, 2012). The finding serves the institutional mission in building

teamwork, collaboration, mutual trust, and respect, and enhances a positive organizational

culture. This also calls for imparting an education for human well-being and ecological

flourishing, intended to develop in the students a consciousness of interconnectedness among all

living beings in the universe (John Paul II, 1979; 1990; McCormick, 2000; Provost, 2000).

Pursuing a compelling sense of purpose. The IPA analysis revealed that the leadership

praxis of all the participants is related to a compelling sense of purpose and meaning. Using

different words, they expressed how being part of the Catholic university answered their quest for meaning: "purpose" (E,L,M,S), "for a higher purpose" (C,S), "purpose at a deeper level" (A), "led by a purpose" (T), "a purpose for life" (T), "for a greater purpose" (T), "meaning" (S), "meaningful/ness" (E,T), "personal meaning" (M), and "meaningful service" (M), and "meaningful way" (L). Winston said that he had been doing a lot of things before, but now finds, at the Catholic university, a personal purpose at a deeper level. The study identified a strong connection between the quest for personal meaning and the participant's experiences in the Catholic university. At 76, Larry, for example, is tirelessly passionate about education and social justice. It is the success stories of the students that drive him.

This defining characteristic of a compelling sense of purpose is not specifically related to their role as leaders but, at a deeper level, concerns the meaning of their very existence. Many of them revealed that they have been in the pursuit of purpose, searching for meaning over their lifetime and, at the Catholic university, discover it. And being able to align with a bigger purpose helps them see the bigger canvas of life and makes them less egoistic. Viktor Frankl's (1959) theory of logotherapy, which argues that the primary motivation of human life is the search for meaning in life, aligns well with this finding. The two major assumptions of logotherapy are: (a) *self-transcendence,* a person's ability to transcend one's self-interests, and (b) *self-distancing,* the capacity to step away from oneself and evaluate oneself critically (Barnes, 2000; Frankl, 1959). These assumptions also relate to the self-identity development of the participants of this study. This compelling purpose, that the participants pursue, is a firm intention "to accomplish something that is at once personally meaningful and which also leads to productive engagement with some aspect of the world beyond the self" (Bronk & McLean, 2016, p. 31). Applied to the

context, the participants of the study, driven by a passion for education, pursue a cause that is both personally meaningful and contributes to the mission of the university.

The lay leaders' sense of purpose enhances their capacity to build leaders who will have a clarity of purpose. Research has found that individuals who live a life with purpose and meaning, and have good social relationships, reach a more profound sense of hope, satisfaction in life, psychological well-being, and flourishing (Peterson, Ruch, Beermann, Park, & Seligman, 2007; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Similarly, the organizational outcomes of employees with a deep sense of purpose are increased employee engagement levels, happier work environments, and reduced employee burnouts and attrition (Kesari & Sajeet, 2018; Kumar & Jauhari, 2016). The lay leaders see the mission not as outside of themselves, but within the framework of their own meaning and purpose. This finding explains why the participants are committed to mission initiatives, way beyond the call of duty. The compelling sense of purpose connects to their goal, values, and identity, which in turn deepens the integration of the mission in their lives.

In a world of conflicting influences and directions, educators with a sense of purpose will support the Church's higher educational mission of inculcating in the students a search for truth and meaning throughout their lives (Hollerich, 2000; John Paul II, 1990). CHE is expected to guide its students to ask significant questions concerning values, purpose, and meaning of life. In a world marked by rapid developments in science and technology that create massive economic and industrial growth, Catholic education envisions that the students search for meaning to ensure that the discoveries serve the purpose of human good (John Paul II, 1990). Catholic universities respond to this need when they incorporate the moral, spiritual, and religious dimensions into their various educational activities such as research, curriculum, and community

service, and find the full meaning and complete development of the human person (John Paul II,

1979).

Engaging New Experiences

The current study found that the academic lay leaders actively seek out and engage new

experiences such as mission orientation programs, training, retreats, mission trips, trips to

founding places, and encounters with the members of the founding order. Their seeking out and

engaging in such experiences inspire transformation in their attitudes, approaches, values, and

behaviors. The result of such engagement is acculturation into the mission and growing

identification with the values of the institution. The leaders adapt to the culture and values of the

university, bringing at the same time their unique experiences and perspectives, and contribute to

the collective mission. The behavior of engaging with new experiences emerged predominantly

from the superordinate themes of nurturing mission consciousness and assimilating the mission.

The IPA analysis identified two stages in this behavior: (a) organizational value assimilation, and

(b) self-university value resonance.

Organizational value assimilation. The analysis reveals that, at the beginning of the

participants' career with the Catholic university, a strong foundation for institutional

enculturation was made possible through formation, training, retreats, mission trips, visit to

founding places, and encounters with the members of the founding religious order. The

integration was further enhanced by the mission-centered conversations on the campus and their

experience of a mission-centric institutional culture. Through training and formation, some

received a more in-depth and clearer understanding of the Catholic intellectual tradition. Most

participants shared their appreciation for their institution's culture of diversity and inclusion. The

non-Catholic participants experienced Catholic faith and traditions, articulated in an inclusive

style, on their campuses. At the same time, as observed in Jensen's (2008) study, the academic lay leaders also became conscious of the organizational challenges of mission dissemination on account of the declining number of members of the founding religious order, and the tension between running a revenue model of higher education versus a model centered on the Catholic mission and identity.

Jablin's (1982; 2001) organizational assimilation theory corresponds to the process of organizational acculturation that the participants of this study experienced. Jablin's (2001) conceptualization of organizational assimilation is comprised of two dynamic, interrelated, and reciprocal processes: (a) intentional and unplanned interventions by the organization to "socialize" the employees and (b) the efforts by the employees to "individualize" or alter their own roles and work environments to fit their values, attitudes, and needs. Successful assimilation involves proactive functions from both the organization and the newcomers (Myers & Oetzel, 2003). The stage model of mission integration described in chapter 4 corresponds to Jablin's (1982; 2001) three-stage model of organizational assimilation theory. The pre-entry stage experiences of forming values and beliefs, and disorienting dilemmas, correspond to Jablin's *anticipatory socialization* stage in which the participants integrated fundamental values of service, respect, and integrity. The nurturing mission consciousness stage parallels the *encounter stage*, a phase of receiving formation in mission and identity, experiencing a sense of community, and the charisma of the founding religious orders. The later stages of assimilating, owning, and championing the mission together correspond to the *metamorphosis stage*, the long process of deeper integration into the organization.

The IPA analysis has revealed a mutually influential and transformative relationship between the participants and the universities they have been serving (Waldeck & Myers, 2007).

The participants' mission integration experiences influenced and, at times, challenged them to be out of their comfort zones, revisit their ideas, and make the required changes in their views and behaviors. In the context of the diminishing number of priests and religious and the increasing number of lay leaders who are tradition illiterate (Morey & Piderit, 2006), Catholic colleges and universities need robust and effective strategies, interventions, induction and orientation programs for mission and value assimilation. The finding calls for a well delivered and well received mission onboarding program that will generate a solid base for the understanding and nurturing of the institutional mission, vision, and values. (Morey & Holtschneider, 2005; Morey & Piderit, 2006). It is crucially significant today for Catholic institutions of higher education today to tap into the knowledge and experiences of the members of the founding religious orders concerning the mission and institutional charism before they vanish. Steps need to be taken for a successful transference of that knowledge to a critical group of laity who would become experts in the Congregational mission, charism, and traditions, and carry the rich legacy forward (McBrien, 1994).

Self-university value resonance. The IPA analysis revealed several experiences that guided participants to self-university value resonance. To many of the participants, the experience of the sense of bond, and small community, in the university resonated with their experience of growing in their homes. An inclusive and hospitable environment resonated with them. The participants found resonance with other values, such as belief in the transformational power of education (A,C,E,L,T), service to community (A,C,E,L,M,S,T,W), social justice (A,C,E,L,M,S,T,Te,W), and faith in God (A,C,E,L,M,S,T,Te,W).

This finding of self-university value resonance aligns with Chatman's (1989) definition of person-organization fit as the congruence between one's values and the norms and values of

the organization one is part of. Of particular relevance to the findings of this study is an emerging body of research that considers person-organization fit not as anything static but as something that develops over time (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006; Shipp & Jansen, 2011; Yu, 2013). The six-stage model discussed in chapter 4 presents mission and identity integration experience as an evolving process and a progressive journey towards congruence between the individual's values and the organizational values. The participants comply with the two broad conceptualizations of person-organization fit: supplementary fit and complementary fit (Grobler, 2016; Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). The lay leaders supplement the mission by dedicating themselves to the leadership roles that the university assigned to them. They complement the mission through a wide range of experiences as lay professionals coming from the secular world. In the context of the declining number of priests and religious, the laity bring in their authentic voices, vision, diversity, academic competitiveness, and administrative skills in the areas of business, law, medicine and other professional programs which the priests and religious are not usually trained for (Gallin, 1996; 2000; Jackson, 2002).

I began this explorative study assuming an interconnection between the participants' inner calling and their engagement with the mission of the Catholic university. The findings of the study prove my assumption right. All the participants found congruence between their inner calling and the institutional mission, values, and identity. This congruence is a result of the clarity of their core values and the meaning and purpose of their lives, arrived at through self-awareness. Through continued reflective practice, this value resonance deepened. They articulate, espouse, and live the mission because the values and mission personally resonate with them. Where many of the faculty and staff find it difficult to establish a personal and professional connection with the institutional mission (Morey & Holtschneider, 2005; Morey &

Piderit, 2006) in the current context of CHE, the mission integration experiences of the participants need to be articulated and shared at the organizational level, in order to educate and creatively engage faculty members, staff, and students in mission-centric discussions. This affirms Gallin's (2000) view that the future of leadership of CHE is with the faith-filled and hardworking laity. While this finding invites the leaders to examine self-university value alignment, it also challenges the institution to determine if its organizational culture and the espoused mission are in alignment.

Critical Reflective Practice

The study identified critical reflective practice as a behavioral competency common to all the participants in the process of integrating the mission and identity of the Catholic university. Dewey (1933), one of the earliest proponents of experiential learning, saw reflection as a self-development and problem-solving tool. Other proponents of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983) found knowledge embedded in experience and related its significance to practice. The participants of the study found critical reflection to be the interacting element between theory and praxis. This behavioral competency emerged from all the superordinate themes, as reflection is an ongoing process. The participants developed the habit of reviewing, reflecting on, and critically analyzing their leadership praxis. All the participants related critical reflection to their leadership effectiveness, spiritual evolution, and personal transformation in attitudes and behaviors. They recognize that over the years their reflective practice molded them as individuals, leaders, and educators in gradual and subtle ways. Critical reflective practice is discussed under the following traits: (a) evolving mission consciousness, (b) evolving spiritually, (c) critical self-awareness, and (d) leadership praxis.

Evolving mission-consciousness. After the participants had been socialized into the institutional culture, they nurtured and deepened the integration of mission and identity through a process of continuous reflection. This intentional and continuous reflection helped in identifying their fit in the mission and helped them to engage in new learning. Regarding the process of mission integration, the participants consider themselves as a product in the process, reflecting continuously, and learning unceasingly. The lay leaders use metaphors and varied expressions to speak of this evolution: "journey" (E,M), "change" (M), "continuous evolution" (M), "adventure" (E), "happy adventure" (E), "growing up" (A), "transforming/transformation" (A,W), "slowly wrap your own experience around it" (M), "still learning" (L), and "deepening the story" (C). Alex says that aided by reflective practice, he progressed from "learning" to "owning" the mission. Mike spoke of progressing from an "intellectual understanding" to a "personal thing." Larry calls himself a "lifelong learner." Their behavior of critical reflection on leadership praxis has been essential to this continuous learning, unlearning, and relearning process of mission integration.

That critical reflection is a process that supports learning before, during, and after the praxis is well documented in the literature (Coulson & Harvey, 2013; Harvey, Coulson, & McMaugh, 2016; McRae, 2015). The participants view the university's Catholic identity not as something static, but as an ongoing, organic, and evolving process (DeGioia, 2005). This finding of mission-consciousness as an evolving reality has implications for the relevance of the mission to the university's contextual factors. The finding aligns with the espoused mission of CHE to respond adequately to its context and time, and decide on the course of action, drawing from the Catholic intellectual tradition and Catholic social teaching. The Papal documents (Francis, 2014; John Paul II, 1988; 1990) articulate this evolutionary dimension of the mission of CHE, which,

guided by its traditions, dialogues with the culture of the time, and brings Christ's message of faith, hope, and love into the lives of people (Cernera, 2005). The mission bears fruit when there is a co-evolution of the members and the organization they are part of (Uhl-Bien, 2006). In the context of this study, the finding implies that just as the participants found the mission integration as a lifelong evolutionary process of making sense of their experiences, there has to be a corresponding evolution of mission-consciousness in the Catholic universities and colleges, responding to the contextual realities, and drawing from its rich culture and traditions.

Evolving spiritually. The academic lay leaders relate reflectivity to their spiritual evolution as well. All the participants reported that prayer has been a regular part of their life, although the form of prayer varied—formal, non-formal, communitarian, reflective, and meditative. In most cases, there has been a reflective emphasis in their prayers. Candace uses her driving time for reflective prayer. The daily reading of the Beatitudes from the Bible inspires and motivates Larry in his social justice and peace engagements. Terri feels that she has progressed from her traditional and ritualistic understanding of Catholicism to an "embodied spirituality" integrating into it practices such as yoga and dance. Tanuja, after having read the sacred scriptures of major religions, calls herself "spiritual" rather than "religious." Many of them have transitioned from a ritualistic understanding of faith to an evolving experience of the spirit. Coming to university for Mike and Emily has been a return to faith practices in the community of faith, finding the voice and recapturing the spirit. Participants who have not been strongly connected to any religious tradition appreciated the reflectiveness and social justice, respect for human dignity, inclusiveness, and other values that are solidly part of the Catholic tradition. Most participants find a strong connection between their spirituality and the efficacy of their leadership roles. They find a mutually influential, spiral relationship between

their faith and work. Alex called prayer the foundation for his works. The faith traditions and belief systems of the leaders varied, but the reflective emphasis in their prayer is a common thread found in the study. To the participants, spirituality is connecting to a higher reality, acknowledging a supernatural presence and, in practical terms, evolving in the journey of discovering themselves. Participants such as Candace, Winston, and Alex reported that their spiritual practices steadied them during times of crises in their lives and brought them hope.

The Catholic philosophy of education is rooted in the transcendental dimension: learning based on the unity and ultimacy of truth grounded in divine revelation (Benders, 2007; John Paul II, 1990; Paul VI, 1965b). This educational tradition challenges and resists pervasive secularization and opposes the modern and postmodern epistemological approach of scientism that counts religion, faith, and spiritualty as something private and relative (Benders, 2007). In this context, the spiritual experiences of the academic lay leaders are an asset that provides a spiritual dimension to the educational experience of the students, and complements their intellectual pursuit with an authentic depth across all disciplines. Fundamental to the mission of CHE is openness to the transcendent (John Paul II, 1990), the "free search for the whole truth about nature, man, and God" (John Paul II, 1990, no. 4), and "the research of all aspects of truth in their essential connection with the supreme truth, who is God" (John Paul II, 1990, no. 4).

This behavior of continuous spiritual evolution prepares the lay leaders to engage students in an inclusive conversation on spirituality, in the context of the plurality of beliefs and practices, and recognize truths in other faiths (Francis, 2014). The leaders will be able to impart an educational experience that integrates faith and life (John Paul II, 1990); values human dignity; promotes integral human development and the good of every person and the whole person (Benedict XVI, 2009; John Paul II, 1990). CHE calls for a mutually illuminating

interaction between faith and reason, integration of divine revelation, and the ingenuity of human

reason (Hollerich, 2000; John Paul II, 1990; Paul VI, 1965b). The holistic Catholic education

believes in the sacredness of all God's creation—nature, earth, and universe. It promotes the

students' human and spiritual growth (Francis, 2014), enabling them to make a personal

synthesis between faith and culture (John Paul II, 1979).

Critical self-awareness. The study found that the participants developed critical self-

awareness through reflective practice in the process of integrating the mission and identity of the

Catholic university. Their self-awareness illumined their strengths and shadows. Larry recalled

how prejudiced and presumptuous he was about the needs of the community when he started

working as a community organizer and how reflective engagement transformed his approach. He

also acknowledges that he has never mastered balancing family and work. The participants,

through self-reflection, learned to evaluate their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Grant,

Franklin, & Langford, 2002). Mike, through his engagement with the San Antonio community,

was open to change himself, challenged his comfort zones, and was willing to be vulnerable. The

self-reflective process of these leaders aligns with Schön's (1983) theorizing that through

reflective practice, the practitioner identifies one's theories of action to have control over one's

behaviors and consequently improve practice. Cole's (2013) phenomenological study of the

impact of the lay formation programs in three Jesuit universities in the United States also found

that the formation programs built reflective practices in most participants. The definition of

leadership as "an inner journey of the self" (Sherwood & Horton-Deutsch, 2008, p. 137) relates

to the self-reflective experiences of the participants of this study. The leaders' critical reflection

involved challenging one's values, social and moral assumptions, and questioning taken for

granted assumptions, which will lead to changing one's frames of reference, perspectives, and mindsets (Mezirow, 1998).

Critical self-awareness enhances a leader's ability to engage in reflective practice and transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000), and it relates to effectiveness in leadership praxis (Day, 1993; Schön, 1983). It has helped the participants discern the purpose and meaning of life and identify one's role in the bigger picture of mission through lifelong learning. In leadership literature, self-awareness, positive self-regulation, and positive self-development are core components of authentic leaders (Avolio, 2011; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). Competency in critical self-awareness is beneficial for realizing the much-espoused critical engagement of realities in CHE (John Paul II, 1990; McCormick, 2000). The finding implies that these lay leaders can inspire a critical pedagogy of education distinct from the secular approaches (Faust, 2010), engaging in dialogue between Christian thought and modern sciences (John Paul II, 1990). Faculty and leaders with a critical awareness of world realities will be able to respond adequately to the Catholic mission of education as an insightful and transformative experience, when approached from its intellectual tradition and social teaching. The Catholic perspective of education is transformative and holistic, not solely set on economic development and social mobility. For example, learning history, from the Catholic perspective, helps the learner to reflect on the past to enlighten one's present and future; anthropology teaches one how diverse human societies are; literature and art, among other things, teach the learner empathy and to see the world through a different lens; and science helps the students understand more deeply the world they live in (Faust, 2010).

Leadership praxis. The academic lay leaders of this study acknowledge that there is a strong connection between reflective practice and their leadership praxis. The quality of their

reflective practice shows in the effectiveness of their leadership roles. In effect, the reflective

practice leads to an integration of their inner self and the outer self. This extends to their efficacy

in various roles: leadership, teaching, student engagement, research, and community service.

That reflective practice bridges the gap between leadership theories and praxis has been

established in the literature (Harvey, Coulson, Mackaway, & Winchester-Seeto, 2010). The

participants relate their everyday decision making to what Schön (1983) terms *reflection-in-*

action, reflecting on the situation at hand in its immediacy, developing intuition, and having a

reflective conversation with the situation (Matsuo, 2012). They also utilize what Schön (1983)

calls *reflection-on-action*, the insight gained from reflection done to alter their behaviors and

improve professional praxis. Reflection at this level is an intensive, higher-order cognitive

activity that transforms a person's meaning framework (Matsuo, 2012), and prepares them to be

open and receptive to alternative ways of thinking and behaving. The reflective practice

developed in the participants the cognitive ability to work through complex work-related

situations and generated in them further self-knowledge through a process of examining and re-

examining assumptions (Mezirow, 2000; Sellers, 2012). The participants approached reflective

practice as a problem-solving strategy in the professional context (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004;

York-Barr et al., 2006).

The behavioral competency of reflective practice enhances the lay leadership's capacity

to support the Catholic university's educational mission of critical and in-depth study of

problems and intellectual engagement with the realities of the world through high-quality

scientific research (John Paul II, 1979; 1990; Paul VI, 1965b). The finding emphasizes further *Ex*

Corde Ecclesiae's articulation that "continuing reflection in the light of the Catholic faith upon

the growing treasury of human knowledge" (John Paul II, 1990, no. 13) is an essential

characteristic of CHE. The finding also corresponds to the long-standing Catholic intellectual tradition of freedom of inquiry, respect for dissent, the harmony of faith and reason, and the engagement of the whole person (Paul VI, 1965b). According to Hesburgh (1994), Catholic universities are crossroads to meet all the intellectual and moral discourse of the day "where all the ideas are welcome, even if not espoused" (p. 10). The study also found evidence of participants leading their teams in collective reflection at the organizational level. Reflection, done in a collaborative environment, has built collegiality and teamwork in the organization. Yet another dimension that relates to this finding is the Catholic university's obligation to be critically reflective of the Church so that the Church could benefit from the continual counsel she receives from her universities (Land O'Lakes Statement, 1967).

Impactful Relationships Building

The data analysis revealed the participants' behavioral competency of building and maintaining impactful relationships. They have been proactive in building relationships across the board, with leadership, faculty, staff, students, and the neighborhood. Building impactful relationships emerged from across all the superordinate themes in this study. Meaningful relationships nourished the participants and have been an impactful factor in their integration of the mission and identity of the Catholic university. I identified three characteristics of building relationships for further discussion: (a) cultivating a collective identity, (b) forging collaborative relationships, and (c) building an inclusive culture.

Cultivating a collective identity. The study finds that in their leadership roles, the academic lay leaders are intentional in building a mission-centric culture through meaningful relationships with administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Mike shared stories of long-standing connections with alumni that support the mission of the university. Emily expresses the

spirit of solidarity succinctly, "I get to be surrounded by people who believe those same things that I believed all my life. . ." The participants have been proactive in building a mission-centered sense of community through dialogue, collaboration, and respectful conflict resolution. The organizational outcome of this behavior is the development of a mission-centric culture, enhanced teamwork, and clarity of direction.

This finding of building relationships for a collective identity finds strong resonance in the servant leadership model. Hays (2008) speaks of the role of a servant leader in building a community that shares a sense of identity and commitment to the organizational mission:

> Perhaps servant leader's greatest task is to mold and sustain community focus and unity. Vision and direction are typical strategies to achieve this. . . . whatever we do and however we do it should be focused on building a better community and a sustainable future, through developing individual and collective potential, capability, and ownership. . . . a good citizen accepts responsibility for his own and his neighbor's welfare, and has and demonstrates the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to participate in and contribute to the community. (p. 129)

The relational leadership model (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2007) and its components also align well with the leadership experiences of the participants of this study. Relational leadership is defined as "a relational and ethical process of people together attempting to accomplish positive change" (Komives et al., 2007, p. 13). This model perceives leadership as a process of understanding self and understanding others such as teams, organizations, and communities. Five primary components of this leadership model align well with the mission integration experience of the participants of this study. Those components are: (a) ethics, upholding values and moral norms; (b) purpose, to have a vision to further an initiative; (c) empowerment, sharing power with others; (d) inclusivity, openness to diversities, points of view, and identities; and (e) process orientation, focusing on how the group accomplishes the task.

By cultivating a collective identity with administrators, faculty, staff, and students, the leaders share their passion for the mission, positively influence others, and get their buy-in. This finding emphasizes the importance of collective decision making, a shared sense of ownership and responsibility for the mission, and an ongoing collective discernment of the mission by all the stakeholders in a Catholic university. The finding implies that this collective identity is built not merely from the relationship among individuals as independent and discrete entities, but also from an organizational phenomenon among interdependent individuals (Uhl-Bien, 2006). The organizational mission drives this intersubjective and collective process of meaning making. The finding also has insight for leadership praxis as the emphasis shifts from an individual-centric approach to an organization- and a mission-centric approach (Dinh et al., 2014). Here leadership is not defined by power, domination, and hierarchical positions but is seen as a shared responsibility, a community act of decision making, and an action that involves all the stakeholders of the university. To CHE, this finding has larger implications for wider community conversations on policy formation and decision making, based on the Catholic intellectual tradition and Catholic social teaching (John Paul II, 1990; McCormick, 2000; Paul VI, 1965b).

Forging collaborative relationships. Building and maintaining an inner circle of supportive, collaborative, and enriching relationships is a behavioral competency common to all the participants. They utilize their interpersonal, relational, and networking skills to support and strengthen the mission. The behavior also involves respecting others' ideas, perspectives, and collegiality both inside and outside the campus. Many of the participants reported collaborative relationships across the university, including mentor-mentee relationships, partnerships in research, and shared interests in community projects. In some cases, the partnerships in research and community projects went beyond the university campus to the neighborhood, to other

institutions, and to other nations as well. Emily says that her friendship with her colleague has mutually enriched them and has helped expand her perspectives. Alex connects with Gloria at a "much deeper level." He considers her his spiritual director. Some others find on the campus mentors and go-to persons for inspiration. With those individuals, the participants share their innermost thoughts and feelings and receive motivation and encouragement. In their mission integration journey, the participants found nourishment and sustenance in those anchor relationships.

The study found most participants drawing strength from prolonged and consistent relationships. A great emphasis on being part of a team was found. This finding is consistent with the virtue ethics theory that underscores the important role of relationality in human flourishing (Richardson, 2012). Fowers (2005) argues that virtues and moral excellences have a "social core" implying that "human flourishing is deeply dependent on social relatedness and the individual's participation in culture" and that "individual character and all of the specific virtues are profoundly social in their origin, enactment, and ends" (p. 93). Russian philosopher, Mikhail Bakhtin reasons that relationship is key to self-consciousness. He says, "I achieve self-consciousness, I become myself only by revealing myself to another, through another and with another's help" (Quoted in Todorov, 1984, p. 96.). This finding emphasizes the importance of fostering a positive environment for a person-to-person interaction in Catholic universities and colleges for robust participation, sharing of experiences, ideas, and resources. This calls for developing institutional practices in forming strong teams, providing opportunities for people to come together across schools and departments, building social networks, and developing resources and training that will foster a cohesive work environment in support of the mission.

Building an inclusive culture. The study found that the participants' experience of encountering people from diverse backgrounds, nationalities, cultures, traditions, values, beliefs, and attitudes prepared them to be inclusive leaders. The participants experienced an environment of appreciation for diversity and inclusion and have been proactive in building a genuinely inclusive organizational culture. Larry and Terri were part of the Marianist Forum to create an inclusive environment on St. Mary's U. campus. In the school that she leads, Tanuja has faculty from diverse faith traditions, and she ensures that everyone feels included. The lay leaders of this study ensure that everyone is treated fairly, valued, and respected.

Gotsis and Grimani (2016) report that fostering inclusion is a servant leadership trait. By keeping subordinates' interests first, and diversity-supportive attitudes, servant leaders help the diverse people involved grow and succeed. By genuine concern for the welfare of followers and special care for those marginalized, a servant leader pushes for inclusiveness. The core dimensions of servant leadership such as empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship are positively associated with a favorable climate for inclusion (Gotsis & Grimani, 2016; van Dierendonck, 2011). Servant leaders have a high sense of community with a strong drive to build teams. They participate in the community, establish healthy relationships, and create solidarity among people (Greenleaf, 1977; Spears, 2010; van Dierendonck, 2011). In the academic lay leaders' integration process of mission and identity of Catholic universities, the findings of the study indicate a dominant role for the relational dimension.

Inclusive leaders strengthen the Catholic university's mission by creating an inclusive community that reflects the whole human race with its special sensitivity to race, gender, faith, languages, sexual orientation, social class, and cultures (Hesburgh, 1994; Hollerich, 2000;

McBrien, 1994; McCormick, 2000). This finding also implies welcoming diverse students, making education accessible to underserved communities, and increasing faculty and staff diversity. Convinced of the value of diversity and inclusion, these leaders also make a visible commitment to the Catholic vision of the unity of the human race, the dignity of human life (Hollerich, 2000; McCormick, 2000), and engage in fertile dialogue with people of all cultures (John Paul II, 1990). Regarding religious beliefs, diversity and inclusion also imply a recognition of truths found in other faith traditions and cultures, acknowledging at the same time that Catholic values are also humane values which can be shared by non-Catholic Christians and non-Christians (McBrien, 1994). True inclusion brings about a culture of learning, appreciation, and understanding; and builds a sense of community and oneness of all as children of God.

Immersion in Whole-hearted Service

Immersing themselves in whole-hearted service is a behavioral competency common to all the participants. This finding emerged predominantly from the superordinate theme of championing the mission, although whole-hearted commitment to service is an overarching experience across multiple superordinate themes. Mike wants to serve without ego. He says, "I don't want this to be an ego trip or this is about me. . . . I don't want me to become . . . my profanity embedded in what I'm doing." Alex says, "My mission is to serve. . . It's really immersing yourself in the space that you serve." These leaders do not want to draw attention to themselves or their achievements. They perceive leadership not as power and authority, but as an opportunity to serve and a role to influence and make a difference. The finding of immersion in whole-hearted service through leadership in CHE is congruent with Greenleaf's (1973) servant leadership model. According to Greenleaf, the primary motive of servant leaders is the desire to serve, and in effect, the desire to serve precedes the desire to lead. The academic lay leaders'

behavior of whole-hearted service has the following characteristics: (a) behaving altruistically, (b) inspiring mission consciousness in followers, and (c) modeling the way.

Behaving altruistically. A visible expression of the participants' whole-hearted service is their altruistic behaviors—selfless concern for the well-being of others—which is also congruent with the servant leadership model. The participants' intention to live a purpose beyond themselves is evident from their commitment to serving the mission, going beyond their roles and positions. Many participants narrated their experiences of providing comfort to students in challenging situations, mentoring, and advising them even outside the school hours, and taking students on mission trips to different parts of the world. Without any agenda for self-promotion, they serve students and faculty with love and compassion, with the realization that the leadership power they have is not about them. The participants also immerse themselves in social justice initiatives and advocate the cause of the marginalized. Larry says, "If I have health, I'm going to be working for social justice. So that is just part of my DNA, who I am now . . ." He also spoke about the many mission trips he made with the students to different parts of the world, witnessing poverty and trying to find solutions to economic and social problems. Steve, the dean of the Law School at St. Mary's U., spoke about personally advocating for people who are marginalized. Mike finds that his role in the mission of UIW is leading the community engagement programs such as miniGEMS and megaGEMS. Coetzer, Bussin, & Geldenhuys' (2017) description of altruism as being selfless, other orientated and having the desire to help others become better in life, are also motives identified in the behaviors of the participants.

By their altruistic behaviors, and encouragement to students in social justice initiatives, the academic lay leaders share in the Catholic university's espoused mission of education for social justice, and inspire the students to make their knowledge and skills available at the service

of humanity. They also share in CHE's commitment to the integral growth of all people, and contribute concretely to the progress of the society, very specially the poor, the marginalized, and the minority groups who are deprived of educational opportunities (Hesburgh, 1994; Hollerich, 2000; John Paul II, 1979; 1990; Land O'Lakes Statement, 1967; McCormick, 2000; Provost, 2000). This finding calls for a mission-driven, social justice-centric approach that will permeate all areas of CHE, such as student enrollment, tuition pricing, hiring, promotion and tenure, employee performance review, curriculum, community service, research, development of infrastructure facilities, and resource allocation.

Inspiring mission consciousness in followers. The study found that the academic lay leaders, having experienced mission integration in themselves, own responsibility for mission dissemination. They make conscious efforts to pass the mission on. They inspire mission consciousness in their followers—colleagues and students**.** They cite examples of impacting the life choices of students, empowering them, and giving them a sense of agency. They inculcate in them the values of justice, peace, respect for the dignity of the human person, integrity, and responsibility. Candace reports that she engages classes with defining issues of social justice, which completely aligns with the mission of OLLU. The leaders also own the responsibility to mentor new faculty members in mission consciousness. Mike recognizes that he has a two-fold responsibility in mission dissemination, (a) to introduce the mission to the students and help them understand and (b) to make sure that the new faculty members understand what mission is. This behavior of forming mission consciousness in others is indicative of these leaders' commitment to the growth of others that servant leaders possess. Empowering, developing people, and stewardship—intending the long-term well-being of followers—are servant leadership competencies (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Coetzer et al., 2017) identified in the

academic lay leaders of this study. Similarly, in authentic leadership theory (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005), the characteristics of authentic leaders include guiding followers toward worthy objectives and an emphasis on follower development, as is the finding in this study.

This finding of inspiring mission consciousness in followers affirms the opinion of McBrien (1994) that to sustain the mission of the Catholic universities, in the context of the dwindling number of priests and religious, it is essential to have a critical mass of committed lay faculty and administrators, from diverse religious traditions, who respect the Catholic traditions and support the university's mission. The finding is also a sign of hope and a positive answer to the Church's objective of greater involvement of the laity in its apostolates (John Paul II, 1988; Paul VI, 1964; 1965). The transition to lay leadership in CHE, therefore, is an opportunity to empower laity in the apostolate of the Church so that they become witnesses to Christ in the human society (Gallin, 2000; Gardner, 2006; Paul VI, 1965a). This finding offers immense possibilities for Catholic universities to take advantage of the mission integration experiences of lay leaders in mentoring, training, and educating the university community in mission-related matters and thus keep the flame of the mission alive and burning.

Modeling the way. Being role models is another key behavioral competency the study found in the participants. The analysis found that the participants embody the institutional mission in both professional and personal lives. Larry speaks about wanting to be an exemplar: "But trying to again be an example to students, be an exemplar, that is really important." In addition to supporting environmental, animal, and educational causes, Tanuja runs a village school in India from her resources. Winston, inspired by the "living-by-example piece" of the Marianists, wants to set an example himself. Aligned with this finding, in the servant leadership

model, inspired by the examples of servant leaders, the followers begin to act as servant leaders themselves (Hays, 2008). The lay leaders of this study cited many examples of students integrating the mission and values of the university and practicing those values in their lives. Examples include students' unwillingness to accept job offers from organizations that had ethical lapses, students who resigned from state departments because the values they integrated could not support some policies, and several law graduates who chose to argue cases for immigrants and the poor for less or even no pay.

Overall, the pervasive servant leadership behaviors of academic lay leaders found in this study echo Wheeler's (2012) description of servant leadership in higher education. The finding is consistent with Wheeler's (2012) argument that the servant leadership model is a fitting and sustaining philosophy in higher education because higher education primarily is about serving. Wheeler's (2012) list of servant leadership characteristics in higher education—relationship to others, the call to serve, authenticity, humility, inner life transformation, and selflessness—are reflective of the behaviors of academic lay leaders of the current study. Similarly, according to authentic leadership theory (Gardner et al., 2005), in developing followers, the primary means that authentic leaders utilize is positive modeling. The participants of this study utilized positive role modeling in their leadership praxis.

A vital element of the mission of CHE is the promotion of the Christian spirit of service and social justice (John Paul II, 1990). In the context of the diversities of cultures and beliefs on Catholic university campuses, the Catholic social teaching provides a common ground for all to work for social justice, dignity, and respect for the human person. By focusing on and paying attention to the study of contemporary issues relating to the promotion of justice for all, the dignity of human life, environmental protection, peace, political stability, equitable sharing of

world's resources (John Paul II, 1990), the academic lay leaders in this study strengthen the mission of CHE. The finding of immersion in whole-hearted service enhances the capacity of the leaders to serve students who will develop into citizens who emulate ethical values and are sensitive to justice and injustice (Hesburgh, 1994; John Paul II, 1979; McCormick, 2000; Provost, 2000). In a world marred by violence and divisions, this finding of immersion in service calls for a renewed commitment of CHE to proclaim the Gospel message of peace, love, compassion, and selfless service (Francis, 2013; Paul VI, 1965a).

Discussions on Lay Leadership in CHE

My review of the literature, situating the context and the need for this explorative study, had identified two gaps in the current scholarship. The first was the shortage of empirical studies on lay leadership in CHE at the middle and lower levels of the organizational hierarchy, and the second was the absence of empirical studies on mission and identity integration experience of academic leaders in CHE from diverse religious affiliations. The current study explored the mission and identity integration experiences of academic lay leaders from Catholic, non-Catholic Christian, and non-Christian faith traditions. This section discusses firstly, the potential of academic lay leadership in CHE in the context of the findings of the study, and secondly, the mission and identity integration of the Catholic university by the non-Catholic participants.

The potential of academic lay leadership in CHE. The findings of this study echo Morey and Holtschneider's (2005) conclusion that the future of CHE will be in the hands of faith-filled and hardworking laypersons. Aligning with the findings of Franco (2016) and Gardner (2006), the academic lay leaders of this study were positive about the potential of lay leadership to ensure a bright future for CHE. At the same time, they were also aware of the many challenges they encounter in this transitional time of leadership from priests and religious to the

laity. The findings of the study also align with Cole's (2013) conclusion that the mission and identity formation programs helped in institutional enculturation, served the purpose of developing a shared mission language, built a sense of community, built reflective practices, deepened their involvement in the university and, for some, engaged and enhanced their spirituality. The findings are also consistent with Olin's (2005) observation that the promotion of lay leadership helped the Catholic university to better deal with the modern-day market forces. Consistent with Gardner's (2003) findings, the participants of the study perceived themselves to be capable of effectively interpreting, preserving, and strengthening the Catholic mission and identity of the university.

In the existing literature, there is no substantial research on the impact of the transition to lay leadership in CHE. However, many writers speculate on how the transition may affect the identities of CIHE. As reported in the review of the literature, the findings of the few empirical studies (e.g., Franco, 2016; Gardner, 2003; Petriccione, 2009; Sloma-Williams, 2010) on the impact of laicization on Catholic mission and identity in CHE have been generally positive, even though some researchers (e.g., Morey & Holtschneider, 2005; Morey & Piderit, 2006) expressed the need for greater training and preparation in the area of mission and identity for the laity to lead CHE effectively. In the literature, the leadership transition as such does not suggest a weakening of institutional character and identity (Gardner, 2006). The present study finds that lay leadership is a viable and effective solution to the leadership crisis in CHE created by the declining number of qualified clergy and religious (Borrego, 2001; Franco, 2016; Gardner, 2006; McMurtrie, 1999; Petriccione, 2009; Sloma-Williams, 2010). Academic lay leaders, as the findings of this study indicate, have the required commitment to preserve and promote the mission and identity of the Catholic university they are part of.

The transition to lay leadership in CHE is also an opportunity to empower laity in the apostolate of the Church (Gallin, 2000; Gardner, 2006). As envisioned by the Church hierarchy, lay leadership in CHE would pave the way for laity to be co-responsible for the mission of the Church (Benedict XVI, 2012; John Paul II, 1990; Paul VI, 1964; 1965; 1965a), and be courageous and credible witnesses of the Gospel in the world (Benedict XVI, 2012). This calls for adequate training and support for lay faculty and administrators, both Catholic and non-Catholic, in Catholic intellectual tradition, Catholic culture, institutional mission, and charism.

Non-Catholics' mission integration. The current study was conducted with a participant sample from varied religious affiliations—Catholics ($n = 4$), non-Catholic Christians ($n = 4$), and Hindu ($n = 1$). Although comparative analysis of the mission and identity integration narratives of the participants based on their religious affiliation was not the scope of the study, the data analysis found no evidence to support the existing literature and perception that Catholic faculty and staff are more supportive of the Catholic mission and identity of the university (McBrien, 1994; Rittof, 2001; Sullins, 2004). On the contrary, the current study found evidence of non-Catholic participants' positive attitude towards and support for the following Catholic identity elements that are found in the literature (McBrien, 1994; McCormick, 2000; Provost, 2000): advocating social justice (A,E,L,S,T), open-mindedness and respect for diversity (A,E,L,S,T), willingness to serve (A,E,L,S,T), support for Catholic intellectual tradition (E,L,S), support for Catholic social teaching (E,S), respect for the dignity of the human person (A,E,L,S,T), the expression of Catholic identity in the curriculum (A,E,L,S,T), and permeation of mission and identity in research initiatives (A,E,L,S,T). There is no distinguishable evidence of Catholic participants being more supportive of these mission and identity aspects over and above the participants from other faith affiliations. This outcome corroborates Ferrari and Janulis' (2009)

finding that faculty and staff of varying religious affiliations—Catholic, non-Catholic/Christian, and non-Christian—show indistinguishable support for the identity elements of a Catholic university, such as inclusion, pluralism, innovation, global and urban engagement activities. The findings of the study imply that in a religiously diverse context, Catholic universities should develop a strong community of committed lay leaders across various faith traditions to support and enhance its mission and identity.

Langan (2000) argues that in a Catholic university the essential task of faculty regarding its Catholic identity is to present the Catholic tradition in academics through a process of interpretation, criticism, and creative development. The critical criterion of Catholic identity, therefore, is intellectual interest and competence in matters of the Catholic intellectual tradition. In this sense, the lay people who maintain the Catholic identity of the university need not necessarily be Catholics themselves (Langan, 2000). As regards the finding of non-Catholic Christian and non-Christian academic leaders' integration of the mission and identity of a Catholic university, the present study, however, had limitations. In the selection process, the participants were first identified by the vice presidents of Mission and Ministry in their respective universities as individuals who are proactive in integrating the mission and identity of the university they belong to. It is unclear if this finding can be replicated with a randomly picked set of participants from the same research sites. More research is required to determine the mission and identity integration level of the non-Catholic Christians and non-Christian leaders who are part of Catholic universities and colleges.

Summary and Key Takeaways

This IPA study on the mission and identity integration experience of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities produced two sets of findings: the six-stage model of the participants'

mission and identity integration which was described in detail with supportive evidence in chapter 4, and the key behavioral competencies model that emerged from the analysis of the stage model and was discussed with the support of the theoretical framework in this chapter. By way of summary, I briefly describe the findings of the sub-questions of this study. The remainder of this section also presents the key takeaways from the study. The overarching research question of the study was: What are the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities of San Antonio who integrate the mission and identity of the university they are part of?

In the data collection interviews, the participants' responses to the opening question, "Please tell me in detail the journey that led you to this university," guided the direction of further questions. I had prepared the sub-questions more as guides for the direction of the interview rather than for verbatim use during the interviews. The responses in the first interview guided the course of the follow-up interview. However, the superordinate themes in the six-stage model and the key behaviors in the behavioral competency model, taken collectively, answered all the sub-questions of the research.

1. What are the life-affirming experiences of participants in the process of integrating the mission and identity of the university?

The overall findings of the study are life-affirming. Multiple superordinate themes—forming values and beliefs, nurturing mission consciousness, assimilating the mission, owning the mission, and championing the mission—detail several life-affirming experiences of the participants. Similarly, the five behavioral competencies discussed earlier in this chapter are findings from the life-affirming and positive experiences of the participants.

2. What are the challenging experiences, if any, the participants encountered in the process of integrating the mission and identity of the university?

This IPA study approached the mission and identity integration experiences of the participants as a lifelong phenomenon, not confining them to the period the participants spent at the Catholic university. The superordinate theme of experiencing disorienting dilemmas described the challenges the participants experienced. Many participants shared experiences of dark and crisis moments, traumatic events, poverty, discrimination, and social inequalities before joining the Catholic university. After entering the university, the challenges described are largely institutional such as the dwindling number of religious on campus, the tension between a corporate model of higher education versus the Catholic vision of higher education, the challenge of making students mission conscious, and the shortage of financial resources for mission support.

3. How have the participants responded to the challenges encountered in the process of integrating the mission and identity of the university?

Two strategies that the participants found most effective in encountering the challenges of mission and identity integration are critical reflective practice and building impactful relationships. Through reflective engagement, the participants critically examined their assumptions; reviewed, and analyzed their leadership praxis regularly. Critical reflective practice, therefore, became a tool for self-development and problem-solving. Secondly, an inner circle of supportive, collaborative, and enriching relationships provided the participants the required nourishment and sustenance, very specially during challenging times. The participants found mentors and go-to persons with whom they shared their innermost thoughts and feelings, and received inspiration, motivation, and encouragement.

4. How do the lived experiences of the participants interconnect their calling and their commitment to the university's mission and identity?

Self-university value congruence and its role in the participants' integration of mission and identity of the university is a leading finding of this study. All the participants found congruence between their inner calling and the institutional mission, values, and identity. Driven by a passion for education, the participants of the study pursue a cause that is both personally meaningful and at the same time contribute to the mission of the university. The lay leaders' engagement with the mission of the Catholic university has complemented their search for meaning and purpose in life. Self-university value resonance discussed under the key behavioral competency of engaging new experiences answered this sub-question.

5. What meanings do participants ascribe to their lived experiences that have influenced the integration of the mission and identity of the university?

Multiple superordinate themes and the five key behavioral competencies answered this sub-question. Overall, the data analysis indicated the outcomes of participants' progressive mission and identity integration journey. The meanings that the participants ascribed to their experiences, for example, their identity as servant leaders, critical self-awareness, relational awareness, spiritual evolution, and role in building relationships were discussed earlier in this chapter.

In summary, I find the following six key takeaways from this explorative study.

Interactive stages of mission integration. The process of mission and identity integration of the Catholic university in the participants has been a progressive, lifelong journey that involved multiple, overlapping stages, angles, and layers. The study identified the following six stages in the participants' progress of mission integration: (a) forming values and beliefs, (b) experiencing disorienting dilemmas, (c) nurturing mission consciousness, (d) assimilating the mission, (e) owning the mission, and (f) championing the mission. However, this progressive

journey is not linear, and the experiences pertaining to a stage are not exclusively confined to that stage. The mission integration experiences of the participants overlap and interact across all the stages.

Critical reflective practice. The Catholic university environment and interventions provided a fitting platform for the academic lay leaders to flourish and align with the mission, vision, and values of the university, a process that has already been at work in them before their entry into the university. Their life strategy of critical reflective practice—the habit of reviewing, reflecting on, and critically analyzing their behaviors—deepened the mission and identity integration experience. They recognize that their reflective practice gradually and subtly molded them as individuals, educators, and leaders over the years. Critical reflective practice and openness to lifelong learning helped the participants discern the purpose and meaning of life and identify their role in the Catholic university's mission.

Ongoing renewal of compelling purpose. The study found a strong connection between the participants' search for personal meaning and their engagement with the mission of the Catholic university. All the participants found congruence between their inner calling and the institutional mission, values, and identity. Active involvement with the mission of CHE answered the participants' ongoing quest for purpose because it is at once personally meaningful, and it also productively engages with some aspect of the world beyond their selves.

Relationality and relationship building. Meaningful relationships nourished the participants of this study. They have also been an impactful factor in the integration of the mission and identity, and the continued development of the university mission. The participants have been proactive in building relationships with leadership, faculty, staff, students, and the

neighborhood. They utilized their interpersonal, relational, and networking skills for the strengthening of the mission.

Servant leadership. The behaviors of the academic lay leaders who integrate the mission and identity of the Catholic university are reflective of the characteristics of the servant leadership model, especially the following dimensions: relationship to others, the call to serve, authenticity, humility, inner life transformation, and selflessness (Wheeler, 2012). The study finds the servant leadership traits identified in the participants of this study fitting attributes for lay leadership to sustain and strengthen the mission and identity of CHE.

Commitment to the mission. Their various life experiences have predisposed the academic lay leaders of this study for an orientation to the Catholic university's mission and values, regardless of their faith traditions. They are thus committed to sustaining and strengthening the following mission dimensions of a Catholic university: advocating social justice, open-mindedness and respect for diversity, willingness to serve, support for the Catholic intellectual tradition, support for Catholic social teaching, respect for the dignity of the human person, the expression of Catholic identity in the curriculum, and a permeation of mission and identity in research initiatives.

Implications and Recommendations

It is essential to reflect on the significance and the implications of the findings of this study, its benefits, usefulness for theory and practice, and the directions the findings have for future research. The implications are discussed under the following sections: (a) implications for leadership theory, (b) practical implications, and (c) implications for future research.

Implications for leadership theory. The current study has implications for leadership theory in general and lay leadership in CHE in particular. The study provided experiential

description of the phenomenon of mission and identity integration by academic lay leaders of Catholic universities from diverse demographic and academic backgrounds, and religious affiliations. The study provided evidence of the relatively new phenomenon of lay leadership in CHE and how lay leadership relates to the broader context of the mission of the Church. The six-stage model of progressive mission and identity integration, the key behavioral competencies model, and the integrated framework of multiple theories that explained the findings are unique contributions of this study. The findings have theoretical implications because it is the first-time that a study of midlevel lay leaders of CHE from diverse religious affiliations is undertaken. These models could be insightful and useful tools for the integration of lay leaders from varied religious affiliations into CHE. The existing empirical studies on lay leadership in CHE have mostly been on the top leadership. The findings of the current research have relevance because of the significant role and powerful influence the midlevel leaders have on how the mission, vision, and identity of the institute is understood and made accessible to the grassroots levels. This pioneering study is a starting point for further research on lay leadership at the middle level of CHE.

Another implication for leadership theory relates to the value of personal narratives in future leadership development in Catholic and other faith-based universities and colleges. Aligned with the findings of Franco (2016), the present study finds that shared personal experience narratives are a powerful tool to deepen the engagement with the mission and identity of a Catholic university. The recently developing field of inquiry—scholarly reflective narratives—which emerges from self-reflective critique (Brookfield, 2013; Nash, 2004) has great potential to strengthen the existing constructivist research paradigm. Scholarly personal narratives have the power to influence, teach, and inspire. The Catholic institutions of higher

education should encourage committed laity to share those narratives and find ways to preserve those narratives for present and future leadership development. The present study found a relationship between human existential meaning and the mission and identity integration. Lay leaders should be provided formal platforms such as new faculty orientations, trainings, and retreats, to articulate their experiences.

Practical implications. The current study has practical implications for institutionalizing mission engagement, imparting mission-centered education, hiring for mission, leadership development, and fostering ecclesial lay ministry.

Institutionalizing mission engagement. The study provides evidence that the academic lay leaders who integrate the mission and identity of the Catholic university support and promote the mission and identity of the university. Catholic universities and colleges should establish policies and practices that encourage faculty and staff involvement in mission maintenance and promotion. They should be recognized and rewarded for mission involvement. Faculty tenure and promotion should consider the faculty members' involvement and participation in mission and identity related activities. Discussions, engagement with Catholic intellectual tradition, research in mission related areas, seminars, conferences, and presentations centered on mission need to be promoted. Support for the mission must be intentional. Catholic mission and identity should be an integral part of academic, strategic, and leadership succession planning. The mission should permeate all the functions of the institute, such as hiring, promotion and tenure, student enrollment, tuition pricing, employee performance review, development of infrastructure facilities, and resource allocation.

Imparting mission-centered education. The findings of the study have practical implications for a mission-driven education in Catholic universities and colleges. This involves

developing mission-centered faculty, staff, students, and administrators through purposeful interventions such as training sessions, discussions, seminars and conferences on mission-related themes, and development of a mission-centric curriculum. The Catholic universities and colleges should revitalize the institutional traditions and prioritize strategies considering the demographic context of the institution. The findings of this study call for imparting education that would enlighten the students on contemporary issues relating to the promotion of justice for all, the dignity of human life, environmental protection, peace, and equitable sharing of world's resources (John Paul II, 1990). Social justice, diversity and inclusion, and community service and engagement should be integral components of CHE, both in the classroom and outside. Initiatives similar to the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative and Marianist Forum on the St. Mary's U. campus provide administrators, faculty, and staff the platform to discuss various aspects of the institutional mission, share their experiences and ideas, and plan together concrete initiatives in support of the mission. Meaningful avenues should also be provided to the students to serve humanity and contribute concretely to the progress of the society, very specially the poor, and the marginalized.

Hiring for mission. The findings of the study offer insights to develop comprehensive hiring policies in Catholic universities and colleges. Hiring for mission in CHE is a crucial organizational practice to ensure the prospective employee's mission orientation, relational skills, attitude to Catholic intellectual tradition, social justice, and community service. The study found that candidates whose personal values align with the mission of the university are most likely to integrate the mission and identity, and contribute to the organizational mission, regardless of their religious affiliations. Mission-fit must be a critical component examined in the

hiring process. The mission interviews should primarily verify the candidate's understanding of the mission, and personal orientation towards Catholic values.

Leadership development. The findings of the study could also help develop tools for training, education, and preparation of lay leadership for the mission and identity of CHE. Such training could be in the areas of mission enculturation, building a collective identity based on mission, development of reflective practice, and building servant leadership competencies. The experiential narratives of both cohorts, the members of the founding religious order and the lay leaders, will be very useful in forming present and future lay leaders. Mission and identity assimilation need to be fostered from the early part of one's career in the Catholic college/university. Faculty formation in the mission and identity of the university is a crucial element because of their access to and involvement with the students, their influence on their peers, and their role in building a mission-centered culture on the campus. The current study provides data on what a midlevel academic lay leader expects from the mission of a Catholic university. Effective leadership development will benefit the university in the long run, resulting low attrition rates, and building long-lasting and valuable mission partners, who will take the legacy of the university forward.

Fostering ecclesial lay ministry. The findings of the study have practical implications for the ecclesial ministry of the laity. Through their involvement in the Church's ministry of higher education, the lay leaders bring their diverse backgrounds and gifts to the ecclesial lay ministry. This ministry fulfills the vision of II Vatican Council (Paul VI, 1965) on the apostolate of the laity expressed in *Apostolicam Actuositatem,* the Council's decree on the apostolate of the laity, ". . . modern conditions demand that [the laity's] apostolate be broadened and intensified" (no. 1). This was further reiterated by Pope John Paul II (1988) urging the laity to dialogue with

and purify the elements that burden the existing culture with the Gospel and Christian faith. Considering leadership in CHE as an avenue for the laity's active participation in ecclesial ministry, formal preparations need to be established for lay leadership in CHE with a focus on mission, Catholic identity, Catholic intellectual tradition, and Catholic social teaching. Some institutions, such as Loyola University, Chicago, Seton Hall University, New Jersey, the University of St. Thomas, Minnesota, and the University of Dallas, have training programs for laity on Catholic identity and culture. More initiatives of this kind are required to develop lay leaders.

Suggestions for Future Research

As reported in the review of the literature, the laicization process in CHE, being a more recent reality, has not been deeply studied. The lay leaders' behaviors, perceptions, roles, and effectiveness in preserving and strengthening the mission and identity of Catholic university, and others' perceptions of lay leaders' effectiveness, are areas that are yet to be sufficiently studied. The academic lay leaders' experiences of mission and identity integration of the Catholic universities that the current study focused on opens possibilities for further research in the following areas:

1. *Alternative research samples:* This explorative phenomenological study of the experience of mission and identity integration can be replicated with other samples such as trustees, presidents, lower-level leaders, faculty, and students. The study can also be replicated with alumni employed in diverse professional areas, exploring how CHE and the integration of the mission is related to their professions today.

2. *Alternative research sites:* Among the four models of Catholic universities defined by Morey and Piderit (2006), the sites of this inquiry were Catholic diaspora models

where Catholic students, Catholic faculty, and administrators are a minority. The study can be conducted in the other models—Catholic immersion model, Catholic persuasion model, and Catholic cohort model. How the integration experiences of participants are similar or vary in the different models could be explored. Exploring the mission and identity experiences of one university/college within the context of its specific mission and charism, and institutional culture, than at multiple universities together, may generate organization-specific findings for effective interventions.

3. *Alternative research methods:* The research methodology used in this study was IPA (Smith et al., 2009). Alternative qualitative methods, such as grounded theory and action research, could also be used for similar studies. According to Smith et al. (2009), constructivist grounded theory is the closest to IPA, compared to any other qualitative method. Action research in particular would allow for active testing and adaptive learning from new processes that aim to institutionalize mission engagement, impart mission-centered education, hire for mission, develop new leaders, and foster ecclesial lay ministry.

4. The current study was conducted among participants whose positive attitudes towards the institution's Catholic mission and identity were ascertained before the study. Their challenges of mission integration were not explored in depth as the overall approach of the study was positive. An in-depth qualitative study of challenges that lay administrators, faculty, and staff encounter in the integration of mission and identity will significantly complement the findings of this study.

5. Further research on mission and identity development relating to specific areas such as mission training, retreats, academic curriculum, and community service could also be explored.

6. The current study also has scope for a longitudinal research study of three to five years to explore the various formative and other experiences of new faculty to examine the influence of those experiences in their institutional integration.

7. The current study also opens possibilities for several comparative explorations of mission integration: clergy/religious versus laity; Catholics versus non-Catholics/ non-Christians; Catholic university-educated versus public university-educated; junior faculty versus senior faculty; and women faculty versus men faculty.

8. Servant leadership was found to be the leadership style of the participants in the study. Further studies using both quantitative and qualitative methods could explore how servant leadership relates to leadership in CHE.

Limitations and Delimitations

I identify and acknowledge the following three possible limitations of this study. *Firstly, the limitation of subjectivity* about which Maxwell (2013) says "the fact that the researcher is part of the world he or she studies—is a powerful and inescapable influence" (p. 125). While also acting as a strength in many ways, my perceptual lenses, beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and experiences may have also limited what I was able to see and perceive in the conduct and the findings of the study (Maxwell, 2013). Within subjectivity is also the limitation of reactivity— my unintended but inevitable influence on the setting, the participants, and their responses (Maxwell, 2013). Despite my conscious attempts, bracketing all my previous understandings and experiences may not have been entirely achievable (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013).

Secondly, limitations regarding the selection process of participants and sampling. I recognize limitations in the selection of participants as the subjectivity of the gatekeepers may have influenced the selection. In fact, two of my research subjects were not suggested by the gatekeepers, yet their powerful life experiences were central to the study. Additionally, with a small sample size of nine, the study has limitation on sample diversity. Eight of nine participants were from academic leadership positions such as deans and department chairs. The lower levels of faculty and staff were not well represented in the study. Additionally, although San Antonio is over 60% Hispanic, the selection process yielded only one Hispanic participant out of nine. This certainly could have implications for the cultural fit of lay leadership strategies in the future. *Thirdly, analytical limitations.* As regards analysis, I do not claim completeness, certainty, or the comprehensiveness of my interpretations. Generally, in qualitative research and particularly in phenomenology, the interpretations are never exhausted (Moustakas, 1994). The strategies I applied to minimize the effects of limitations were detailed in chapter 3.

Delimitations refer to the boundaries that a researcher has set in a study which could limit the generalizability of the findings (Pyrczak & Bruce, 2005) A phenomenological study, by its very nature, is not expected to be universally generalizable. However, this study has significant relevance and adequate scope for leadership literature in general and for lay leadership in CHE in particular, on account of the contextual needs discussed earlier. This inquiry limited itself to academic/mid-level lay leaders in CHE by identifying the gap in the literature through a review of the literature. The study, therefore, excluded the board of trustees, presidents, students, alumni, priests, and religious from its purview. The research site was the three Catholic universities of San Antonio, and the insights from the study are delimited by the cultural, social, political, and religious contexts of the research site. As regards the theoretical framework used in

discussing the findings, there were many other relevant and applicable theories than the ones I chose to include in the theoretical framework. However, due to constraints of a study of this nature, I limited the framework for interpretation to the five most relevant theories which were discussed in chapter 5.

In chapter 1, in the section on research context and need, I had mentioned cultivating mission-centric leadership culture in Catholic institutions of higher education in India as my personal reason for this study. I acknowledge that the demographics and context of this research site were very different from the site of my prior experience. For example, the research site was three urban Catholic universities in the United States, whereas the site of my previous experience was a semi-urban context in India. As mentioned earlier, although general applicability is limited, I hope that the findings of this study add to the body of empirical knowledge and will be relevant to lay leadership practice in CHE in different parts of the world. However, to know more about the situation in India, a separate study, contextualized to the needs of the site, will have to be carried out.

Reflections

For me, this exploration has been a personal quest to discover. I embarked on this exploration from my professional background in teaching and leadership in CHE. I believe in the transforming power of education; I have experienced that personally as a first-generation college learner myself, and I have witnessed that from being a faculty and leader of a Catholic institution of higher education in India. My personal experiences have deepened my belief in CHE as it develops the whole person in a learning environment rooted in Catholic intellectual tradition, and also enables the students to listen to the call to service and social justice according to Catholic social teaching. One of the reasons for this inquiry with select academic lay leaders was to

contribute in my humble way to the existing scholarship on lay leadership in CHE, and to preserve and promote the mission and identity of Catholic universities by empowering the laity. My prior experience of working with a complexly diverse group of academic lay leaders from various religious affiliations was my reason for the choice of the participants from diverse backgrounds.

This has been an insightful exploration. I am deeply moved by the many heart-warming and inspiring stories I listened to. There were narratives of deep faith in Providence, search for purpose and meaning, love for selfless service, and commitment to social justice and community engagement. I am humbled by their strong devotion to the mission of the Catholic university and the clarity of purpose that was revealed in their narratives, regardless of their religious affiliations. At the preparatory phase of this study, I was not sure whether I would be able to find the required number of participants from a single university who meet the inclusion criteria and are willing, at the same time, to participate. That was my reason for conducting this study across three Catholic universities. My assumption was wrong. All three universities had many lay leaders who were very enthusiastic, excited, and willing to share their stories of mission and identity integration.

Every conversation I had, resonated with Morey and Holtschneider's (2005) finding that the future of CHE is secure in the hands of faith-filled and committed laypersons. Some of the lay leaders in this study could have easily been in leadership positions of a tier-one university in the country for a bigger pay, if they wanted to, but chose to be part of a Catholic university because they believed in the efficacy and the meaning and purpose of its mission. They found it personally meaningful. Reflecting on this reminds me of Jesus' parable of fine pearls, speaking of the kingdom of heaven: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine

pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it" (Matthew 13: 45–46). Having found the treasure, the leaders were willing to let go much because the treasure was worth it!

The participants' stories have touched my heart to examine my direction, disposition, and commitment. To me, this has been a journey of self-reflection, a review of my journey as a religious priest, a community leader, and a leader in CHE. Along this journey, I did *reflect-on-action* (Schön, 1983), on how I would have done things differently, gaining insight on my past experiences and *reflect-for-action* (Thompson & Thompson, 2008), on my direction for the future.

This inquiry has also reaffirmed my belief in qualitative inquiry as my preferred way of knowing. I was not introduced to exploring knowledge through experiential narratives until I joined the qualitative methods class in this PhD program. We were a startlingly diverse class in terms of professional, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and life experiences. Using different qualitative methods, we explored, during the entire semester, our own experiences of integration into the PhD program. That was learning qualitative methods through an exploration of our personal experiential narratives. That human experiential narratives can be credible, scientific, and empirical knowledge was an epiphany to me. That was the beginning of my love for qualitative inquiry. And that love has taken me thus far in this inquiry. Exploring meaning in human experience has been very fascinating to me. IPA's focus on interpreted meaning and critical reflection particularly appealed to me. The phenomenological method fits this inquiry because mission transmission is basically phenomenological and experiential.

Throughout the analysis, I strove to enter the lifeworld of the participants. I spent countless hours actively engaging with the data and rigorously analyzing the mission and identity

integration experiences of the participants. Bracketing my fore-meanings and prejudices required a very conscious effort in the analysis because of my shared stories with the participants. In the hermeneutic process, I was very self-reflective because, in the narratives, there were many parallels with my own experiences. I was additionally careful in reviewing my biases, going back to the data many times over, deploying reflectivity, and bracketing to minimize my influence. I believe I have done justice to the experiences of the participants. I am immensely grateful to them for trusting me with their stories. I am sure their insights and experiences will immensely help, inspire, and educate others.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Requesting Recommendation of Participants for Research

Date

Address

Salutation

I am Thomas Varkey Thennadiyil, a Catholic priest from the Order of Claretian Missionaries. I am currently a doctoral candidate in Organizational Leadership at the University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio. My doctoral research is a phenomenological study of the experience of academic lay leaders of the three Catholic universities in San Antonio who integrate within themselves the mission and identity of the university they are part of. For the purpose of this study *academic lay leaders* refer to not only the non-cleric and non-religious members of Catholic and Christian faith but all other faith traditions as well from the position of deans downwards. In other words, the sample for the study include deans, associate deans, directors, chairs, heads, coordinators, and leaders of various academic units in your university who are not priests or members of religious orders in the Catholic Church.

A critical starting point in this study is to identify those academic lay leaders who integrate the mission and identity of (name of the university). I request your help to identify eight to ten academic lay leaders (as defined above) who integrate the mission and identity* of the university. Kindly fill out the nomination form enclosed. Your nominations will be used to narrow down the search for prospective participants for this research study.

The following are the inclusion criteria for participating in the study:
1. The participants should have a minimum of 3 years of experience in academic leadership in a given Catholic university.
2. The participants could either be currently working in academic leadership or retired from such a position in Catholic universities within the last 10 years.
3. The participants should have received recognitions for their outstanding contributions to the university's mission.
4. The participants should also be willing to cooperate in the research through deep sharing of their personal experiences and relating them to their leadership practices.
5. The candidates who may not meet one or the other of the first three criteria mentioned above may still be considered for participation if the vice presidents of Mission and Ministry cite strong reasons of mission and identity integration. In the case of such participants, the exempted criteria and the reasons for their participation will be mentioned in the study.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could propose candidates for my research. If you need any further information, please contact me by e-mail: (e-mail address) or by phone: (phone number). You could also contact my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Alfredo Ortiz Aragon by e-mail: (e-mail address) or by phone: (phone number).

I am immensely grateful for your help.
Kind regards,

Thomas Varkey Thennadiyil, CMF
Dreeben School of Education, University of Incarnate Word

* Kindly nominate based on your personal understanding of what it means to integrate the mission and identity of the university.

Appendix B: Nomination Form

Kindly nominate academic lay leaders (as defined in the request letter) at (Name of the University) across schools and departments who you believe have integrated the mission and identity* of the university.

Your Role in the University: _____

Your Gender: _____

Number of Years you have worked at ……….. (Name of the university):

Candidate Nominated *Full Name, e-mail and Department/Role (Could either be currently working or retired within the last 10 years)*	Number of years you have known the person	Your reasoning for nomination. *Why do you think this academic lay leader has integrated the mission and identity of ………………….. (name of university)*
1.		
2.		
3.		

* Kindly nominate based on your personal understanding of what it means to integrate the mission and identity of the university.

Appendix C: Copy of the E-mail Sent to Nominated Candidates

Salutation

Greetings.

I am Fr. Thomas V. Thennadiyil, a Catholic priest from India. I am currently a doctoral candidate in Organizational Leadership at UIW. While in India before I came to San Antonio for my doctoral studies, I taught at undergraduate level and was also involved in the leadership of a Catholic undergraduate school. My doctoral research is a phenomenological study of the experience of academic lay leaders of the three Catholic universities in San Antonio who integrate within themselves the mission and identity of the university they are part of. In other words, I am looking at the life experiences of academic lay leaders (meaning not priests and religious) that influenced them to integrate the mission and identity of the Catholic university they are part of. When I requested (name), the V. P. for Mission and Ministry to recommend me leaders, who according to her have integrated the mission and identity of UIW, you are one of the leaders she recommended. I request you to consider participation in this research. Your knowledge and experience of mission integration of (name of the university) will be of great benefit to this study and thereby to the readers. Before we finalize your participation in this study, I would like to have a short (15 to 20 minutes duration) personal meeting and conversation with you. During that meeting I could provide you more details on the study and also get a short demographic data form filled out. If you could kindly suggest a couple of possible slots to meet with you this week or the week after, I could pick one of those slots for the short meeting. Thank you so much for your willingness to consider participation in the study. I look forward to meeting you. My cellphone number is: (phone number).

Thanking you,

Fr. Thomas V. Thennadiyil

Doctoral Candidate

University of the Incarnate Word

Appendix D: Informed Consent: Participant Consent Form

Title of the study: Integrating the Mission and Identity of Catholic Universities: An
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Academic Lay Leaders

What is this consent form about?

You are invited to take part in a research study conducted by Thomas Varkey Thennadiyil,
Doctoral Candidate in Organizational Leadership, Dreeben School of Education at
University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, USA. This informed consent form
provides you the details of the study before you decide to take part in it. You do not have to
participate if you do not want to. Kindly read the information provided here. Feel free to ask
questions about anything you want to clarify. If you decide to participate, the researcher will ask
you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to keep.

What is this research study about?

The purpose of this research study is to explore the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of
the three Catholic universities in San Antonio—University of the Incarnate Word, Our Lady of
the Lake University, and St. Mary's University—who integrate the mission and identity of the
university they are part of. This explorative phenomenological study focuses on the life stories
and experiences of the participants that contributed to the development of the mission and
identity orientation of the university within them.

What will I be required to do?

If you decide to be part of this study, you agree to the following:

- Complete a demographic data form that asks about your professional and personal
  backgrounds.
- Participate in a maximum of three interviews which will be held at a time and location of
  your choice. In the first interview of 60 to 90 minutes in duration you will be asked to
  respond to a series of questions about your experiences, thoughts, and feelings of
  integrating the mission and identity of the university you are/were part of. In the second
  interview of 60 to 90 minutes in duration you will respond to a series of questions about
  your experiences, thoughts, and feelings to further expand on what you shared in the first
  interview. You may be requested to participate in a third interview of 30 to 60 minutes in
  duration in which the researcher will review the study findings with you. In case you
  attend the third interview, you will have the opportunity to inform the researcher whether
  or not the findings accurately captured your experiences. All the interviews will be
  audiotaped.

- You will be asked to review the transcripts of the first two interviews. This is to verify
  the accuracy of what you shared. And reviewing the transcript of the first interview could
  also help you to reflect on your responses in the first and prepare for the second
  interview.

- The first two interviews will take place over a period of two to six weeks. If you agree for the third interview to review the findings, that interview will take place between one to twelve months after the first two interviews.
- If you wish to provide any written reflections or any documents you consider is helpful to the study and relates to your experiences under consideration, you are most welcome to do so.

Can I stop my participation in this study?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question during the interview or on the demographic data form or opt out of the study completely at any point of time. If you decide to withdraw, the researcher will delete the audio record files and the transcripts of your interview.

Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?

The researcher does not anticipate any serious risk or discomfort to the participant. However, given the nature of the study, its requirements, and the process involved in the selection of participants, it may be possible that the identity of the participant may be discerned. Recollecting experiences may also cause emotional discomforts to some participants. You are free to request a pause during the interview or decide to continue the interview at a later time, or may decide to opt out of the interview permanently, at any point of the study.

Will I benefit by participating in this study?

There will be no compensation of any kind for participation in the study. However, your participation may benefit you personally and professionally from reflecting on your experiences of integrating the mission and identity of the university you are/were part of.

Who will see the information about me?

Participant anonymity is not a requirement for this study. You are given the choice whether or not your name is to be used in the study. You may circle your choice below:

1. I will be an anonymous participant using the pseudonym ……..………….. *[Fill out the pseudonym of your choice]*.
2. I will be an anonymous participant and I permit the researcher to decide a pseudonym for me.
3. I choose to use my name in the study.

The researcher will not reveal your personal identity in any publication or presentation, except your name, in case you choose to use it. All other identifying information you provide will be kept confidential. Parts of your interviews, including direct quotes, may be printed in the manuscripts, but any identifying information will not be printed. Your demographic data maybe used along with that of other participants to describe the sample, but no personal identifiable details will be revealed. The audio recordings will be transcribed by researcher alone, and all

data related computer files will be deleted 5 years after the completion of the research. All paper-based forms will be destroyed after they are scanned and transferred digitally to computer. All research related computer files will be saved on the researcher's personal computer in a secure, password-protected manner. The data collected may be used for any scholarly publication or presentation emerging from the study. For the use of data for any other publication, the researcher will seek explicit permission from you. You may decide to grant or deny permission for the same.

Whom do I contact if I have more questions?
You may ask any questions you have now. In case you have any questions later, you may contact the researcher via e-mail: thennadi@student.uiwtx.edu or over phone: 210-574-1304.

You may also contact Dr. Alfredo Ortiz Aragon, PhD, the dissertation committee Chair, Dreeben School of Education, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas via e-mail: alortiz1@uiwtx.edu or over phone: 210-805-2545.

If you have additional questions about your rights or wish to report a problem that may be related to the study, please contact the University of the Incarnate Word Institutional Review Board office at 210-805-3036.

University of the Incarnate Word's IRB approval number for this study is 18-11-003 and it expires on November 19, 2019.

Statement of consent
I have read the information above. I have had the opportunity to ask clarifications and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand the study well enough to make decision about my participation. By signing below, I agree to the terms mentioned above. I have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of participant: _____

Date of consent: _____

Participant's signature: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

Appendix E: Second Informed Consent

Request for second informed consent

Salutation

Greetings from Fr. Thomas V. Thennadiyil.

I thank you again for your participation in my study on lay leadership in Catholic higher education. As I am nearing the completion of this project, I am now reaching out to you for your approval of the part of the study that involves your data.

Attached with this e-mail I am presenting to you all matters pertaining to you in the manuscript. Your portion is highlighted in blue color in the attached MS Word file. As you would see, there are identifiable information in the work such as your name and your professional details. Kindly review the manuscript and let me know of any changes or additions you would like. If you approve the manuscript as it is, a one-word e-mail reply- APPROVED- would suffice.
I thank you for your generosity with your time and for sharing your rich experiences.
I look forward to hearing from you.
Thanking you,

Fr. Thomas V. Thennadiyil
Doctoral Candidate
University of the Incarnate Word

Appendix F: Demographic Data of Participants

Personal details

Age:	Gender:
Race:	Ethnicity:
Nationality:	Highest Academic Degree:_____
Faith Tradition (Circle what applies): Catholic Non-Catholic Christian Others (specify)_____	

Academic Background

Years of School education at a Catholic School until 12th Grade (Mention the number of years)	
Years of School education at a non-Catholic Christian School until 12th Grade	
Years of School education at a Public School until 12th	
Years of College education at a Catholic University/College	
Years of College education at a non-Catholic Christian University/College	
Years of College education at a Public University	
Discipline(s) of Master's Degree(s):	
Discipline(s) of Doctoral Degree(s)	

Career

Are you currently working or retired? (Circle what applies)	Currently working Retired
If retired, mention the year of your retirement:	
Total years of your work experience:	

Total years of work experience in higher education:	
Total years of work experience in Catholic higher education:	
Total years of work experience at the current university:	
Total years of work experience at current position of leadership:	
Mention your current position:	

Awards and Recognitions

List out the awards and recognitions, if any, you received at your current place of work:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mission and Identity Integration experience

How did you learn about the mission and identity of the university you are now part of?
(Mention all that apply)

Through formal training	Yes_____ No_____
Self-taught	Yes_____ No_____
Through other ways (Specify)	

Appendix G: Interview Protocol and Schedule

Interview Protocol

[Before the interview: Review the protocol and the schedule and ensure everything is in place. Greet the participant warmly and spend 5–7 minutes of conversation building rapport and facilitating a positive environment.]

Researcher: Thank you so much for consenting to be part of this study.

Your responses are very important and I want to make sure that I capture everything you say. Can I audiotape this interview? *[Wait for the response].* Thank you, I will turn on the digital recorder now. *[Switches on the digital recorder and places it centrally to facilitate optimal recording quality].*

I will also be taking notes during the interview. I want to assure you that all your responses will be confidential and a pseudonym will be used to quote from your responses. You could choose a pseudonym for yourself. *[Wait for the response].* I will be transcribing the interview and only the pseudonym will identify the data. The data will be stored for 5 years.

As per the IRB requirements of the university, you have to sign the informed consent I had e-mailed to you earlier. I have two printed copies of the informed consent. One will be for you to keep. This document states that your participation is voluntary and you are free to stop at any time or may choose to skip any question that may make you feel uncomfortable. It also states that all information will be confidential and that the study does not intend to inflict any harm. You may take a few minutes to review the document *[Give time for review].* Do you have any questions on the informed consent? *[Wait for response and collect the signed consent].* Thank you.

This interview is expected to last between 60 to 90 minutes. I have some questions in my list. However, kindly feel free to talk about your experiences that you feel are related. Do you have any questions at this time? *[Wait for response].* Thank you.

My name is Thomas and I am a doctoral student at the University of the Incarnate Word. My dissertation is on the lived experiences of academic lay leaders of Catholic universities who integrate the mission and identity of the university they are part of. The focus of this research is on your lived experiences. I am interested in your life experiences that have helped you integrate the mission and identity of the university you are now part of. In other words, please describe in as much detail as possible your life experiences, thoughts, and feelings that connect to your integration of mission and identity of the university.

[Begin with asking opening question from the interview schedule]

[During the interview use probes as necessary to help the flow of the conversation. Note down relevant para-verbal non-verbal communication. Note down my own significant transferrential reactions. And conclude when both the participant and I feel a subjective sense of saturation of the data. And after the interview thank the participant and collect all the materials of the interview.

Interview Schedule

[The interview schedule presented here is an example of the questions the researcher will use. The research, as it progresses, may require revision and change of questions.]

Opening Question:

Please tell me in detail the journey that led you to this university.

Primary Structural Questions:

1. Please describe your relationship to the mission and identity of the university.
2. Describe in detail the experiences that have helped you to incorporate the mission and identity of the university.

Exploratory Probes:

[The following probes may be asked depending upon the flow and direction of the interview and also the need to access greater details of the experiences shared (Smith et al., 2009). The sequence of the questions will vary according to the dynamics and the details of the experiences being shared.]

1. Please share with me events from your life that may have influenced your choice to work in this university. Kindly share with me specific situations, events, and people involved.
   Possible prompts: Who or what influenced you? Can you give me an example? Why is that important to you? Why does that stand out in your memory? Why did you choose to work at this place and not others?
2. Describe in detail experiences in which you felt working in this university has personally influenced you. Describe those situations in detail.
   Possible prompts: What happened? What kind of influence? What connections do you find between that event and your role in the university? What meanings do you give to those experiences?
3. Describe the challenging experiences you may have faced in integrating the mission and identity of the university?
   Possible prompts: What happened? How did you feel? What is it that you found challenging? Were you able to overcome the challenge? What did you do?
4. Can you share with me some experiences from the university that may have changed you over the years? Please give me examples.
   Possible prompts: In what ways? How did you feel about that? How are those changes significant? How do you see yourself today as compared to the time you joined?

Possible probes for all the questions above: What people/thoughts/incidents/conversations stand out for you? Tell me more about that. How did you feel about that?

Before winding up the interview session: Is there anything you haven't shared that you believe is relevant to the story of your relationship to the mission and identity of the university?

[The questions for the second round of interviews will be developed in response to the experiences that the participants shared in the first interview. Those questions will follow the same format used in the first round of interviews.]

Appendix H: Reflection Questions and Optional Worksheet for Follow-Up Interview

A) **Follow up Interview with [Name]: Reflection Questions**

1. Dr. [Name], in our previous conversation you mentioned that while doing your doctoral studies at [Name of the University] was your first realization that you really wanted to serve the students. Is there any particular event or a set of events that led you to this realization?
2. You mentioned that UIW helped you do things and become things you never imagined- and that you have been receiving a lot. Can you speak more on that?
3. You didn't know much about the Catholic traditions and culture before you came to UIW. And yet you were very quick to integrate, personalize and love the place, its culture, and mission. Not many find it that very easy. If a newly hired faculty with no knowledge of Catholic traditions, culture, and mission ask your guidance for integration into the mission of UIW, how would you guide her?
4. You spoke about the process of personalizing, deepening the understanding and living the mission. You also said that your colleagues have played a part in that process. Does UIW have a strong catalyst group of faculty and leaders who have a deep understanding of the mission and engage in mission-centered discussions? How do we cultivate that kind of an environment?
5. What of the Catholic and UIW traditions had the most influence on you?
6. You mentioned that you really did not understand faith before you came to UIW. How does growth in the understanding of faith relate to mission integration of this faith-based university? Do you think there is a co-relation? How does faith help your personalization and living of the mission?
7. What has UIW done in cultivating this integration in you?
8. What could the university do more with its mission integration among faculty?
9. You mentioned that perhaps students are not as connected to the mission as you expect them to be. What more could be done with the students to help them connect better to the mission?
10. Imagine that you get to hire a lay person for a middle level leadership position at UIW. What will be those three or four traits you would look for among candidates to make sure the person fits the Catholic identity, mission and culture of UIW?

B) Optional Worksheet for Follow-up Interview

Your significant life moments that influenced the way you integrate and/or express the

identity and mission of the Catholic university

Kindly spend a few moments in personal reflection and identity the 5–7 most significant moments in your life that have influenced the way you have integrated and/or express the mission and identity of the Catholic university that you are now part of. "Significant" simply means something that was important or meaningful to you in some way. Significant moments could be positive, negative or in-between, personal or professional, and from any time of your life, either before or after joining the university. After indicating each significant moment in the first column, kindly also provide in the second column a short narrative explaining why you consider each moment significant.

Your Name:

	Significant moments in your life that have influenced the way you integrate the mission and identity of the Catholic university that you are now part of.	**Why is the moment significant?**
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

Appendix I: Clustering of Level 1 Codes

Superordinate themes   *Themes*   Level 1 codes (Larry)

1 Forming Values and Beliefs			
Forming a spirit of service	*Integrating fundamental values*	*Internalizing faith and spirituality*	*Experiencing mentor and ideologue influence*
Engaging with community	Becoming politically aware	Being active in church	Being influenced by a committed faculty
Serving the less privileged	Seeking knowledge	Seeing social realities in the context of faith	Being influenced by a faculty of faith
Organizing community	Becoming aware of Vietnam war		
Living in underprivileged circumstances	Valuing democratic principles	Questioning personal faith	Encouraged by a faculty to do higher studies
Sharing the lot of the poor	Being committed to national ideals	Experiencing influence of faith traditions	Being positively influenced by mentors
Experiencing what poverty is	Moved by the ideals of social democracy		
Experiencing parental influence in service	Becoming politically conscious	Finding meaning in religious traditions	Working with Caesar Chavez
	Becoming socially conscious		Being inspired by political and spiritual leaders
Experiencing the influence of family	Being influenced by family values		
	Learning civil rights movements		

2 Experiencing Disorienting Dilemmas	
Encountering social issues	*Experiencing dark moments in life*
Learning depth of poverty and inequality	Experiencing traumatic moments
Encountering social discrimination	
Engaging social justice issues	
Experiencing social injustice	
Experiencing racial discrimination	
Experiencing racial violence	
Experiencing frustration	
Experiencing social challenges	
Being angry at the Church	

3 Nurturing Mission Consciousness			
Experiencing the charisma of the founding congregation	*Receiving formation in mission and identity*	*Experiencing a sense of community*	*Experiencing trusting leadership and mentoring*
Being inspired by Marianists	Deepening knowledge	Connecting well with students	Experiencing encouraging leadership
Being inspired by social activists of founding congregation	Deepening knowledge in non-violence and civil resistance	Loving the experience of alumni being in touch.	Being inspired by mission-driven exemplars
Researching on Marianist social justice guru	Cultivating academic competence		
	Immersing academia and faith		
Visiting Marianist social projects	Deepening knowledge of the Marianists		
	Engaging deeply with the charism of the Marianists		
Being inspired by the charism of the founder	Understanding Catholic intellectual tradition		
	Loving Catholic social teaching		
Being driven by the progressive charism of the order	Engaging Catholic social teaching		
	Gaining experiential knowledge		
	Being challenged by catholic intellectual tradition		
	Recognizing the influence of Catholic Intellectual tradition		

4 Assimilating the Mission			
Interiorizing through reflective engagement	*Experiencing a compelling sense of purpose*	*Aligning personal values with the institutional mission*	*Deepening faith and spirit*
Engaging faith reflectively and critically	Finding fulfillment in social justice involvements	Not wanting to teach at a state university	Experiencing faith as a process
Critical questioning		Integrating academia and social activism	Questioning own faith
	Feeling accomplished		Dialoging with God
Reflecting constantly			Deepening one's own faith
	Being purpose-driven	Feeling fit for UIW	Gaining a transformed understanding of church
	Finding personal meaning	Being passionate about mission	Seeking answers from scripture
		Personal living of values	Being inspired by Beatitudes
	Discovering personal purpose and meaning		Being challenged by Beatitudes
		Living the mission personally	Experiencing deepening in faith
			Being influenced by faith
			Seeing faith as foundation of hope
			Experiencing transforming faith
			Living one's faith

5 Owning the Mission			
Experiencing mission integration as a continuous evolution	*Building relationships*	*Experiencing a mission centric culture*	*Experiencing challenges of integration*
Being a lifelong learner Life as a constant learning experience	Being open to dialogue Experiencing the mission being enriched by the presence of diversities Organizing dialogue Strengthening community Staying connected with the academic community Experiencing a sense of community		Recognizing own vulnerabilities Experiencing the challenge of passing on the legacy Not mastering balance Facing conflicting obligations Experiencing the challenge of balancing different roles

6 Championing the Mission			
Integrating mission in academia	***Imparting ethical and moral values***	***Advocating social justice***	***Living by example***
Recognizing that the curriculum should serve the mission	Publishing on non-violence Living human values Teaching students to think Strengthening common good Educating students in human values	Feeling overwhelmed with social justice movements Involving with civil rights movements Becoming a social justice advocate Advocating social justice Advocating peace Becoming a social justice practitioner Joining the Center for Social Justice and Global Awareness Creating Social Justice Collaborative Practicing Catholic social teaching Engaging social justice internationally Imparting education to the less privileged Developing ideas for community welfare Reaching out to the third world countries Taking students to overseas mission tours	Living out values Becoming an inspiration to students Modelling own behavior Living the charism of the founder Becoming an exemplar

Appendix J: Screenshots of Codes from Dedoose