1978

American Catholic Education in the 1960's: A Study of the Parochial School Debate

Karl Peter Ganss

Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation

https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/1791

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

Creative Commons License

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.

Copyright © 1978 Karl Peter Ganss
AMERICAN CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN THE 1960'S:
A STUDY OF THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL DEBATE

by

Karl Peter Ganss

Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September
1978
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It would be an impossible task to list all of those who in some way contributed toward the writing of this dissertation. But the author would like to offer special thanks to the members of his committee: Drs. Gerald Gutek, John M. Wozniak, and Rosemary V. Donatelli, who helped bring this work to fruition.

In a more personal vein, the author would like to thank his parents, Karl J. Ganss and Philomena (Cekle) Ganss, whose sacrifices made a Catholic education possible. Also a word of gratitude to Ken and Margaret McNealy and their three children, Michael, Megan, and Mollie, who provided support and understanding when the dissertation seemed a long way from completion.
VITA

The author, Rev. Karl Peter Ganss, is the son of Karl John Ganss and Philomena (Gekle) Ganss. He was born on April 19, 1942, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

His early education was received in parochial schools in Philadelphia and Sacred Heart Preparatory Seminary in Geneva, Illinois. After graduating from high school in 1960, the author began a year of spiritual formation with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in Youngstown, Ohio, and continued his theological preparation at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Shelby, Ohio.

Upon ordination to the Catholic priesthood on September 21, 1968, the author began postgraduate studies at DePaul University, Chicago. He received an M.A. in history from the University on February 6, 1972. During that time he also distinguished himself by induction into the National Social Science Honor Society. Several years later, the author began a doctoral program in the Department of Foundations of Education at the University of Loyola in Chicago.

Concurrent with his studies, the author held the position of chairman of the Religious Studies Department of Mount St. Mary's Academy, St. Charles, Illinois, and religion instructor at Sacred Heart Mission Seminary, Geneva, and the Academy of Our Lady, Chicago. In 1972 he was hired by the McHenry County Board of Catholic Education as Area Director of Religious Education. Five years later, in 1977, he also assumed the
duties of Superintendent of Catholic Education in that same county, a position that he still holds.

His professional memberships include the American Catholic Historical Association, the Religious Education Association, Pi Gamma Mu, Phi Delta Kappa, and the National Catholic Education Association.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTERS

### I. INTRODUCTION
- Background                                                             | 1
- Purpose                                                                | 1
- Scope                                                                  | 2
- Need for Study                                                         | 3
- Definitions                                                            | 4
- Methodology                                                            | 7
- Basic Assumptions                                                      | 7

### II. HISTORY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT                           | 9

### III. ARE PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS THE ANSWER?                                | 32

### IV. WIDER ISSUES OF THE DEBATE                                       | 55

### V. SCIENTIFIC STUDIES                                                | 80

### VI. WASHINGTON SYMPOSIUM                                              | 110

### VII. POSTSCRIPT                                                       | 131

### SUMMARY                                                               | 152

### BIBLIOGRAPHY                                                         | 155
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In 1955 just as Sputnik technology was getting off the ground, and public education was being raked over the coals by revisionist educators, Catholic education found itself in a similar turmoil. In an article in *Thought* magazine, in that year, Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, noted historian from the Catholic University of America, publicly criticized Catholic education for being anti-intellectual. The ensuing debate heatedly continued until finally in 1964 Mrs. Mary Perkins Ryan raised the question which everybody feared: why Catholic schools at all?

The purpose of Mrs. Ryan's book, admittedly somewhat tongue in cheek, was to get the Catholic Church in the United States to reevaluate its strong traditional stand on Catholic schools, hopefully abandoning them in favor of informal programs of religious education. The book did not have its desired effect; however, it did generate considerable controversy in which new issues emerged. This latter development did much to clarify Catholic thinking, and paved the way for a rejuvenated educational mission in the Church.

B. Purpose

It is the purpose of this dissertation to study the history and
development of the Catholic educational debate in some sense associated with Mary Perkins Ryan's book, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?* The author hopes to center on the issues that were brought into the forum of the debate; such as the purpose of the Catholic schools, the rationale for financing Catholic education, and lastly the optimal moment for Catholic schooling. Key personalities treated will be Mary Perkins Ryan, James Michael Lee, Father Andrew Greeley, James Donohue, Neil McCluskey — to name a few.

**C. Scope**

The study herein undertaken deals with specific issues rather than institutions or levels of Catholic education. Thereby the author hopes to avoid the myopia that comes from a too narrow focus, such as would occur if one simply examined the parochial school situation. Obviously, however, from time to time, different levels of the Church's educational apostolate will figure prominently in this or that debate, but indirectly.

Also from the very start, it should be made clear that the issues and personalities treated all come under the heading of Roman Catholicism, i.e., the educators and critics are all involved in some way on the level of their community of faith. We are not concerned with long-standing opposition directed against the Church from without, as for example, the criticisms heaped upon Roman Catholicism by Paul Blanchard and James Conant during the period of the 1950's.

The general time period of this study is from the publication of John Tracy Ellis' essay, "American Catholics and the Intellectual Life,"
in 1955 to the publication of the pastoral letter of the American bishops, entitled, *To Teach As Jesus Did*, in 1972. However, the more particular focus will be from the release of Mary Perkins Ryan's book, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?*, in 1964, to the promulgation of the statement on Catholic education by the Washington Symposium in 1969. The reason for the telescoping of course lies in the fact that the storm of controversy touched off in 1964 was more or less definitively resolved by the time of the summit meeting taking place in the nation's capital in 1969. The other two parameters are significant in that they gracefully lead to and from the main conflict span; 1955 marks the first public criticism of Catholic education on a national scale. The 1972 date exhibits a re-vitalized Catholic education, which put more stress on academics, religious content, and service, though not approximating its peak enrollments witnessed in the 1960's.

D. Need for the Study

Because the Catholic Church has made such vast changes over the last fifteen years, there is an increasing need for Catholics and others interested in socio-religious phenomena to understand the interplay of people, ideas, and events that paved the way for the present situation. This applies to every phase of Catholic life, especially to the field of Catholic education, which is the key to understanding and accepting the Church of the 1970's.

There is an increasing feeling of rootlessness among many adult Catholics, a feeling that the Church is no longer true to its original mandate given by Jesus Christ. The author believes that by systematically
examining the Catholic school debate of the nineteen-sixties, the Post-Vatican II Catholic will gain insights into the phenomenon of change and better adapt to a Church which was taking a giant step in renewing itself. Moreover, the author believes the order and continuity that will emerge from the study, will have a quieting effect on the reader, pointing out the surer footing of Catholic education for the future.

E. Definitions

Catholic education as defined in this treatise is education engaged in by Roman Catholics in an institutional setting. As such it involves formal instruction, and takes place according to certain guidelines set down by the Catholic hierarchy. Given this frame of reference, Catholic education encompasses every level of involvement from pre-school to adult education — as long as it exists in a given, structured environment, and under the tutelage of priests, religious, and laity.

From the very onset, Catholic education must be distinguished from religious education. The former has been synonymous with Catholic schooling, which involves a unified plan of instruction in secular as well as religious subjects; it also involves the attitudes, beliefs, and practices that are inculcated during the normal course of the school day. The latter is more restricted; religious education refers only to a small aspect of Catholic education, and can take place either in the formal geographical location of specific buildings, or in an informal setting such as the home. As such the time dedicated to religious education is very minimal, usually from sixty to ninety minutes during any given week.
Also the term Catholic education as used in this treatment, is somewhat narrowed to refer to only that which takes place in the school. Thus the study takes no cognizance of the other modes of education in the Church, such as the Catholic press, the Sunday homily (sermon), Catholic hymnology, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD), and other mass education media.¹

It might also be mentioned that the term Catholic education in no way denotes a simple, unified, monistic structure or system perfectly administered by an omni-present hierarchy. Rather, there is great diversity along many lines.

For one thing, not all Catholic schools are owned and operated in the same way. Some, such as the parochial schools are owned by the parish and ultimately by the diocese. Others such as academies, private high schools, junior colleges, and diminishingly fewer full fledged colleges and universities, are in the hands of religious orders or lay boards of control.

In terms of supervision, especially in the case of elementary schools, sometimes the chief administrator is the pastor, the educational supervisor of the religious community, or the diocesan superintendent. Likewise control varies according to where the power base is, either at the local level, if the school is separate and independent, or at the diocesan level, if the school is part of a system. The former situation

might manifest itself in the form of central financing, coordinated central purchasing, etc.

As regards the quality of Catholic education, here again there is considerable diversity, depending upon who controls and staffs the school; and what the educational vision is. In schools, for example, those run by the Jesuit Order, much greater stress is put on academic preparation of teachers than in schools run by other communities, where religious are pushed into a classroom, just barely out of the novitiate.

When it comes to financing, once more there is variation. Most schools, at least at the lower level, are supported mainly by tuition and a much larger subsidy from the parish treasury. However, in a few cases, as in the instance of inner-city schools, the funding comes from the Bishop.2

From what has been said, although efforts to unify Catholic education have been "systematic," there is practically speaking no one system. This is especially true of higher education, where most institutions are autonomous. On the lower level, the situation depends on the given diocese. Virtually the closest we come to a system is the parochial school, one which is more a purposeful system than an administrative system.

2According to a study by Notre Dame University, released in the 1960's, only 34 of the nation's 2500 Catholic high schools had more than 50 percent of their budget funded from the bishop's office. Confer Reginald A. Neuwien, ed., Catholic Schools in Action (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), p. 74.
F. Methodology and Procedure

The dissertation is fundamentally an historical study of the issues debated in Catholic education in the period from the late 1950's into the following decade and a half. As implied from this introduction thus far, the study will rely heavily on the historical method. The author will strive to faithfully reconstruct the climate of controversy above mentioned, through documentation and calculated inference.

Since the dissertation deals with a period of American Catholic education that is relatively current, the main part of the research involves monographs, learned journals of education, bulletins of national and state Catholic educational associations, columns of correspondence, major addresses, and interviews with the major figures concerned with the debate.

G. Basic Assumptions

There are two major assumptions underlying this study. The first is the belief that the Catholic educational renascence of the 1960's is due chiefly to the wedding of two long-separated aspects of the immigrant Church: Catholicism and Americanism. Once the Church began producing upwardly mobile members of the new middle class, it was only a matter of time that a new consciousness would set in, letting Roman Catholicism take its place among the religions of the nation. This new awareness on the part of American Catholics would in turn cause them to question the Church's traditional educational processes.

The second major assumption is that once the Church identified with
the American way of life, it could no longer remain isolationist; it had to give up its opposition to basically American philosophies of education, such as those of Dewey, Kilpatrick, and others. The obvious consequence of this is that from here on in the Church in America will find its educational structure changing just as fast as American life changes.
CHAPTER II

A HISTORY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT FROM THE FIRST PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE TO VATICAN II

In the 1960's prominent liturgists and religious educators raised the question that perhaps the American Catholic Church could do without its massive network of parochial schools in favor of more experiential and catechetical programs of Christian formation. Although Catholic educational criticism was not unheard of during this period, the thought of abandoning what had become a permanent fixture in American Catholicism, came as a shock. However, a backward glance at the history of the parochial schools in the United States reveals a rather surprising conclusion: parochial schools were never absolutely necessary for the life of the Church in America. Although they were very serviceable and strongly encouraged by ecclesiastical authority, they were never absolutely mandated by the American Catholic Church. The present writer hopes to show in the ensuing presentation that the only major factor responsible for the establishment of the parochial schools was the incidence of religious bigotry in the public schools and the secular godlessness that followed. By indicating the internal seeds of debate that were never quite eradicated, the writer also wishes to point out how the Catholic educational debate came full cycle, once the Americanization of the Church took place and Catholic institutions democratized.

This chapter focuses on the period of growth and development from
the first provincial council of Baltimore up until Vatican II. However, for obvious historical reasons the major thrust will be on the late 1800's; this was the period when primal questions began to be asked, such as, Why Parochial Schools?, What relationship should there be with the Public Schools?, What role should the State play in Education? By contrasting the early beginnings of the parochial school movement with the Golden Age of Insight represented by Vatican II, the Catholic educational issues of the 1960's will make more sense.

In order to understand the legislation of the councils of Baltimore, it is important to understand something of the background of the times. The possibility of Catholic schools as a distinct and separate system in the United States, came about only as a last resort in the face of a hostile American environment. In the beginning of the Catholic Church as a free entity in the newly formed American nation, there was little organized effort to establish a system of schools. The equivalent of Catholic elementary schools existed here and there and served basically a religious function. As a practical necessity in many cases, because of isolation and distance, some Catholic parishes also were engaged in secular education.

However, the situation took on a new urgency as the new tides of immigration came, beginning with the Irish in the 1830's and 1840's. With the flood of these Catholics, who settled mostly in the large eastern cities, the Church soon realized that special efforts were needed to preserve the faith of the immigrant. In view of both the relatively few Catholic schools that existed during this period and
the anti-Catholic sentiment that prevailed in the public schools, the American bishops became increasingly concerned. They now saw the need for vigilance and outspokenness to bolster the religious practice of their new flock.

In the 1840's as the common school movement gained momentum, giants of the Church, such as Archbishop Hughes of New York, challenged the threat that the common schools represented to the faith of the immigrant Catholic. Although in the early years of his episcopacy, Hughes had the pleasant situation of having his schools funded by the Public School Society of New York, he soon became militant as he fought for the Catholic share of tax monies. Hughes' first encounter with the pro-public school forces unfortunately ended in defeat. Nonetheless, he proceeded to attack the Protestant, anti-Catholic atmosphere of the public schools. What angered him most was that Catholics attending the schools were denied the use of their own Bible (the Rheims-Douay version) and had to tolerate readings from the King James Bible and the other practices prevalent in the public schools at this time. Hughes joined forces with other clergymen, such as Archbishop Kendrick of Philadelphia, in fighting the anti-Catholic bias in the textbooks also in use in the public schools. As time went on and the nativist frenzy took greater hold on the country, it was inevitable that ecclesiastical legislation

---

1James Michael Lee in his article, "Roman Catholic Religious Education," as found in Marvin J. Taylor, ed., Foundations for Christian Education in an Era of Change (Nashville: Abingdon, 1976), p. 245, cites Hughes as "originating for the first time...a deliberate, full Catholic commitment to the organized, wholesale establishment of a separate and total Catholic School System."
would be mounted toward the establishment of a separate system of Catholic parochial schools.

It was against this background that the Catholic bishops of the United States met periodically in Baltimore from 1829 until 1885 to address the situation brought about by the lack of an organized network of Catholic schools. Although the avowed purpose of the meetings was pastoral, i.e., to take care of the needs of the emerging Church in America, education took up much of the bishops' deliberations. Not only were they concerned about the religious instruction of their flock, but the bishops were also impatient to establish seminaries for the training of priests, and institutions of higher learning where teachers could be educated. The end result of these periodic assemblies was the inauguration of a system of parochial schools that was normative for the entire Catholic population.

As stated above, the first provincial council of Baltimore evinced the first visible drive for systematic Catholic education. Meeting in 1829, the council fathers among other things, voiced the need for formal declaration:

We judge it absolutely necessary that schools should be established, in which the young may be taught principles of faith and morality, while being instructed in letters.2

The statement was important not insofar as it was a clear mandate for the establishment of parochial schools, but rather in that for the first time on a national level, the bishops expressed the need for universal

instruction.

On August 20, 1833, against the background of the then emergent common school movement, the second provincial council convened. The conference made up of nine bishops and one archbishop, continued the drive for education by passing legislation for the inauguration of more efficient parochial schools. A significant contribution of this meeting was the selection of a committee of three to supervise the publication of Catholic textbooks. In a pastoral letter summing up the work of the council, Bishop John England again stressed the importance of Catholic education in which youth would have "the best opportunities of literature and science, united to a strict protection of their morals and the best safeguards of their faith."4

The third provincial council, which met in 1837, seems not to have concerned itself too much with education. However, the pastoral issued following the council urged Catholics to support the schools. The council fathers also went on record, through their spokesman, Bishop England, as praising the work of the teaching orders of nuns, who had been streaming into the country during this period.

Three years later, the fourth provincial council concerned itself with the anti-Catholic influence in the public schools. Since the Catho-

---

3The three university and college presidents who served on the committee were from St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore; Mt. St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg; and Georgetown College.
licit immigrant population began to swell the enrollment of the existing parochial schools, and funds were scarce, many pilgrims to the new land placed their children in public schools, which in many instances were detrimental to the faith. The council fathers considered the matter and urged priests and parents to insist on their civil rights.

Like the previous council, the fifth provincial gathering, which met in 1843, inveighed against the anti-Catholic climate of the public schools. The bishops in their pastoral insisted on the natural right of parents to have their children educated in the above schools without interference with their religious faith and practices. The council fathers also reminded parents of their duty to impart faith to their children. This was the last mention of Catholic education until the first plenary council of Baltimore in 1852.6

The first provincial councils were significant in that they exhibited a definite trend in American Catholic thinking toward setting up an independent system of parochial schools. At first the councils witnessed the need to supervise the religious instruction of youth; then gradually by establishing a committee on the publication of Catholic textbooks, the opposition to the Protestant scriptures in the public schools, and the strong insistence on the civil rights of Catholics

5A plenary council covers a larger area of jurisdiction than a provincial council, is more solemn in nature, and requires the permission of the pope to be convoked.
6The provincial councils, which met in 1846 and 1849 respectively, had nothing to say about education. Although these were peak years of the nativist uprising, not only was Catholic education not a part of the bishops' agenda, but not a single word about persecution was mentioned: a curious fact to say the least.
unable to attend the existing parochial schools, the councils paved the way for the legislation that followed in the first three plenary councils of Baltimore.

In 1852, two years before the Maine Supreme Court made the King James version of the Bible normative in the public schools of that state, the American bishops assembled for the first plenary council meeting in Baltimore. Seeing the impossibility of any compromise with the public school system, these American churchmen called for the establishment of parochial schools in dioceses whenever possible. In their pastoral letter the bishops had the following command:

Encourage the establishment and support of Catholic schools; make every sacrifice which may be necessary for this object; spare our hearts the pain of beholding the youth whom, after the example of our Master, we so much love, involved in all the evils of an un-catholic education, evils too multiplied and too obvious to require that we should do more than raise our voices in solemn protest against the system from which they spring.7

Fourteen years later, at the close of the Civil War, the American bishops met once again in plenary session; the year was 1866. Compared with the enactments of previous years, there was very little legislation. However, matters educational were nonetheless touched upon. The bishops directed their priests to build schools next to the parish church and to provide religious instruction for children attending public schools. Perhaps the most spectacular suggestion made at the council was the creation of a national Catholic university. Unfortunately, the time was not ripe for the idea and so it had to be shelved until the 1880's. Other pro-

---

7Guilday, National Pastorals, p. 191.
visions of the council were for the education of the poor, especially the newly liberated black man and the rehabilitation of delinquent youth. Generally speaking, however, all that the second plenary council accomplished was to reinforce earlier decrees and pronouncements.

The third plenary council, which met in Baltimore, in 1884, was of course the most significant of all the Baltimore councils. It was at this meeting that legislation would be made for Catholic education, which would influence the course of American church history for many years to come.

Part of the background of the third plenary council involved a Catholic layman and journalist named James A. McMaster. Born a Presbyterian, McMaster was part of the conservative element in the Church, which believed that every Catholic child should be educated in a school maintained by the faith. Perhaps encouraged by the Syllabus of Errors and the triumphalist tone of Vatican I, McMaster conducted a one-man campaign in the Catholic press for a distinct network of Catholic schools. He eventually brought his influence to bear in Rome through an agent, Miss Ella B. Edes.

As things worked out, McMaster's persistence was rewarded. The Congregation of the Propaganda sent the American hierarchy a questionnaire, which eventually became the basis of the Papal Instruction of

8A rather conservative document directed by authorities in Rome against liberal churchmen, who because their views bordered dangerously on heresy, were branded, "modernists."
The above document gave McMaster a moderate victory and served as the ideological groundwork for the educational decrees of the third plenary council of Baltimore.

During the third council of Baltimore there was considerable discussion on the force that legislation should have regarding the obligation of sending Catholic youth to the Catholic schools. In many dioceses attendance at parochial schools was almost equivalent to fidelity to God. Parents who bypassed the parochial schools were excluded from the sacraments. In other dioceses parents were free to do as they pleased. This ambiguity along with the need for further clarification on the rights and duties of pastors and parents as regards the Catholic school, formed the agenda of the council's committee on schools.

The principal movers at the council for a resolution of the school issue, were Archbishop Feehan, of Chicago, who was chairman of the committee on schools; Bishop Spalding, of Peoria; Bishop Flasch, of La Crosse; and Bishop Cosgrove, of Davenport. Studying the former pronouncements of the Baltimore councils, the fathers of Baltimore III once again underscored the negative effects of public education. It was their opinion that if religious instruction were separated from secular education, and left to the home and church, religious indifference would result, so much so that religion would no longer be considered a real part of life. Accordingly then the bishops of Baltimore III, reempha-

---

9The Instruction put heavy stress on the importance of parochial education but at the same time safeguarded the rights of parents who due to hardship have to send their offspring to the public schools.
sized the importance of parochial schools:

Therefore we not only exhort Catholic parents with paternal love but we also command them, with all the authority in our power, to procure for their beloved offspring, given to them by God, re-born in Christ in baptism, and destined for heaven, a truly Christian and Catholic education, and to defend and safeguard them from the dangers of an education merely secular during the entire period of childhood and youth; and therefore to send them to parochial schools or others truly Catholic, unless perchance the Ordinary, in a particular case, should judge that it might be permitted otherwise.10

After laying down the above principle on thegrave importance of providing a Catholic education, and emphasizing the role of the bishop in deciding mitigating circumstances, the council fathers next turned to the rights of parents:

Since, therefore, for a sufficient cause, approved by the Ordinary, parents may wish to send their children to the public schools, providing the proximate dangers are removed by the necessary precautions, we strictly enjoin that no one, whether bishop or priest,—and this the Pope through the Sacred Congregation expressly forbids—should dare to repel such parents from the sacraments as unworthy, either by threat or act. And much more is this to be understood concerning the children themselves. Wherefore let pastors of souls, while they warn the faithful committed to them of the dangers of these schools, take great care lest, led by an immoderate zeal, they may violate, by word or deed, the most wise counsels and percepts of the Holy See.11

Moving out of the area of rights, the bishops of Baltimore III then attacked the root cause of non-attendance at parochial schools. The two main factors responsible for the poor attendance at many parochial schools was 1) the lack of schools in certain areas and 2) the inferior academic quality. The bishops were quick to admit these two failings,

11Ibid., p. 194.
but vowed to renew their efforts to provide widespread, quality Catholic education. Toward that end, the council fathers issued the following decree:

I. Near each church, where it does not yet exist, a parochial school is to be erected within two years from the promulgation of this Council, and is to be maintained in perpetuum, unless the bishop, on account of grave difficulties, judge that a postponement be allowed.

II. A priest who, by his grave negligence, prevents the erection of a school within this time, or its maintenance, or who, after repeated admonitions of the bishop, does not attend to the matter, deserves removal from that church.

III. A mission or a parish which so neglects to assist a priest in erecting or maintaining a school, that by reason of this supine negligence the school is rendered impossible, should be reprehended by the bishop and, by the most efficacious and prudent means possible, induced to contribute the necessary support.

IV. All Catholic parents are bound to send their children to the parochial schools, unless either at home or in other Catholic schools they may sufficiently and evidently provide for the Christian education of their children, or unless it be lawful to send them to other schools on account of a sufficient cause, approved by the bishop, and with opportune cautions and remedies. As to what is a Catholic school, it is left to the judgment of the Ordinary to define.12

Thus the third plenary council of Baltimore marked a milestone in Catholic education. While clarifying the role of pastors and parents in promoting Catholic education, and laying stress on the grave duty of the clergy in building schools, the council paved the way for the growth and development of the parochial school movement in the United States. The council also did yeoman's duty in setting standards and implementing policy. However, what the council did not do was to make the parochial schools an absolute norm of Catholic education; the fathers were suffi-

12Ibid., p. 195.
ciently enlightened to allow flexibility in the parents implementing Christ's command to impart teachings. Those who in later ages pointed to Baltimore III as the sine qua non for parochial schools are guilty of both misrepresenting history and of failing to read the spirit of the present.¹³

Although the third plenary council of Baltimore established the principle of "every Catholic child in a Catholic school," the country was still a long way off from actually implementing the decrees. In fact, there was a growing liberal element among the American bishops that would challenge the status quo, and render the above goal just a bit more difficult to attain. Chief among these liberal protagonists were Archbishop John Ireland, of St. Paul, Minnesota; John Lancaster Spalding, of Peoria; Bishop John Keane, head of the Catholic University of America¹⁴; and Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore.

These churchmen, mostly Irish in background, saw no need to place undue stress on the parochial schools, which in some sense kept the immigrant from becoming absorbed into the American mainstream. As these liberal clerics argued, the Church should support education in general, including the public schools, rather than restricting herself to a closed system of religious indoctrination however ensconced in secular learning. They believed education and citizenship went hand in hand. Many of this power group envisioned giving over the existing parochial schools to the


¹⁴The university first opened its doors in 1889.
government at a nominal expense and thus in effect fostering a system of Catholic public schools. Religious instruction could take place after the regular course of studies.

Opposing this liberal faction, who seemed out of harmony with the decrees of Baltimore III, was a strongly vocal group of bishops, embodying the German point of view, which was pro-Catholic schools. Chief among this camp were Bishop Bernard McQuaid, of Rochester, New York; William Corrigan, archbishop of New York; and the bishops of Wisconsin. These conservatives were militant in demanding a sectarian education for the nation's Catholics to protect them against the dangers rampant in American society, which often resulted in the loss of faith of countless immigrants. Perhaps one of the strongest reasons for backing the parochial schools was the fact that these institutions preserved the native language, customs, and faith of the new comers to America. Unlike the liberals, who represented a tradition that was Anglo-American to begin with, the conservatives needed an identification with their respective ethnic group to sustain the faith life of their people. The rallying cry of the pro-parochial school faction was "where the language is, there the faith is."\(^{15}\)

While the storm clouds had been gathering for some time, the actual deluge came when Archbishop John Ireland addressed the National Educational Association at St. Paul in 1890. In his remarks before the convention, 

\(^{15}\)In 1890 the state of Wisconsin passed a law requiring instruction in English in all schools of the state; the law reinforced the attitudes of the Catholic Germanizing element in the state.
Ireland praised the public schools for their progress and reemphasized the need for compulsory attendance at these same institutions. In doing so, and partially as a diplomatic move, Ireland bemoaned the fact that such a thing as parochial schools had to exist. As might be expected, Ireland's comments were interpreted as a strong denunciation of the emergent parochial school system. From the standpoint of the present, Ireland's speech before the NEA provided ample evidence for the existence of a counter parochial school movement in the late nineteenth century. (However, it must be emphasized that in fact, Ireland was not against the parochial schools — only parochial schools owned and financed by the Church rather than the nation.)

Not long after his NEA encounter, the archbishop of St. Paul was involved in another situation with far reaching implications for Catholic education in America. In the summer of 1891, Ireland entered into an agreement with the public school board in Faribault and Stillwater, Minnesota. According to the cooperative plan, Ireland leased the parochial schools in these two cities to the public schools, for a nominal fee.16 The sisters and Catholic lay teachers, under the arrangement, were to be employees of the public system, provided they met standards approved by the board. Religious instruction would then be given after the regular school day had ended.

Although Ireland withstood conservative criticism, both within

16This was not the first instance of cooperating between Church and State; the plan was actually patterned on the Poughkeepsie arrangement, in effect in New York, since 1873.
and outside the Church, and eventually received the qualified endorse-
ment of the Vatican, the plan was abandoned because of the unstable
political condition in Minnesota. But the experiment did not go un-
noticed and was tried again and again in many other communities with
varying degrees of usefulness.

Shortly afterward, Father Thomas Bouquillon, a professor of moral
theology at Catholic University, and an acquaintance of Archbishop
Ireland, initiated what would subsequently be called, the "School Con-
troversy." Bouquillon in a pamphlet entitled, "Education: To Whom Does
It Belong?," disturbed the Catholic equilibrium by putting forth the
then unheard of opinion that the Church was not the sole authority re-
sponsible for education. He said rather it was the individual, the
family, the state, and the Church working together in harmony. Need-
less to say, this undermined the conservative view that the state had
no rights at all over education since it was essentially a spiritual
activity.

The force of Bouquillon's argument was to weaken the necessity for
parochial schools. If the state had a right to education, even if the
right pertained only to secular education, then the parochial schools
were not absolute. Their secular function could be supplemented or even
supplanted by state agencies. Thus a very short time after the parochial
school enactments of Baltimore III, Bouquillon was covertly suggesting
that as long as their religious educational aspect was relegated to other
agencies, the parochial schools could either be dissolved or transferred
to the public domain.
To refute the Bouquillon paper, Father Rene I. Holaind, of the Jesuit Seminary at Woodstock College, Maryland, issued another pamphlet entitled, "The Parent First," which claimed that education was essentially the right and duty of parents and Church combined. The state, he asserted, entered in only at the request of either of the above. What Holaind was trying to establish was the principle that the state had no authority over education unless ceded this right by default on the part of either Church or parents.

Thus the controversy raged. But in the last analysis, it was up to Rome to render a decision. Accordingly, in November, 1892, Archbishop Satolli, special representative to the United States, studied the matter and offered his Fourteen Propositions. Essentially, Satolli's points were a statesmanlike document which incorporated the best of both viewpoints. The quality of Catholic education should be improved, he insisted; Catholic parents should be encouraged to send their children to parochial schools. But exceptions always would be tolerated as long as faith and morals were not in question. Moreover, priests could not excommunicate parents for failing to comply with the dictates of Baltimore III. Here again the argument for Catholic schools was weakened; Rome refused to take an absolutist stand and hence tolerated alternative education in the situation of the public schools.

As the twentieth century dawned, Catholic schools became established. The voice of controversy for all practical purposes ceased as the schools went about their function of religious and moral education along with the secular branches of knowledge. In many instances develop-
ments in Catholic education closely paralleled those in the public sphere. The forerunner of the National Catholic Educational Association was established, schools multiplied, higher education emerged, the quality of instruction improved, supervision became more evident, dioceses began to organize schools into systems, and the Sister Formation Movement was organized to prepare the American teaching nun as a classroom professional. In the mid-1950's, the sleeping giant of controversy once again began to stir until a decade later he sprung to his feet wreaking havoc in Catholic educational circles.

The proximate history of the Catholic educational controversy finally came in 1955, when Msgr. John Tracy Ellis published his now famous essay on the state of Catholic intellectual life. Published at a time when public education itself was in the throes of change and self criticism, affected by the new Sputnik technology, Ellis bemoaned the sad state of the Church's system of higher education.

The first area under attack by Ellis was something that should have been "peculiarly" the Church's own; her scholastic tradition in philosophy. According to Ellis, Catholic colleges and universities were thwarting any unique contribution that might be made in the area of philosophy by understressing the Church's rich tradition of Thomism in favor of the secular sciences. Catholic higher education would do far better, the priest-historian pointed out, contributing something distinctive to the world's body of knowledge rather than imitating the

research done on the secular campus.

Another area commented on by Ellis was the current proliferation of Catholic colleges and other institutions of higher learning. Because more and more religious congregations were establishing expensive educational plants, the Catholic Church was perpetuating mediocrity. Not only was there a scarcity of adequately trained personnel, but research facilities such as libraries and laboratories were poorly furnished.

A third factor which discouraged the rise of intellectuals was what Ellis characterized as "the absence of a love of scholarship for its own sake among American Catholics." As the critic of the 1950's saw it, Catholic students were using education as an end without appreciating it also as a means, which in itself was an object of love and commitment.

Finally, Ellis decried what he saw as an exaggerated emphasis on moral development by Catholic authorities. So much stress was being given to the students' moral and spiritual goals that academic excellence was taking a back seat, frustrating the emergence of the true intellectual. This was a rather shattering blow to Catholic academia, which had subconsciously supposed that by underscoring the spiritual and the formational, Catholic schools would produce intellectual results. This theme was greatly stressed during the 1960's.

The reaction to Ellis' paper ranged anywhere from quiet rejection to public outcry. Many objected vehemently to the author's public criticism of Catholic education. Others repudiated Ellis for comparing Catholic education with public institutions, which themselves were not free from criticism. Still others confirmed the writer's contentions by disclaiming any attempt to dethrone the Church's traditional scholastic and moral philosophy. But whatever stance one takes in regard to Msgr. Ellis' indictment, it marked a new era of intellectual openness in the Church; and the questions raised provided the substance for the debate of the 1960's.

Ellis' views were greatly shared by Thomas O'Dea, whose main reasoning for the inferior state of Catholic education was the lag in the cultural values and social organization of the American Catholic Church itself.\textsuperscript{19} O'Dea singled out five characteristics of American Catholicism, that were responsible for the prevailing climate of non-intellectualism. These characteristics were especially applied to the parochial schools debate of the following decade. The negative attributes were as follows: 1) formalism, 2) authoritarianism, 3) clericalism, 4) moralism, and 5) defensiveness.

The first factor cited by O'Dea, then, was formalism. By this he meant the tendency "whereby 'demonstration' replaces search, abstractions replace experience, formulae replace content, and rationalistic elaboration replaces genuine ontological insight."\textsuperscript{20} It saw the world as a

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 155.
finished creation, which was entirely evident as to its meaning and essence. And finally, all the elements of life were put into isolated categories: religious and non-religious.

O'Dea explained the Church's non-intellectual emphasis by a second element, which he called authoritarianism. By this he simply meant that educational leaders in the Church, who were mostly clerics and religious, sought to impose pre-packaged solutions to all problems, using their power of office rather than the force of argument and research. Such a view seriously limited the notion of truth, which was rather a dynamic, unfolding reality. This authoritarianism reinforced the formalism cited above.

The third factor responsible for the lack of intellectuals in the Church was what O'Dea called clericalism. As is obvious from the term, clericalism meant the domination of the educational structure by priests and those educated in the priestly mold. In this state of affairs, the layman was hopelessly dependent on the hierarchic structure for his vision of truth. Moreover, he was alienated from the real world in which his colleagues worked, by an education that was foreign to him and monastic in tone.

A fourth characteristic found by O'Dea was moralism. This was the tendency to see spiritual danger lurking everywhere. Creation and everything in it was an occasion of sin. A system of education with moralism as its base, could hardly be expected to exalt knowledge for its own sake, only as a means of saving one's soul.
Finally, O'Dea posited defensiveness as a cause for the lack of intellectuals in the Church. Defensiveness was merely the ghetto stance of the Church whereby it rejected anything that was not Catholic, and clothed itself in an armor of apologetics. Such a view was unhealthy quite simply because it closed itself off from ideological combat, which has a way of purifying one's basic position and of adding new aspects of truth to the discussion. All of the above characteristics were attacked in due course, and added fuel to the debate to come in the 1960's.

While the last volleys of Ellis' criticism were reverberating on the American scene, a new front opened up in the Catholic school debate: Vatican II. This world-wide council of the Catholic Church, which convened in 1962, had an important role to play; it freed American parochial education from its enslavement to the past. The council introduced the principle of pluralism into the Church, bringing the school out of the ghetto. Documents such as the Decree on Ecumenism and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World made it possible for a new appreciation of truth.

The Decree on the Laity remotely paved the way for the more active involvement of the laity in the Church at large and ultimately in the field of education. Although when the decree was issued, the schools were largely staffed by priests and religious, the immediate future would witness dramatic changes. It also brought parents back into focus as what the council called, "primary educators" of their children; it encouraged them to take an active role in setting policy on school boards and in assisting the work of education through parent organizations.
Another important document, cited above, was the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. This statement had the effect of focusing the Church outward and hence opening up Catholic education to a dimension of service and social involvement beyond itself. The role of the Church was to be more than just a preserver of institutional values; it was now meant to be a leavener of society in general. By implication, the schools should do more to sensitize students to their apostolic responsibilities. The Catholic educational system should develop leaders who will be agents of change in a world in need of reformation.

Ironically, the least influential document of the council was the Declaration on Christian Education. This statement was meant to provide leadership in the Catholic instructional field; but it ended up being merely a reformulation of past documents. Nonetheless, the declaration found an atmosphere of acceptance as various American educational groups, such as the National Catholic Educational Association, made recommendations on how to implement it on the local level.

With the mentality of Vatican II altering the thinking of many Catholic churchmen, a new ferment took place. The monolithic thought structure of the American Catholic Church splintered; honest questions began to be asked. Traditional values and assumptions began to be challenged. Fittingly enough the major arena of questioning was the Catholic school because of its strong role in socializing the Catholic masses.

---

The first real bombshell that exploded after Vatican II came in the person of Mary Perkins Ryan, a frail New Hampshire housewife and mother of five. Heavily involved in the liturgical movement, Mrs. Ryan noticed the great contrast provided by the Catholic schools with their expensive institutional ramparts and dubious effectiveness. The schools were a hindrance to the growth taking place in the Church. Mrs. Ryan's book, published before the 1964 meeting of the National Catholic Educational Association, was the topic of discussion at the organization's Easter enclave in Atlantic City. The next chapter will take up her arguments.

---

22 Andrew M. Greeley denies the widespread attention attributed to the Ryan book at this meeting.
CHAPTER III

THE INITIAL DEBATE: ARE PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS THE ANSWER?

Chapter two examined the issues surrounding the development of the parochial school movement in the United States. Of particular interest, however unorganized and muted, was the discussion on the absolute necessity of the Catholic schools. As was indicated, those opposing a separate structure of education for American Catholics, had to bow to the forces of nativism, which rendered such a plan impossible. But the seeds of their contention were not lost to history. Under the aegis of Vatican II and with the coming-to-status of the Catholic Church in America, the question could again be raised: Is a separate system of Catholic schools necessary? Is not the rightful place of Catholic citizens, with their fellow countrymen, in a common, educational structure where their Catholicism and Americanism could be fused toward a common goal?

The purpose of the current chapter is to examine the opening arguments in the 1960's debate on Catholic education. In particular, the author will examine the thought of Mary Perkins Ryan, who figured prominently in the controversy of the period.¹ She was the catalyst for much of the discussion generated during this stormy decade.

¹Many authors such as Andrew Greeley claim that she as no other critic was responsible for the "total collapse" of morale among Catholic school personnel. Confer Andrew M. Greeley, The Communal Catholic (New York: Seabury Press, 1976), p. 171. The present writer is not as convinced of this seeming overstatement.
In her book, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?*, Mary Perkins Ryan posed the crucial question. Her answer was an insistent "no!". As pointed out in the beginning of her book, Mrs. Ryan was not opposed to quality Catholic schools where they existed, but only to the academic mediocrity that a mass system of parochial schools would occasion.

Mrs. Ryan's thesis might be further specified under nine sub-statements:

1. Parochial schools are no longer necessary from an historical point of view.
2. They are economically unfeasible, draining the Church of important financial and human resources.
3. They are socially divisive.
4. They are unecumenical, perpetuating a triumphalist model of the Catholic faith.
5. They seriously hinder the liturgical renewal taking place in American Catholicism.
6. They discourage parents from assuming their role as primary educators of their children.
7. They fail in the very area where they should excel: the teaching of religion.
8. They fail to promote social awareness.
9. They are isolationist, hardly supplying students with an intellectual basis for life in a diversified society.

Having stated the basic issues underlying the argument to abandon the Catholic schools, the author will now examine each in detail, indi-
eating the various facets of Mrs. Ryan's thought.

The first point raised in the discussion, then, is that the Catholic schools are no longer relevant from an historical point of view. The charge was rather forcefully raised by Mary Perkins Ryan in her now famous book challenging the continuance of the parochial schools:

The notion prevails, among Catholics and non-Catholics alike, that elementary schools, high schools, and colleges under Catholic auspices are an essential aspect of Catholic life, and that belief in the necessity of a Catholic education system is almost an article of Catholic faith. But, in actual fact, providing a general education for its children is an auxiliary service, not part of the essential mission of the Church.2

In the mind of Mary Perkins Ryan and many others, the very reason why the Catholic school system emerged was because of the prevailing anti-Catholic bigotry in the country in the mid-nineteenth century, and not because of any internal imperative. It was the fathers of the Baltimore Council's fear of losing immigrant Catholic youth in the public schools, rather than the rightness of the parochial school concept that caused the injunction: "every Catholic child in a Catholic school," to be implemented.

As Mrs. Ryan pointed out in Are Parochial Schools the Answer?, schools have never been an indispensable part of Christianity. The early Church propagated itself by word and example rather than by child-centered institutions. The Church took on its educational mission only when other agencies failed to provide general learning.

The underlying strength of Mrs. Ryan's first point was that once the parochial schools accomplished their purpose of protecting the religious and ethnic identity of the immigrant, and providing a vehicle of Americanization and upward social mobility, the schools had lost their reason for continuing. No other fact heralded the seeming demise of the parochial schools, then as one author put it, the joint reign of Pope John XXIII on the Tiber and President John Kennedy on the Potomac.3 The Church was no longer living in the ghetto but had arrived on the American scene.

The second point made by Mrs. Ryan was that parochial schools were economically unfeasible, draining the Church of important financial and human resources. Mrs. Ryan's major criticism here was the massive effort required to serve a rapidly diminishing portion of American Catholics.4 Commenting on the symbolic reality of the Church's misdirected resources, Mrs. Ryan voiced her outcry:

To keep on as we are, struggling to support and extend the Catholic educational system by our own efforts, is clearly becoming less and less feasible. The evidence seems to indicate that this policy would mean educating fewer and fewer Catholics in proportion to the total number, while continuing to absorb a major part of the Church's personnel and material resources.5

Further capturing the American Catholic imagination, Mrs. Ryan pointed out the futility of spending over $100,000,000 annually to keep the paro-

---

4When Mrs. Ryan's book was written, 55 percent of Catholic children were enrolled in elementary schools and 45 percent in high schools under the Church's direction.
5Ryan, p. 162.
chial schools going when a large portion of that sum very easily might be channeled to parish religious education programs, the Newman Apostolate, and many urgently needed services to minority groups.6

Perhaps the most indicting aspect of the non-feasibility argument was Mrs. Ryan's assertion that despite the vast financial outlay, and the overwhelming concentration of priestly and religious effort, the parochial schools were largely duplicating the general education provided by the state anyway. Looking to the years ahead, the New Hampshire mother of five questioned this duplication even more seriously:

Will the Church of the future be able to fulfill all these demands and at the same time maintain a system of general education? After all, the state today provides a basic education for all its citizens. Is it reasonable to expect the Church to continue also to offer the same service at the expense of those services which it alone can provide?7

Mrs. Ryan's third point was that the parochial schools kept Catholic Americans from socially interacting with their fellow citizens. First of all, the very notion of a separate school system had a symbolic message for the country: Catholics were an elite group, who did not want to cooperate with the goals of the nation at large. By establishing a closed system of education, Catholics chose who they would educate. Subconsciously, Catholic school officials fostered the attitude that public schools were outside the pale of excellence; and those who attended these schools were in some way morally inferior.

Aside from whatever messages were conveyed by the parochial schools,

6Ibid., p. 164. 7Ibid., p. 140.
there was the practical reality that parents in no way were involved with public school parents because of the seeming disparity of goals between the two. As Mrs. Ryan put it,

the fact that the parents of Catholic school children are drawn together by their common interests tends to cut them off from their fellow citizens' concern with the public school and all the interests that center on it...This in turn is resented by people concerned with the welfare of the public schools, and marks off Catholics as a peculiar and non-cooperative group, especially in localities where a large proportion of Catholic children attend parochial schools.8

Perhaps tied in with Mrs. Ryan's idea of social divisiveness, was her fourth point that the parochial schools were unecumenical. As Mrs. Ryan viewed them, the Catholic schools were not in keeping with the spirit of open dialogue and cooperation called for by Vatican II. The parochial schools by their very nature did not sufficiently allow for any indepth discussion of religious beliefs other than that of Catholicism. While it was true that the schools often offered courses in comparative religion, these undertakings were more theoretical than actual. Moreover, the way subject material was presented precluded any real objectivity; students were not stimulated by the give and take of viewpoints that might ordinarily take place if the minister of another faith were involved in the teaching of the subject.

Aside from the rather unenlightened way religion was presented in the classroom, was the mentality underlying the teaching. Although, Vatican II strongly stressed the freedom and rights of non-Catholic be-

8Ibid., p. 55.
lievers, the schools were by-and-large operating from a Tridentine\textsuperscript{9} modality. As a result, Catholics approached their fellow citizens of other faiths with a certain smug, know-it-all attitude, leaving little room for any real dialogue.

Mrs. Ryan's fifth point centered on the liturgical movement taking place in the United States in the 1960's. As this liturgical pioneer saw it, the parochial schools were hindering renewal by constricting the Church's energy and personnel. The whole underlying tone of Vatican II's document on the liturgy was that Catholics become involved on the grass roots' level in their own religious formation through Mass, the sacraments, prayer, and the practices of the Christian life. Unfortunately the schools stood in the way of this new awareness ever being diffused to the majority of young Catholics.

In terms of sheer energy, the implication of Mrs. Ryan's writings was that the schools by their archaic religious attitudes were in reality institutionalizing old patterns of worship and belief. Mrs. Ryan wanted Catholics to be vigorous and independent, ready to recognize the voice of God calling them to growth and maturity. As long as Catholics viewed the liturgy as something external, due largely to their parochial school training, real Catholic education in the form of religious formation would not take place. The schools were preventing true universalism in the faith life of the Catholic masses.

\textsuperscript{9}Referring to the Council of Trent (1545-1563). The Council represented a counter-reaction to the Protestant Reformation chiefly through a strong apologetic return to Catholic doctrine.
Practically speaking, the parochial schools hindered the liturgical movement chiefly by capitalizing on the priest's time and abilities. Instead of spending himself preparing classes for a small percentage of Catholics, these religious leaders should have been devoting their efforts to their primary responsibility — that of liturgical formation. If the priests could abandon their role in the schools, the parishes themselves would become centers of Catholic education. Priests, too, would find their ministry much more rewarding.

Another implication of Mrs. Ryan's writing is that the maintenance of the Catholic school system discouraged parents from instructing their children in religious truth. By fostering the mentality that only the clergy and religious involved in the parochial schools were official religion teachers, the Church was keeping the Catholic laity apart from their children's faith development. If the American Hierarchy at this juncture in its leadership, should abandon the schools, the true balance between parenting and adolescent faith development would be restored. But as it was, Catholic parents were fearful and unengaged in this vital effort.

Mrs. Ryan's seventh argument for abandoning the parochial school system dealt with the allegation that the schools failed in the very area where they might have been expected to excel: the area of religion. Her comments are threefold, concerning the approach by which religion is taught, the inculcation of morality, and the way the Christian life is presented.

In the area of approach, the Goffstown housewife lamented the
overly formal way religion was taught. To begin with, doctrine was presented in an unrealistically detached manner. The truths of the faith were taught as "what must be believed in order to be saved" rather than as something to be lived and experienced from within. In this vein the content of faith was dry and uninteresting -- something to be put to memory and cherished as a protection against possible damnation.

When it came to prayer, too, there was much formalism. Prayer was taught as a "dutiful use of a means of grace rather than as communication with God." It was mechanical, relying on set formulas, which ranged from rigid to overly pietistic. In all instances it lacked personalism; it was aloof and uninvolved. What's more, the teaching of prayer made little reference to the Bible and scriptural prayer, as found in the psalms.

As religious practice, there was the same regimentation. Children were herded into Church for First Friday Mass and confession and the other exercises, which insured an other-worldly point of view. "Participation" meant merely learning formulas and faithfully reciting and singing at the right times.

The second area looked askance at, by the modern religious educator, was the way morality was inculcated. Mrs. Ryan thought there was too much disparity between the way a student was taught and how he actually behaved. For some reason, she pointed out, teachers failed to model their

10Ryan, p. 65.  
11Ibid., p. 65.
own teaching. Students were closely guarded in matters such as examinations and never given the underpinning reasons for their good behavior. It seemed that they were never taught that sin was an evil because it was "unworthy of members of Christ."12

Mrs. Ryan's final difficulty involved the manner in which the Christian life was presented. All too often priests and religious were placed upon a pedestal, giving the impression that they were the only first class Christians. As a result, in the minds of many impressionable youth, unrealistic expectations were instilled. The fallacy of such an attitude became manifested only too soon when the maturing student saw these representatives of the Church in an imperfect light. But even where Catholic school trained adults developed a realistic attitude toward priests and religious, the impression still remained that religion was exclusively their domain and only they were responsible for the work of the Church.

Mrs. Ryan's eighth point was that the parochial schools by their other-worldly focus failed to promote social awareness.13 The end product of such a system, according to the lay writer, was that Catholics were overly concerned with saving their own soul and not with the mortal peril that their fellow human beings found themselves in because of a lack of life's very essentials. Writing in her controversial book, Mrs. Ryan laid out the case as she saw it:

Catholics generally feel no religious necessity to carry out their

12Ibid., p. 67.
13A fact corroborated by the Greeley-Rossi study.
daily work as a service of love to their neighbor; to fight segregation; to engage in the reform of the social and economic orders; to involve themselves in efforts toward peace.14

Mrs. Ryan's ninth point was that the parochial schools were intellectually isolationist. By this she did not mean so much that the academic quality of the schools was lacking, but rather that the Catholic system did not foster intellectualism. Her main point was that without the stimulation that comes from the diversity of ideas and beliefs represented by the public schools, Catholic education at best gave halfhearted service to its students. Expressing herself on this topic, Mrs. Ryan said:

Even if it were possible to reform Catholic education completely I am not convinced that attendance at a Catholic school would be the best way of preparing a young person for Catholic living in today's world. The atmosphere of a Catholic school is by nature a sheltered, even a hothouse one. True, outside of school the child or young person may have friends who are not Catholics. But most of his day is spent in Catholic surroundings; he does not become accustomed to the massive impact of the prevailing secular atmosphere in which he will ordinarily be required to live his adult life. He is not prepared to stand up against the cold wind of indifference; he is more likely to be reacting against what seems like the over-religiousness of the Catholic school.15

As might be expected from a work on education written by a liturgist, Mary Perkins Ryan's book met with much criticism. However, what caused such great consternation was not the fact that Mrs. Ryan was obviously writing outside of her field, but that she had captured the popular Catholic imagination at a time when the old was giving way to the new. Riding high on the wave of liturgical reform, and already in the public gaze, Mrs. Ryan quickly became a popular spokesperson for the

14Ryan, p. 100.  
15Ryan, p. 157.
anti-school faction. She was sharp, witty, and sufficiently costic to receive national notice.

A month before the book was actually published, Msgr. O'Neil C. D'Amour, associate secretary of the department of school superintendents of the NCEA, branded her work "foolish" and "incredibly naive." He went on to say that Mrs. Ryan revealed "a complete lack of understanding of education generally, American society and Catholic education." William McManus, superintendent of Catholic schools for the archdiocese of Chicago called it "reckless" and "negative," a kind of "post-council Utopia." And on and on the criticisms went.

However, not all churchmen and educators viewed Mrs. Ryan's work with horror and ultimate disdain; John D. Donovan, noted educational writer, in the October 2, 1964, issue of Commonweal, had some positive things to say:

...the contemporary cause celebre of Mrs. Ryan's book deserves special mention. Its predominantly clerical and religious reviewers during the past few months seem to have been shocked to their toenails by the daring of her criticisms and proposals. For them the parochial school system appears to be as sacred as motherhood or, at the very least, as sacred as the public school system is to the American non-Catholic public. Her recommendation therefore, that serious considerations be given to setting it aside because it is no longer exclusively or even best suited to the spiritual and practical needs of Christian education today has provoked a massive, emotional hemorrhage. Indeed, at this point in time, the issues she raises have hardly been confronted.

18 Ibid., p. 54.
Instead an a priori promise that her criticisms will be empirically disproved was wildly cheered by Catholic school educators.20

The basic criticisms directed against Mrs. Ryan’s book were on two levels: on the level of methodology and on the level of content.

First of all on the level of methodology. The fundamental charge against Mrs. Ryan was that her work was a combination of personal opinions, scattered interviews, and a few sociological findings. In no way did her volume approximate any of the formal sociological research of a Fichter or a Greeley. There were only forty-seven footnotes, very few of which were of a statistical nature. In the work itself, there was no indication as to the universality of her observations. She provided little evidence of how she formed her conclusions. Commenting on this serious lack, Andrew M. Greeley had this to say:

I do not demand from Mrs. Ryan statistical tables. There are various ways of empirical data collection, and statistics are by no means the best method...But surely those who are the object of Mrs. Ryan's attacks have the right to know what her research methods were; how many schools did she visit; how many classes did she attend; with how many teaching nuns did she talk; how many school administrators did she interview; how many different parts of the country were investigated; how many Catholic parents outside of her own circle did she converse? Until Mrs. Ryan provides this information, the Catholic educator would be perfectly justified in suspecting that she had done none of these things, that in fact her book is strictly "armchair" research, and therefore, interesting as a curiosity perhaps, but hardly as a serious contribution to the discussion of the merits of Catholic education. Indeed, the Catholic educator would be perfectly justified in commenting that Mrs. Ryan simply does not know her subject.21

In the same vein as Greeley, Dr. Roy Defarrari, who rebutted Ryan

---

in a small book entitled: *A Complete System of Catholic Education Is Necessary*, pointed out her lack of primary source material, among other methodological errors. He wrote:

> While she quotes rarely, and then from secondary sources, her chief sources are her own experiences and conversations with certain consultants. Anything like a complete collection of primary source material, and a systematic organization of this information, followed by an objective appraisal of its significance, not a straining to exact support for preconceived notions, is completely lacking. The reader is left in great confusion at times by the lack of a logical sequence in the author's story. Certainly, any treatment of a subject so vital as that of the book before us should have the best logical scientific approach.22

The majority of critics attacked Mrs. Ryan on the level of content; their arguments are listed below and are arranged in antithetical order to her main points as summarized earlier in this chapter.

First of all on the issue of necessity, Mrs. Ryan's critics rejected the notion that parochial schools represented only an historical reaction to the existence of religious bigotry in the early 1800's. They base their arguments on the nature of Catholic education itself. Catholic schooling was not something that could be dispensed with at will. The very nature of education called for a relationship with religious truth, which served as an important integrating force. To advocate that general education be left in the hands of the public schools, as Mrs. Ryan did, was to create a dicotomy between general truths and the absolute truth upon which all knowledge hinged.

One of the first Catholic school spokesmen to point out the above

argument was Roy Deferrari, a professor at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. According to Deferrari, the hallmark of Catholic schooling was academic integration, i.e., the fact that all subjects in the curriculum here held together by a basic theology, which served the function of providing a rationale for what was learned. As Deferrari explained it,

Academic integration, as we have attempted to describe it, is the great differentiating factor in Catholic education. Moreover, it includes religious education, if I understand Mrs. Ryan's description of it, but the latter cannot stand alone. General education, which she appears to consider of minor importance, is held together and unified by religious education. Catholic education, properly conceived and carried out, is held together as a compact unit...23

In other words, religious formation as advocated by Mrs. Ryan, could not be achieved unless in the context of general education.

Given the theoretical possibility that religious education could be separated from general education — a possibility strongly denied by Deferrari — many critics of Ryan doubted whether quality religion instruction could be had in Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes.

Although agreeing with Deferrari's defense of integral education,24 Lawrence J. Shehan, Archbishop of Baltimore, looked not to its essential nature but to the implications of fragmentation. Shehan viewed the Catholic schools as a type of safeguard for public morality, without which institution, the nation's morals would erode. Commenting in the April 4,

---

23Ibid., pp. 37-38.
24As opposed to the theory of "permeation," which tried to artificially insinuate Catholic terminology into secular sciences. An example of this would be the use of missionaries or rosary beads as the basic units in an arithmetic lesson.
1964, issue of America, the Baltimore archbishop had this to say:

One main defect of education emptied of religious content arises from the fact that religion forms the necessary foundation for morality. The great central truth of religion gives the principles of morality their validity as moral law and their binding force in conscience. The elimination of religion from education is bound, in the long run, to contribute to the weakening and even undermining of those moral principles and standards which not only are imperative in the life of the individual but are also the foundation, the indispensable underpinning, of our country, our civilization and indeed of society itself.25

Francis Canavan, associate editor of the above Jesuit weekly, almost five months later, argued from utility for the continuance of Catholic schools. He put his case squarely:

Whether we like it or not, children are going to spend a large part of their lives in school. The education they get there will be a major factor in their intellectual development. I do not believe that the formation of the Church's members as full-fledged Christians in today's world can be accomplished if no effort is made to integrate this intellectual development with their more strictly religious development. To be done properly, this integration requires schools that are dedicated to achieving it.26

Those who differed with Mrs. Ryan's second argument of the feasibility of the Catholic schools, did so on several levels. First of all, the New Hampshire housewife and mother of five gave the implication that financial resources as found in the Catholic community would not be adequate in the future for financing Catholic schooling. Many including Chicago sociologist Andrew M. Greeley were quick to point out that the money was there if only Catholic educators bothered to look.

26Francis Canavan, Reply to John Julian Ryan as found in America, September 19, 1964, p. 301.
Looking beyond Catholic assistance on the financial support issue, spokesmen such as Wilfrid Sheed saw a strong possibility for federal aid. Sheed suggested the likelihood of government assistance on the basis of the public service supplied by the Catholic system. In an article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, several months after the publication of Mary Perkins Ryan's book, he had this to say:

Should these schools, the parochial schools, receive public aid? To this untrained eye, the constitutional language on this point is loose enough for people to make what they want of it...I tend to agree with those who feel that good education is a public service, and that any school that provides it up to the required standards should receive some public assistance, as it would in England, Holland and elsewhere. In effect, this would mean that Catholics would get some of their own tax money back, instead of paying extra for the privilege of keeping the public schools less crowded and less expensive to run.27

But underpinning the New Hampshire liturgist's feasibility argument were not only financial implications, but those of personnel as well. Mrs. Ryan contended that for the American Church to come alive, priests and religious would have to be retrained to become experts in the field of religious education as opposed to teaching secular subjects as many were. The fallacy pointed out was that anyone, given a Roman collar or religious habit, would be a suitable candidate for religious education. As Mrs. Ryan's critics concluded, being skilled in one field does not mean one is adequate to the task of religious education. Besides, they pointed out, how could the Church possibly retrain all its teachers in such a short span of time. What would happen to the schools in the meantime?

Answering Mrs. Ryan's observation that religious vocations were dwindling and hence the schools would not be adequately staffed in the future, Archbishop Shehan opined there was in fact no vocation crisis. In his estimation the seeming teacher shortage was caused by more and more religious spending longer time in graduate schools as a result of the sister formation movement of the 1950's. Unfortunately, history proved Shehan wrong.

Answering the charge of divisiveness, supporters of the Catholic school system claimed that their institutions were in keeping with the original purpose for which the public schools were founded: to provide an education permeated with basic Christian principles. While the public schools evolved into a religiously neutral system of education, the Catholic schools have perpetuated the distinctively American institution of the parochial, Christian school.

Monsignor O'Neil C. D'Amour also pointed out that the Catholic schools were distinctively American in that they operated on the same historical basis as the public schools. He said:

Catholic schools traditionally have been in a very true sense public schools. They have drawn their student bodies from the entire range of the social structure. They have not limited their enrollment economically by the imposition of high tuition rates or intellectually by the establishment of high standards of admission.28

Elsewhere, Monsignor D'Amour pointed out the distinctively American contribution of the Catholic schools:

...Catholic schools are American schools. They are dedicated to providing for the nation loyal, patriotic, and well-educated citizens. They attempt to give to their students the best of preparation in the secular fields of learning. In addition, they attempt to impart to these students a knowledge of the things of God and to develop in them a love of virtue. In an age confronted with a crisis of the spirit, that which is needed in America is a strengthening of religious education and not a weakening. Not only Catholics but the nation and, indeed, the world have a stake in the future of Catholic education in our country.29

Attacking those who would destroy the parochial school system for the sake of creating a uniform system of public education, Wilfrid Sheed pointed out an important value of educational diversity: Intellectual pluralism. As he put it,

The parochial school is one of the few surviving objects of cultural diversity. To my mind, it already mimes the public school much too closely, but it is different enough to preserve a certain openness in an increasingly stuffy society. Modern American life maintains a consensus not only of opinion but of intellectual style probably more overpowering than that of any other civilized country. The consensus is so all-encompassing that many of us are not even aware of its existence. As far as we are concerned, it is simply the only way to think.30

Archbishop Shehan took Mrs. Ryan's fourth point to task by denying that Catholic schools were hindering ecumenical dialogue. Actually, the church's educational system advanced ecumenism by insisting on the role of religious truth and morality. Commenting in America he said:

If education by its very nature requires that religion form part of and be integrated into, the curriculum of the schools, and if religious truth is the very foundation of morality, it is scarcely necessary to dwell at length on the argument that the Catholic school by its nature is contrary to the modern spirit of ecumenism. Both Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI have given the answer to such an argument in insisting that the movement for Christian unity can never be fostered at the expense of Christian truth, and that true ecumenism must be carefully distinguished from a false irenicism.31

29Ibid., pp. 69-70.
30Wilfrid Sheed, p. 6.
31Lawrence Shehan, America, April 4, 1964, p. 481.
Addressing herself to Mrs. Ryan's sixth point, that parochial schools kept parents from assuming their primary responsibility as educators, Sr. Rose Matthew, I.H.M., strongly disagreed in the May, 1964, issue of the Catholic School Journal:

If we are being "realistic" about inadequacies in Catholic school teaching of religion — or any other subject — let us also be realistic about the amount of help parents can give in actual religious instruction which precedes religious formation. The parent does not attempt to teach his children the mathematics, the literature, the social science, the physics, the chemistry, the secretarial skills which the child will need to operate effectively in his adult society. The parent has neither the time nor the specialized understanding to do this. He delegates his responsibility to the school. Is religion somehow different? While it is certainly true that the home amplifies or negates religious instruction and formation provided by the Catholic school, it is just as true that today's parent is no more able to provide the kind of religious training necessary for the Catholic intellectual than he is the general education.32

Corroborating Sr. Rose's argument, Mrs. Doris Barnett Regan, a parent writing in the same journal, made the comment:

The majority of parents are not equipped by background, temperament, discipline, nor their condition in life to undertake this kind of training of their children. Even those of us who have had the benefit of excellent religious training from childhood through graduate school are frank to admit this fact. Education in religion or in any other field is a full-time job and require skilled professional teachers. Parents with the best will in the world cannot supplant the Catholic school.33

As to Mrs. Ryan's point that Catholic schools usurped the parents' right as primary educators, many critics called for more precision.

While it was certainly true that parents were the ones who ultimately

33Ibid. A Parent's View, Doris Barnett Regan, M.A., p. 28.
chose what education best suited their offspring, their sending these children to Catholic schools was by no means an abdication of that primal right. Far from replacing parental responsibility, the Catholic schools actually implemented it. Francis Canavan in the August 15, 1964, issue of *America* made that very point:

*We have constantly asserted the primacy of parental rights in education. But that is not to say that the school is the family at large or that teachers are mere substitutes for the parents of their pupils. Parents have a fundamental right to choose the kind of education their children will get. It does not follow that they are competent to give their children the formal education that modern society requires.*

Answering the charge of academic isolationism, many spokesmen for the parochial schools pointed out that because individual schools lag behind public schools in one or the other academic areas, was no reason to pose that they should be abolished. Were that true, one would be making the assumption that the Catholic schools were not capable of improvement -- a charge hardly defensible. Moreover, the above critics seemed to forget that the public schools were similarly being attacked for not producing sufficiently high results. What would guarantee the public schools being more effective in the light of more crowded classrooms and greater expenditures?

Looking back over the controversy generated by the Ryan book, it now seems clear, as one reviewer put it, that her book was more about the problems of the Church than about Catholic schooling. But never-

---

35 Gerard S. Sloyan, as cited above, p. 52.
theless, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?* helped clarify the distinction between Catholic education and Catholic schooling. For the longest time, American Catholics equated the two and thus became rather short-sighted in exploring the rich possibilities for growth among the faithful. With the air of the debate clearing, at the end of the sixties, more substantive issues could be considered. Before passing on to the further stages of the Catholic educational debate of the sixties, it is useful to summarize briefly Mrs. Ryan's contribution.

On the positive side, Mrs. Ryan drew attention to the importance of Christian formation both within the schools and outside of them. She also made people aware of the teaching potential of the liturgy. By challenging the hierarchy to reexamine their financial priorities in regard to the parochial schools, she generated awareness for better, more professionally staffed CCD programs. And most important of all, she re-emphasized the role of the laity in the Catholic educational process. Accomplishments which represented no mean feat.

On the negative side, Mrs. Ryan's book represented a number of failings. The book lacked scientific evidence and professional scholarship. The assumptions made, in many instances, were incorrect; such as, the implication that the Catholic schools could easily be eradicated from traditional Catholic life,36 that the schools were incompatible with a rich liturgical life on the part of the local parish,37 that the schools

---

37 "Are Parochial Schools Necessary?", *Commonweal*, April 17, 1964, p. 100.
could adequately be replaced by CCD, Newman, and the Sunday homily,\textsuperscript{38} and that the parochial schools however many their failings, were incapable of reforms sufficient to warrant their continued existence.\textsuperscript{39} Her insights about finances would later be contradicted by studies such as Greeley's. And finally the debate would shift to more important issues.

However, Mary Perkins Ryan deserves credit as a woman who dared. She helped the American Catholic Church face the changes initiated by Vatican II. Idealistic, unswerving, tenacious, she helped usher in a new era for Catholic education. And for that, she deserves our praise and historical appreciation.

\textsuperscript{38}Ibid. \hspace{2cm} \textsuperscript{39}Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

WIDER ISSUES OF THE DEBATE

In the preceding chapter the writer examined the question of whether or not the Catholic schools were absolutely necessary for the Church in the United States to fulfill its educational mission from Jesus Christ. In considering the question we concerned ourselves chiefly with Mary Perkins Ryan and her controversial book, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?* As may have been noted throughout the last chapter, Mrs. Ryan's work constituted a watershed in American Catholic education thought. She forced many churchmen and educators to wake up and reevaluate the Catholic school system in the United States. The end result of the debate that she initiated was the insight that while Catholic schools made a valuable contribution to the Church's teaching mission, they were by no means necessary in the absolute sense that many were arguing, in the 1960's.

The intent of the present chapter is to go a step further and to inquire into some of the crucial issues raised by Mrs. Ryan's book. Accordingly, chapter three will focus on three specific questions: 1) What is the purpose of Catholic Schooling? 2) How will Catholic schools support themselves in the future? 3) Given dwindling Catholic resources, what level of education should be accentuated?

The first question that concerns us then is, Why Catholic school-
ing? What purpose do the schools serve? Up until relatively recent times Catholic education in the United States had been synonymous with Catholic schooling. However, works such as Are Parochial Schools the Answer? have undermined this certitude and caused us to begin to make distinctions.

Traditionally, Catholic schools were confessional schools; they were institutions designed specifically for making Catholics better members of the faith. And while there was an evolution of consciousness as to the ultimate purpose of Catholic schooling,1 parish schools were largely concerned with the instruction of Roman Catholics. Up until the middle of the twentieth century, the mainstay of Catholic education were immigrants, especially those from Germany, Ireland, and southern and eastern Europe. The function of Catholic schooling was thus twofold: the preservation of the religious faith of the immigrant, and the gradual assimilation of these newcomers into American society.

The primary purpose of Catholic schooling was of much concern to the American hierarchy because of the massive waves of illiterate immigrants streaming into the United States, and the anti-Catholic atmosphere that existed in the public schools. Justifiably so many American churchmen feared that unless the Catholic church maintained its own system of schools, these foreign Catholics would not be able to hold on to their native faith. Of parallel concern, especially among clergy of the same ethnic background, was the preservation of the group's customs and cul-

The second traditional function of Catholic schools was of importance because the immigrant needed a middle ground by which he could enter the American mainstream. From the very beginning the Catholic schools represented a climate of acceptance where the immigrant could make the transition into the American lifestyle without too much cultural shock. The Catholic schools then went about the task of raising the level of education and introducing the immigrant into the social and political life of the country. As such the Catholic schools were not meant to imitate the public schools but to outdo them. By providing an education specifically tailored to the immigrant's need, it was thought that the newly arrived pilgrim could enhance his upward mobility.

These two historical functions held fast roughly up until the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960, the first Catholic president, which event symbolically announced that the American Church had finally taken its place among the other official religious bodies in the United States. It was at this juncture that Catholic schools began to experience an identity crisis. Vatican II brought the crisis to full term.

In an age when public schools no longer represented strongholds of prejudice and anti-Catholic bigotry, and when more than fifty percent of Catholic youth were already enrolled in these schools, not to speak of the numerous Catholics involved in teaching and administration, the Catholic schools had to find a new purpose or cease to exist. Having resolved the question as to whether or not the Catholic schools should cease to
exist, the question now became, What is the role of the Catholic school in a pluralistic society? Is there a function which differentiates the type of education offered by church schools from that available in public schools? and similar questions. John Tracy Ellis in his book, *American Catholicism*, indicates the deep awareness of Catholic educators, once Are Parochial Schools the Answer? faded from the scene. He noted:

As the decade wore on, a further factor appeared in the minds of an increasing number of Catholics who participated in this debate. Granted that there were available adequately trained personnel and money to operate the parochial schools, these Catholics felt that the problem was more fundamental, and they asked themselves such questions as these: Should the schools' resources be diverted into a ghettoized educational system? Would this not make the Church ingrown rather than outgoing at a time when the spirit of Vatican II seemed to have encouraged the latter? Should not the assets formerly expended on parochial schools be directed rather to other areas which would help to make the Church more relevant to the secular community as a whole — for example, to a social involvement that would assist in healing the wounds of that community? Should not the Church's resources, both personnel and money, be employed with a broader Christian motivation to extend Catholics' efforts to the world in which they live, rather than simply to take care of the educational needs of Catholic children in a way that often duplicated existing facilities and opportunities available to all American children? Catholics thinking along these lines saw the Church's school system as too self-centered to allow a fulfillment of the basic obligation of love, that is, to be outgoing in its service to others as a Christian conscience should demand. Such, then, have been the questions asked not only by many of the Catholic laity but also by a growing number of young pastors and the younger clergy and religious generally.2

During the 1960's three purposeful models of the Catholic school emerged, each with its own emphasis and area of influence. The first was what might be called the Mission School. Those who advocated this model stressed the social betterment function of the Catholic school. Seeing

---

the success of the parochial schools in Americanizing the immigrant, these educators turned their sights on the new immigrant, the member of a minority group, who was still on the outside of the social structure. The Mission School advocates also highly regarded the education of the handicapped, the poor, and other groups considered outcasts.

The Mission School concept of Catholic schooling had its origin in the Declaration on Christian Education of Vatican II. The Roman document encouraged pastors and their flock:

...to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools to become increasingly effective, especially in caring for the poor, for those who are without the help and affection of family, and those who do not have the Faith. 3

In line with the admonition for Catholic educators to serve the less fortunate, Monsignor James C. Donohue, superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of Boston, created quite a furor in the latter 1960's. He strongly advocated the Church making education in the inner city its number one priority. 4 Donohue first announced his contention at the March, 1967, meeting of the National Catholic Educational Association at Atlantic City. At the convention, the Boston educator noted boldly:

Our first obligation as a Christian school system is in the inner city. If we don't provide this apostolate then we are in trouble when we try to answer a question as to why we should exist. 5


4Priorities 2 and 3 included religious education, and elementary and secondary schools respectively. For further explanation confer James C. Donohue, "New Priorities in Catholic Education," America, April 13, 1968, p. 478.

As Donohue saw it, the Catholic schools should take on a sense of mission; they should be a modern counterpart to the Church's former apostolate to the immigrant. The only difference now in terms of education would be that those undergoing instruction would largely be non-Catholics. But the socializing function of the schools would continue in the same way as formerly.

To implement his plan, Donohue called for Catholic school superintendents setting up ad hoc committees on a diocesan-wide basis to determine what might be done to reduce racial isolation in the schools. The committees would include representatives of the diocesan school board, public school officials, civil rights leaders and members of other faiths. Donohue hoped that the recommendations of these committees would serve as a primer for a nation-wide conference on racial isolation to be convened in the spring or summer of 1968.

Among Donohue's recommendations were cooperation between rich and poor parishes, the building of new schools with new curriculums and parish programs, cooperation with the public schools in educational parks and other centers where children from wide geographical areas could get together for quality education. Perhaps even more revolutionary, but certainly in line with other vocal spokespersons of Catholic education, was the idea that

Where appropriate we should offer some of our inner city schools and their staffs to public schools—without recompense—to relieve crowding and provide special programs for the children who need them most without proselytizing.6

---

Father Michael O'Neill, prominent educational writer of the 1960's and superintendent of schools for the diocese of Spokane, Washington, gave the underlying reasons for the Church's involvement with inner city education in an article that appeared shortly before Donohue's famous address to the NCEA cited above. Slightly altering the format of O'Neill's comments, his ideas are as follows:

1. ...Catholic educators [should] become involved in schools for the urban poor...because this educational problem is also a moral one -- [allowing urban slum dwellers to escape their poverty.]

2. Catholic education has available educational resources: experienced teachers, administrators, counselors, specialists, curriculum ideas and materials, educational "hardware," not to mention property and buildings in slum areas that could be used for educational purposes.

3. Catholic educators could run slum schools free of political vulnerability that plagues public schools in these areas.

4. Catholic religious teachers would be full-time residents in, and part of, the slum community--a condition clearly not prevailing among public school personnel, for obvious and understandable reasons.

5. These Catholic educators would presumably remain in their schools over long periods of time, as opposed to the rapid teacher turnover in public slum schools.

6. Religious teaching communities could and should assign some of their best teachers to these schools; again for obvious reasons, public inner-city schools are notoriously unable to attract and keep high-caliber teachers.

7. ...priests, nuns and brothers are generally respected and trusted by corecity residents, whether Catholic or not.7

Donohue's suggestion was attacked by many (although the official hierarchy were noticeably silent). Paul Meckenberg, national president

---

of Citizens for Educational Freedom, charged that Donohue would put an added tax burden on American Catholics since such a plan would surely displace students currently enrolled in Catholic schools, in favor of inner city Protestants. Editorial writers for Triumph magazine were aghast that Donohue would sacrifice the teaching of Catholic doctrine for an urban ghetto education little different than that offered in public schools.

Although Donohue's proposal that the Church center its efforts on the inner city, he did not suggest that suburban Catholic schools be closed. Unfortunately, churchmen such as Archbishop Dearden of Detroit went to extremes in advocating that funds from suburban schools be diverted to the inner city. He was taken to task in Greeley's, New Agenda:

An alternative approach (and one apparently followed by such ecclesiastical dignitaries as Cardinal Dearden) is to say that the Church cannot maintain schools in both the inner cities and the white suburbs, and that the blacks of the inner city have first claim on the services of the Church; but this is the sort of administrative stupidity that has brought the Catholic Church in the United States into chaos. There are clearly two distinct problems: the white middle and upper middle-class parochial schools, which can be if not supporting at least sustained by subsidies from the parish, and the inner-city parochial schools, which need financial support from the rest of the diocese. Only the most incompetent, narrow-minded administrator thinks that the way to get financial support for the inner-city schools is by closing the suburban schools.

The second purposeful model for Catholic schooling of the future was the Experimental School model. Advocates of this group suggested

---

9 Ibid.
that the present Catholic schools should become focal points for innovation. Rather than duplicate the education offered by the public schools, their Catholic counterparts—should become leaders in the field of instruction. Francis J. Sullivan, professor of history and philosophy of education, Seton Hall University, embodied this thought. In an article for the ecumenical journal, Religious Education, Sullivan commented:

...where Catholic schools continue to exist, they should function as experimental centers for the development of new techniques, new methods, new curricula and new values in education. Moreover, when a community experiences problems and difficulties not easily dealt with in public education, the Catholic school should function as a community school meeting wherever possible the challenge posed by these problems and difficulties.11

This view as reinforced by James C. Donohue, who while he viewed innercity education to be the primary goal of the Church, nonetheless saw the need for Catholic schools being centers of innovation. Commenting along these lines he said:

They must be nothing less than excellent schools, devoted to experimentation and innovation, serving to produce intelligent, well-formed graduates, and serving also as laboratories whose successes can be communicated to public education and to the Church's own educational efforts in the ghetto.12

Michael O'Neill cites the general feasibility of the Catholic schools adopting the experimental model. In the second installment of a two-part series on Catholic education, the Spokane educator came out in favor of the idea:

...there seems to be no basically discouraging obstacle to Catholic education's becoming a significant force in educational research

and experimentation. Such work often cannot be done by public schools, for a variety of reasons, and private schools do not often have representative groups of students. (One of the problems in educational research is that "experimental schools" are usually university-operated schools attended by sons and daughters of professors and graduate students. Another problem is that they are often not really very "experimental.") Catholic education could use its relatively free and independent status to improve the quality not only of its own schools but that of public schools as well.\(^\text{13}\)

The third purposeful model of the Catholic school is the Christian leadership model. According to its exponents, this vision of the Catholic school should be totally dedicated to producing a Christian elite to serve the Church in various important areas. Neil G. McCluskey alluded to this model in his book, *Catholic Education Faces Its Future*:

There are people who advocate that the Catholic school of the future should be an elitist school, not in the sense of a high-tuition or strict-entrance-requirement institution, but rather as a school engaged in a specialized task. One kind of preparatory school could function as a leadership center both for the young men and women from whom would come many of the priests, sisters, and brothers of tomorrow and for other youngsters who would be prepared to assume greater leadership roles as members of the laity.\(^\text{14}\)

Also implied in McCluskey's remarks was the fact that such a school would also be a seed bed for teachers and administrators to perpetuate these very schools.

Bishop Ernest J. Primeau, president of the NCEA, saw the Catholic school as a leadership school in a slightly different vein. The Catholic Church should turn out leaders not so much in terms of Christians in top roles, so much as grass roots Christians who lead by their heightened social awareness. In reference to the argument on priorities raised by


James Donohue, Bishop Primeau had the following comment to make:

The question is not whether we should be teaching white middle-class Catholics, but what we should be teaching them. The issue, in my mind, comes down to this: Are we preparing white Catholic Americans to fit into American society — or are we preparing them to change American society by infusing it with values of justice and charity to all men?15

C. Albert Koob saw as a developing purpose of the Catholic schools a leadership role in the area of ethnic identity. Catholic schools could sensitize American society to the riches of cultural pluralism and thus soothe the alienation of the ethnic middle class. Commenting in America magazine, Father Koob commented:

It is possible, yet too early to tell definitely, that Catholic schools might ultimately find their greatest reason for being in the new social role that they can serve in a modern complex society. Middle America, as Msgr. Geno Baroni reminds us, contains a large segment that is Catholic, and that segment built its schools for ethnic and cultural reasons as well as for religious training. Today Middle America is alienated. Middle-class whites labor under pressures that are not only economic but social as well. All of the emphasis on helping minorities, as necessary as it was, has served to polarize the two groups. The needs are obvious, yet there is no easy solution to this social upheaval. Homogenizing the cities or the suburbs by having all children attend public schools holds no guarantee of improving the situation. The melting pot theory of public education has been rejected. It is possible that the Catholic school holds a great potential for responding to the alienation that has taken place.16

Given the notion of consensus when it came to the purpose of Catholic schooling in pluralistic America, another issue that created considerable debate was how to finance this venture. Within the Catholic community two basic solutions presented themselves, although not necesse-
sarily exclusive of the other. The first was that the federal government should bear the major portion of subsidizing the Catholic educational effort. The second view believing that federal aid at most would amount to a negligible sum, advocated that the Church look to itself for more creative ways of keeping its system of schools going.

The basic argument put forth by newly formed pressure groups such as Citizens for Educational Freedom (CEF) was that Catholic schools presented an essential service to the nation by saving tax payers millions of dollars and preserved the pluralistic nature of the country's schools. While this line of argumentation was directed to the non-Catholic sector, it was not espoused by all Catholic educators. Some school officials feared that government assistance would bring with it all sorts of red tape which in the end would hamper the Church's educational effectiveness. If the American Catholic hierarchy was any indication of where Catholics stood on the matter of federal aid, then we might conclude that one-third of the Church was for aid, one-third against it, and one-third neutral.

However, the real drama in Catholic circles concerning the support of the parochial schools involved internal finances. It was one thing to argue that the state and federal governments had not done their share for Catholic schools, but quite another to imply that the Church lacked creativity in mustering her own funds, or that the schools themselves mismanaged their resources and were not accountable. The latter allegation, since it came from fellow religionists, created much more heat and frenzy than the much more staid argument about federal aid. What follows is the sequence of arguments leading to a new look at Catholic school fi-
One of the first creative thrusts in the process of reevaluating the means of financing the Catholic schools came in the person of Anthony Seidl, professor at the University of San Francisco. Seidl initiated conversation in the very beginning by stating rather bluntly that the reason why Catholic schools were hurting financially was due to internal mismanagement and poor fiscal policies. In an article appearing in What Is Happening in Catholic Education?, edited by C. Albert Koob, associate secretary of the secondary school department of the NCEA, Seidl exposed the myth of finances. He said:

A popular pastime for those concerned with Catholic schools is the discussion of methods for relieving financial pressure for these schools. The assumption is that the acquisition of more money would improve their educational performance. Increased enrollments are time and again cited as one cause of the problem, as is the necessity for employing more lay teachers. Rarely is any attention given to the likelihood of managing the enterprise with the resources available; seldom does anyone question whether adequate financial plans are formulated, whether the financial transactions are properly accounted for, or whether financial reports provide administration with information essential to control and planning.17

As Seidl saw it, unless Catholic administrators began putting the schools on sound financial basis by introducing fiscal responsibility in the form of adequate budgeting, long-term planning, accountability, and financial reporting, the schools would continue to flounder, eventually going bankrupt.

Part of the difficulty with Catholic school financing in the late

1950's and early 1960's was that there was a great amount of secrecy surrounding the running of the schools. Very often the pastor alone was the chief financial person. He paid the bills and kept an accurate picture of the school's financial health. He did so possibly because he feared that if the school floundered, it would reflect on his leadership. Thus the laity were never given any annual reports of the school's indebtedness, projected budget, or added demands.

Somewhat supporting Seidl's contention that Catholic schools were in trouble financially due to poor budgeting, management, and accountability, Msgr. O'Neill C. D'Amour, in an article appearing in the NCEA Bulletin, November, 1968, cited clerical leadership as the nemesis referred to above. As D'Amour pointed out, the money was available for running the schools; the Catholic faithful were just not being appraised of present needs; they were not being invited to share in the planning and administration of Catholic education. To remedy the situation, D'Amour called for the systematizing of Catholic schools within individual dioceses, the implementation of the board movement, and centralized financing.18

Another aspect of the Catholic school financial picture came in the form of a scenario put forth by Neil G. McCluskey in his book, Catholic Education Faces Its Future. In this rather intense volume, the author proposed financing the Catholic schools in a way very similar to the pub-

lic school system: general taxation. As McCluskey viewed it, the solution to current financial problems was to levy a kind of head tax on all Catholics of a given diocese to support its schools. He put his case as follows:

...Tuition is now abolished. In its place there is a school tax levied on every adult member of the diocese. The present system of financing Catholic school education is unbelievably archaic, obsolete, and inefficient. In this matter we are a good one hundred years behind the public school system, whose architects long ago argued successfully that the burden of support for the commonly-used public school was a total community responsibility because of its important benefit to society. The token tuition collected by the parochial school today is usually supplemented by regular throw-it-in-the-Sunday-basket appeals to parish generosity. How much fairer and more practical to share the tax burden and to concentrate during certain periods of the year on whatever all-diocesan drives for supplementary funds prove necessary. Henceforth, let the education of the youngsters in the rich suburban parish and the declining downtown parish be paid for out of the same central fund. And if private schools directed by religious orders want to be supported in this way, it is only proper that they become an integral part of the diocesan system.

Another internal way of financing the Catholic schools was put forth by William E. Brown in a book entitled, Can Catholic Schools Survive? Brown's basic idea was that Catholics might be motivated to continue supporting their schools by means of a deduction on personal income tax. By doing away with tuition and encouraging parents of Catholic school children to use the collection basket so that the cost of operating the school could be written off as a donation, the Church would continue to keep itself going amid rising costs. By this plan, according to Brown, an individual parishoner would be able to shelter at least twenty percent

---

of his income from taxation.\textsuperscript{20}

By a series of graphs and statistics, Brown also pointed out that it would be cheaper in the long run for Catholics to keep their schools open than to bear the increase in taxes caused by a new influx of students into the public schools. Armed with this arsenal of facts, educators might approach the private enterprise sector to enlist their support, since tax dollars were effectively kept down by the maintenance of separate Catholic schools. Catholics themselves would see the value of continuing to underwrite their own system; for closing the schools would have the effect of creating new public schools and hence a higher tax rate. Brown's plan seemed to have its merits.

However, as several authors pointed out, Brown's research was somewhat faulty.\textsuperscript{21} In several instances he made some overly free generalizations that were not borne out by the facts. In other cases he was careless in his factual references. Nonetheless, Brown caused American Catholics to begin the process of finding more creative solutions to their financial dilemma. His writing challenged educators to pursue further legal possibilities.

Another source of funding for Catholic schools was alluded to by Russell Shaw, director of educational services for the NCEA. In an article for \textit{America} magazine, Shaw indicated some alternative means of

support within the Catholic community:

Even within the traditional structure of ecclesiastical fund-raising by voluntary donations, remedies for this situation are possible. One proposal is for so-called "progressive" tithing, under which the well-to-do would contribute a larger percentage of their income than the less affluent. Another possibility, little explored up to now, lies in securing endowments for Catholic elementary and secondary education.22

A rather forward-looking proposal about financing the Catholic schools was advocated by C. Albert Koob, who posed the idea of centralized financing. Although this idea had been proposed previously by such popular educators as Neil G. McCluskey and others, Koob put added stress on operating the schools through a diocesan source, which in turn would pay teachers' salaries, process bills, and apply subsidies in the case of schools experiencing financial setbacks or other emergencies. The advantage of diocesan financing through a common office as Koob saw it was that those overseeing the educational process could get a better pulse on the condition of the schools in the various sections of the diocese; superintendents would also be in a position to encourage uniform practices such as a common bookkeeping system, parallel salary structures, and the like. A centralized system of financing would also encourage parishes to take more of a pastoral interest in poorer parishes and to engage in such practices as "twinning."

Although Koob's idea was a good one, the state of Catholic education at the time was such that a strong individualism still made centralized financing a mere pipe dream. About all the dioceses have accomplished

While many ambitious solutions to the Catholic school finance problem, such as abolishing tuition, a graduated tuition based on income, centralized financing, and the like, about all that came out of the 1960's was a better management of funds, more professional procedures, and a heightened awareness of the need for a new source of school income.

Aside from the question of direction, another important issue in the discussion on Catholic schooling was, given the financial hardship brought on by the 1960's, when was Catholic schooling optimally given and received? It was an important query since the cost of building and maintenance had spiraled, and the cost of salaries quadrupled with the loss of countless religious vocations. Thus faced with limited resources, leading churchmen sought to pinpoint when Catholic schooling was most vital. The discussion finally revolved around two opposing views: one stressed concentrating on the early years when the child was most impressionable and formed his basic attitudes toward religion and life. The other view put emphasis on the upper grades, especially high school, when the student was ripening intellectually, and more apt to benefit from a Catholic school environment.

The whole issue of readiness came to the fore at the 1959 gathering of the National Catholic Educational Association. In one of the major addresses at the Easter week convention, Lawrence Cardinal Shehan of

23A good example of this is the Co-Op Purchasing Plan, which operates out of the offices of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Other dioceses participating in the plan are Rockford and Joliet, Ill, and Gary, Ind.
Baltimore caused many educators to gasp with his provocative suggestion that diocesan educational offices consider phasing out the early years of parochial education. In his talk at the convention, Shehan presented his case as follows:

...since it is common experience that during the younger years attention and interest can be held by extracurricular religious instruction, and since neither of these conditions holds true during the years of adolescence, thought might well be given to a plan to provide all children with a Catholic education, say from seventh to the twelfth grade.24

When Catholic educators recovered from the shock, they began to air the issues in the professional journals and popular monthlies. The first to give wide scope to the readiness argument was Msgr. Carl J. Ryan, superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. In an article published the same year in Homiletic and Pastoral Review,25 Msgr. Ryan gave the pro's and con's of dropping various levels of Catholic schooling. For the sake of clarity, he divided Catholic schooling into 4 segments: primary (grades 1-3), intermediate (grades 4-6), upper (grades 7-9), and high school (grades 9-12). Summing up his presentation, the reasoning went as follows: the advocates for retaining primary and intermediate schooling argued that these years were important for establishing basic attitudes and core religious truths, for a qualitative program of sacramental preparation, for the initiation of patterns of discipline, for student influence on the religious faith of parents, and finally for avoiding the complex situation of transfers and adjust-

ments, which would take place if elementary education were dropped. Those for doing away with the early years of formal Catholic education stressed the following factors: the lack of religious doctrine in the primary and intermediate years, the child's natural enthusiasm for CCD at this age, the avoidance of a needless transfer in the case of students attending public kindergarten and then transferring to the parochial school, the added responsibility factor for adults who would have to take more initiative in preparing their children for the sacraments, and the resilient faith of youngsters in these years, which would be rendered more dynamic in the high school years.

In September, 1959, the readiness argument became polarized in an article appearing in the Catholic Educator, entitled: "What Level Must We Maintain--Elementary or Secondary?" In the article, two teaching sisters debated the merits of either position.26 Sister M. Josephina, C.S.J., accentuating the elementary argument, cited the lesser cost of educating pupils in these years and the greater availability of teachers, who naturally spent the entire day building up a close relationship with their class level. She also cited some of the arguments contained in the Ryan article. Perhaps the most alarming aspect of her presentation was the implication that Catholics should keep the elementary years of education because the Communists place parallel importance on these years.

Arguing for the secondary position, Sister Harriet, a Franciscan,

mentioned the benefits to the Church from concentrating on this level. These years, sister stressed, were key awakening years when adolescents begin to question and to form their own intellectual opinions. What better way to assist them in this sensitive area than through a Catholic high school education. Other important effects were the bond between high school students and the parish, especially in the instance of a parochial high school.

The elementary-secondary debate also found its way into the proceedings of the 1962 NCEA convention. At the end of the elementary report, Mrs. John O. Reidl, past president and program director of a Milwaukee media council, and Sister Ann Virgina, principal of prestigious St. Mary Academy, Monroe, Michigan, respectively debated the elementary and secondary positions. The new elements added to the discussion were the importance of the elementary schools as a seed bed for vocations, and the stress on high schools as a means of terminal education.

The significant insight at this point of the debate was the realization that "every Catholic child in a Catholic school" was no longer a possibility, and the harsh projection that many Catholic young people would not attend a Church related college. George N. Shuster cited three trends, which accounted for the narrowing focus on secondary education: 1) the current lag in high school enrollments, 2) the up-grading of teaching religion, now more oriented toward the high school classroom, and 3) the emergence of clerical-lay boards governing the high schools, which involve the community to a larger degree in Catholic education.27

For the first time Catholic educators realistically viewed the practicality of restructuring the traditional format of Church schooling; the Archdiocese of Cincinnati had led the way by dropping the first grades in all of its schools. Now more and more Catholic leaders were gravitating toward a definite structure of Catholic schooling. Most plans seemed to revolve around the seventh grade to junior college years. Witness comments such as those of Neil G. McCluskey and James Michael Lee:

If we are forced to abandon a section of formal Catholic schooling, it ought to be the first six grades. To achieve maximum results Catholic education should start with the 7th grade of junior high school, continue through senior high school and include the 13th and 14th grades or junior college. A network of Junior colleges under diocesan and religious-order direction would mean that many tens of thousands of Catholic young men and women, at a critical stage of intellectual maturation, would have at least some access to what few of them will ever discover elsewhere, the philosophical and theological treasures of Christian humanism as well as the great documents of Catholic social thought.28

The present writer believes the solution lies in reinvesting personnel and money to prune away those branches of the Catholic school system which are inefficient when viewed from the Church's purpose in operating schools. Specifically, all elementary schools should be abandoned; Catholic nursery schools should be inaugurated; Catholic secondary schooling should begin at the age of puberty; Catholic universities as they are now should be dismantled and restructured into Catholic colleges within the nearby secular university of stature.29

Much of the debate on the optimum readiness for Catholic schooling might have been resolved if more educators made reference to the Greeley-Rossi study published in 1966. According to its authors, there was no

optimum time when any one level of Catholic schooling would be more
crucial than another. The important factor necessary for any religious
outcomes was continuity. For any Catholic schooling to be effective, it
would have to build on a successive pattern of formal Catholic instruc-
tion. Moreover, religious consequences were dependent upon a solid re-
ligious background in the home prior to schooling.

C. Albert Koob, former associate secretary of the National Catho-
lic Educational Association, later underscored this finding in his col-
laborated book, S.O.S. for Catholic Schools.30 He pointed out:

Research on education, notably in the Coleman Report, the govern-
ment's massive study of the disadvantaged, emphasizes that the
earliest years are crucial for the development of attitudes and
skills. New approaches to the religious education of children
certainly need to be explored—approaches that put less emphasis
on rote formulas, and more on deepened insight and experience.
This, however, is a very different thing from emphasizing the edu-
cation of adults at the expense of children. Christianity, we are
told is a "religion for adults." Obviously, that is true. But re-
ligious educators who use this slogan as an argument for de-empha-
sizing Catholic schools seem not to have thought through the implica-
tions of their own rhetoric. How, after all, do adults acquire
their religious attitudes and beliefs except by a long formationa-
process beginning in the earliest childhood years? How can adult
religious education be really effective unless it builds on an
already established foundation of knowledge and attitudes? The
argument for adult religious education is in fact also an argument
for Catholic schools.31

Perhaps the sanest voice in the primary versus terminal Catholic
education debate was Bishop James Shannon, auxiliary of St. Paul,Minnea-
polis. His thoughts agreed with the reconciling position of Greeley,
Koob, and many others—but not for empirical or psychological reasons.

30Albert Koob and Russell Shaw, S.O.S. for Catholic Schools
31 Ibid., pp. 120-121.
As he viewed the debate, what determined the level of Catholic schooling to be retained was not parental influence or peer development, but local leadership. This being the case, Shannon saw no reason why all levels of Catholic schooling could not continue. In an interview reported in *Trends and Issues in Catholic Education*, the Minnesota bishop had the following comment to make:

I am confident there is a place for Catholic education at the elementary, secondary, and college levels, but it will not be in all the same places where it exists today. It will not necessarily try to do all the things it has done in the past. It will depend on the strength of the local leaders and on the enlightenment of the leaders in the Church to put these goals before the people.32

As the 1970's dawned, many of the issues raised during the previous decade were resolved or at least accepted in a more favorable climate. In the first area of purpose, the Catholic schools found a more individualistic reason for their continuance. Reemphasizing their original religious purpose, Catholic educators refused to limit themselves to any social or economic strata. They would go on serving the entire population. They would continue to offer a value-laden general education, which would prepare American Catholics to grow in faith and citizenship and thus ultimately make their contribution to the world at large.

The end of the 1960's saw financing and managing Catholic schools still an important consideration of the Church. The pros and cons raised during this period had not been without effect, although the most

---

noticeable change brought about in the following decade was one of attitude. Gradually as responsibility for financing the schools was shared with the laity through boards of Catholic education at various levels, the vision of Anthony Seidl and others began to be implemented. And while no unified method of financial support was pushed on a national level, nonetheless, institutions such as endowments began to be established. Also with the refining of research, largely in the hands of Andrew Greeley and Neuwien, and the establishment of the NCEA data bank, a broader base was laid for future support.

Finally in the matter of what constituted the peak moment for Catholic schooling, there was a return to the notion of continuous, systematic learning beginning at home and ending with adult education. Advocates of elementary and terminal education saw the errors of a fragmented view of Catholic schooling and began to think in categories of total education, going even beyond the scope of the formal institutional setting.

The following chapter will delve into the meaning and import of the various studies occasioned by the 1960's debate. In many instances the research findings already began to answer some of the crucial issues still being disputed. In other cases the sociological findings gave direction to doubtful educators and encouraged them to begin the task of rebuilding the Church's system of Catholic schooling. But whatever the effect of the studies, they put educational discussion on a firmer foundation, and dispelled a considerable amount of slipshod scholarship.
CHAPTER V

SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

In the preceding chapters the author presented an overview of the history and development of Catholic education up until the 1960's, and of the perennial issues that culminated in Mary Perkins Ryan's book, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?* After setting up the nature and scope of the study in chapter one, chapter two indicated that the Catholic schools were never fully accepted as the absolute means of carrying out the Church's mission of teaching. While a unique combination of factors such as, prejudice, ecclesiastical politics, and ethnic pride brought them into being and maintained them, the schools never quite accomplished their goal of educating more than fifty percent of the Catholic younger population. The chapter also treated the Americanizing elements within the Church, who saw the public schools as a satisfactory substitute for parochial schools. Chapter three documented the opening debate of Catholic education in the 1960's. Encouraged by the new spirit of freedom and inquiry fostered by Vatican II, Mary Perkins Ryan raised the sensible question, "Are sectarian schools really necessary in a religiously pluralistic society?" After developing the Ryan thesis, the chapter then recorded the opposing voices of the debate. Finally chapter four delved into the wider issues stemming from the initial discussion, issues no longer dealing with the necessity of the Catholic schools in the 1960's, but with matters such as, the nature, scope, and utility of paro-
chial education in a post-immigrant America. The present chapter sifts through the debate and establishes a climate of factualness by citing the findings of significant research on the Catholic schools.

Scientific research in Catholic education is of recent origin. Prior to the publication of Andrew Greeley's monumental work, *The Education of Catholic Americans*,¹ little sociological data regarding the nation's Catholic schools had been processed. Only a few treatises had been done at the university level on this or that aspect of the Church's teaching mission, but nothing on the global scale that was witnessed in the 1960's.² The scientific studies enumerated in chapter five deal with those that appeared in the period of soul-searching from 1955 until 1972, chief among which are the reports of Joseph Fichter, Reginald Neu-wien, and Andrew Greeley.

The first empirical study on the Catholic schools was Joseph H. Fichter's *Parochial School*.³ The study, which appeared in 1958, was a comparative examination of students in two similar schools: one a typical parochial school under the pseudonym of "St. Luke's" and supposedly in South Bend, Indiana; the other, William Howard Taft Public School, in the same city. The purpose of the study was to give an in-depth picture of a Catholic school in operation, and to contrast the effect of parochial schooling with that of Catholics in the public school system.

---

²An example of some such studies may be found in Daniel Callahan, *Mind of the Catholic Layman* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), footnote 7, p. 156.
Utilizing a team of ten investigators, Fichter examined every facet of the Catholic school. Throughout the course of the 1956-57 school year, fourteen teachers and 632 students were tested, questioned, interviewed, and observed. The pastor, parents, and other pertinent people were also interviewed to complete the picture of the school. The author's findings were presented under four headings: 1) Patterns of Socialization, 2) Structures of Group Action, 3) Agencies of Control, and 4) Social Correlates of the Parochial School.

Part one of Fichter's work dealt with patterns of socialization, covering such areas as student position and progress in the system, religion, social attitudes and standards, conformity and conduct. Significant findings include the following:

First of all as regards social attitudes, Fichter found that the children of St. Luke's "demonstrated more favorable attitudes than the public school children on practically all of the statements made concerning concrete social problems of the adult world." On the other hand Fichter went on to say that the Catholic school children in public school showed "the highest percentages of unfavorable attitudes toward Negroes and refugees and towards the idea of aid to foreign countries." They also had a high degree of ignorance about labor unions. The author attributed this not to family background but to the fact that the children in the public school were not experiencing Catholic schooling.

Secondly, in the area of conduct, the priest sociologist found sur-

\[4\text{Ibid., p. 130.} \quad 5\text{Ibid., p. 129.} \]
prisingly little difference in their standards. Using a test, which avoided any questions dealing with religious convictions or motivation, Fichter and his associates found that neither Catholic schooling nor public schooling had any effect on standards of behavior, or at least, both had an equal effect.⁶

Part two of the study described the structures of group action at St. Luke's. Principally concerned here were youth movements, organized sports, cliques, clubs, and boy-girl relationships. The chief findings here also seem to be two in number: First of all, as might be expected, St. Luke's students had a larger percentage of Catholic friends (75 percent as opposed to the 25 percentage of public school Catholics with friends of the same faith.) The important observation here is that of "the religion he professes."⁷

Secondly, despite the superiority of the Catholic school in other areas, it seemed in the light of Fichter's study to be less successful or at least less concerned with developing boy-girl relationships in the normal course of school and outside class activities.⁸

The next major part of Parochial Schools dealt with the agencies of control at St. Luke's, specifically with teachers, parents, parent-teacher relationships, and methods of finance. The only area where the public school had more advantages over St. Luke's was in the area of parent-teacher relations. As the Fichter study bluntly put it, "The parents of St. Luke's tend to be servants of the parochial school rather

⁶Ibid. ⁷Ibid., p. 237. ⁸Ibid., p. 266.
than its superior, partner, or representative."\(^9\) As Fichter noted, most of the parents tended to work for the school rather than with the school. This was especially true in areas related to teachers and curriculum, where parental involvement was looked upon as interference with the school. By contrast, "the public school, with a full-time Principal and with teachers who have free periods during the day, has an overwhelming larger percentage of pre-arranged interviews between parents and teachers."\(^10\) However, it should be noted that these interviews dealt mostly with behavior problems.

Finally, the fourth part of the study concerned the social correlates of the parochial school, including useful information on the religious training of the Catholic students attending the public school, basic problems of elementary education, and the integration of school, parish, and the wider community. The only point worth noting here is the truism that Catholics outside the parochial school system fare badly when it comes to religious training. As Fichter observed: "About one-third of them cease attending Sunday school before they reach the eighth grade. This means that they go into adolescence, youth and maturity with a small child's partial knowledge of their religion."\(^11\)

Perhaps the best way to summarize the Fichter study is to say that it was the first complete, detailed study of a representative Catholic school. And while issue might be taken with minor aspects of the study, the author nonetheless supported his findings by means of a question-

\(^9\)Ibid., p. 345.  \(^10\)Ibid. \(^11\)Ibid., p. 393.
naire administered to Christian Family Movement couples representing 192 different schools, and to teachers associated with another 241 schools. The information gathered involving the above 433 schools in 29 states of the nation may be found in the appendix to Parochial School.

A year after publishing his volume, Joseph Fichter released summary findings about Catholic elementary education. His findings are as follows:

First of all on the negative side, Fichter noted that in general the classrooms of the Catholic grade school were more crowded than those in the public sector, there being on the average of 45 students per classroom. As far as Catholic teachers were concerned, they were paid less and did not have escalating arrangements for pay or pension plans. In terms of teacher preparedness, the Catholic instructors did not have the number and kinds of degrees that the public school teachers had. Moreover, the Catholic teachers participated less in teacher institutes and had fewer contacts with colleagues in other schools. Also there was less communication between the Catholic teachers and the parents of students.

Secondly, as regards curriculum, the Catholic schools lacked the development of the public schools in the area of physical education and overall departmentalization. Likewise, the Catholic schools lacked the resources for other courses such as crafts and vocational subjects.

Church institutions obviously stressed a heavy academic program as opposed to life adjustment courses.

Perhaps Fichter's most disappointing finding was that while Catholic school students were not intellectually inferior to public school students, there was no significant difference in their social attitudes. Apparently in this study Catholic education in the late 1950's made no more significant social impact on the minds of its students than did the public school.13

Fichter noted that parochial school children were more orderly and self controlled than the public school children — a fact that seemingly stands in contrast to his finding about the universality of standards of conduct for both parochial and public school pupils. Apparently, Catholic school students are more highly motivated to carry those standards into practice. Also Fichter observed that parochial school students have the added advantage of being able to develop patterns of religious practice, such as, prayer, Mass attendance, and the reception of the sacraments.

In 1962 after a seeming silence in the Catholic press, Joseph Fichter raised some important questions concerning the effectiveness of Catholic secondary education.14 In a national survey of 2,216 active, practicing Catholic adults, the author found some evidence that Catholic graduates of public high schools had a better religious outlook than

13 This point is disputed elsewhere in the Greeley-Rossi Report quoted later on in this chapter.
those who attended Catholic secondary schools.

Using a sampling, which included non-college-bound Catholic adults\textsuperscript{15} in every state of the nation, Fichter reported the following findings:
First, as regards the leadership of the local Catholic parish, Fichter concluded that products of Catholic high schools had a closer personal relationship with the clergy than public high school students. Only one-fifth of those attending public institutions reported having a priest come to their home as opposed to one-third of the Catholic high pupils. However, public high school students had a higher estimation of the clergy than those enrolled in Catholic secondary education — a fact possibly due to the Catholic high student's greater familiarity with the priests on their faculty.

Secondly, when it came to listing the greatest problems facing the Church, both groups stated the opinion that the main two difficulties were the drop in the rate of vocations and communism. However, the public high school Catholics showed a more universal outlook in the choice of the third problem; they cited moral indifference as opposed to anti-Catholic bigotry mentioned by the Catholic high students.

Next, in the area of parish improvement, Catholic high school students seemed more satisfied; aside from some minor improvements in clergy-lay relations and in methods of financing the parochial school, they were

\textsuperscript{15}The breakdown of the sampling population was as follows: those who completed 4 years of public high school — 45 percent, those having attended 4 years of Catholic high school — 34 percent, those attending both — 6 percent. The remaining 15 percent surveyed either did not attend high school or at least did not finish.
fairly content. On the other hand, public high Catholics were more specific in their recommendations; they were concerned about improving the quality of the parochial school and also involving the laity in the life of the school.

When it came to the students' wider interests such as reading, the survey revealed that Catholic high school graduates much preferred to read for relaxation, while the public school students read for information or personal improvement. In terms of the choice of periodicals, Catholic high school students understandably chose Church magazines while public high Catholics read high caliber secular subscriptions such as Time and Newsweek. The latter group were interested in broadening their viewpoint by attending to good journalism and factual reporting. They were concerned about national and world affairs insofar as these events affected their total secular and religious outlook.

In the area of social goals, there was much agreement between Catholic and public high students. Both groups listed as being of utmost importance, the reduction of crime and delinquency, the securing of basic rights for all Americans regardless of creed and race, and the lessening of Cold War tensions. However, public school graduates ranked the securing of basic civil rights as of greater importance than the reduction of crime and delinquency.

As far as general social awareness was concerned in matters such as, political affiliation, race relations, foreign aid, and labor-management relations, Fichter found many similarities between the two groups. Catholic and public students alike reflected the same patterns of party allegi-
ance. Both groups showed a comparable awareness of the problems of race in the United States. Only in the area of foreign aid was a more universal outlook reflected: Catholic high school pupils were for reducing foreign aid while those in the public high favored increasing it.

Finally in the area of religion, Fichter noted a significant difference. Public high school Catholics had a more vital interest in matters of faith than did their counterparts in the Catholic system. The author of the survey attributed this factor to the public high students' overcompensation for a religious education that was insufficient in their earlier years.

The general conclusion of Fichter's study seems to be that public high school graduates in the late 1950's and early 1960's were much more socially aware than Catholic high students. On commenting on this noticeable difference, the Loyola sociologist made the following remarks:

The significant differences of social awareness between the graduates of Catholic and public high schools are not easily explained. The public school products are more progressive and alert, more interested in the activities of their fellowman and in the welfare of society. This consistent disparity between the two groups of respondents is not the result of statistical chance; it is not a local or regional phenomenon, since our sample represents adequately all dioceses in the United States.16

The whole effect of the above study was to cast doubt on the effectiveness of the Catholic high school program. As Fichter indicated in the concluding paragraph of his article, the Catholic high school seemed to be more concerned with the hereafter than with preparing students for

the present.

However, socially deficient as Catholic high schools might have been, a note of hope was injected several years later when Donald Light published his findings on the social involvement of students in Catholic and other high schools.¹⁷ According to Light, Catholic high schools were substantially more successful in integrating the educationally, economically, and personally disadvantaged into the life of the school than were other high schools.

In 1966 the results of two studies funded by the Carnegie Corporation were published. The first was The Education of Catholic Americans,¹⁸ authored by Andrew M. Greeley and Peter H. Rossi in conjunction with the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago; it studied the effect of Catholic education on recent graduates. The other work, edited by Reginald A. Neuwien, was entitled, Catholic Schools in Action.¹⁹ Unlike the former study, the Neuwien volume studied those currently enrolled in the Catholic system. Taken together the Greeley-Rossi Report, (also known as the NORC Report), and the Neuwien study gave much needed input into the debate that was raging in Catholic education.

The Education of Catholic Americans was the result of a three year study in which 2,700 Catholics were personally interviewed and another 1,000 who subscribed to Commonweal, were surveyed, along with a control

¹⁹For full citation, confer footnote 2 of Introduction.
group of high school students and Protestants. The study, which attempted to assess the effect of Catholic education on its graduates, delved into three major categories of effects: religious, social, and aspirational.20

In the first area of religious outcomes, Greeley and Rossi tried to determine whether the commonly avowed purpose of Catholic education had been accomplished, i.e., Catholics who were more vigorous in the observable phenomena of their faith: church attendance and reception of the sacraments, orthodoxy in doctrinal and ethical attitudes, religious knowledge, acceptance of Church authority, and church involvement. The authors reached the following conclusions:

1. Catholics who went to Catholic schools do score considerably higher on measures of sacramental behavior, but even those who did not go to Catholic schools score relatively high on such measures.

2. Catholic school Catholics are no more likely to concede teaching authority to the Church in matters in which most people agree that the Church has a right to teach and in matters in which most say the Church has no right; but in areas of disagreement, such as race, sex, and education those who went exclusively to Catholic schools are more likely to grant the Church teaching authority.

3. In doctrinal and ethical matters, the Catholic school Catholic is somewhat more orthodox, especially in matters such as sexual morality and papal primacy, which have been of considerable symbolic importance in recent Catholic history. There are also moderate differences in attitudes on family size and mixed marriages.

4. Catholic school Catholics are much better informed on the doctrinal fine points of their religion.

5. They also participate more in church activities, but not as much

20 Writer's own division.
as might have been reasonably expected; we suggest that family behavior might be more important than schooling in producing organizational commitment.

6. With our admittedly limited tools, we could not discover any relationship between Catholic school attendance and disposition to help others.21

The second part of the study concerned the social effects of Catholic education. Involved here was the traditional charge that Catholic schools were divisive in that they failed to integrate their students into the American mainstream, and that Catholic school graduates entertained socially intolerant attitudes.

To answer the divisiveness argument, Greeley and Rossi examined the role of Catholic school graduates in the life of the community. Specifically, this aspect of the study attempted to find out whether Church educated Catholics were less likely to have Protestants and Jews as friends, neighbors, or fellow workers; whether they were less likely to be involved in community activities; and whether they were less apt to be well informed on current events. All findings were negative. Although, it was understandable that Catholics attending Church schools would choose friends of their own faith, during their student days, once they graduated their social interaction was the same as for any other group. As regards community involvement, the study also affirmed that one's school had little to do with one's secular activities; it made no difference whether Catholics attended Church institutions or public schools.22

21Greeley-Rossi, The Education of Catholic Americans, p. 72.  
22Ibid., p. 119.
The other aspect studied in this grouping was whether or not Church schools developed any "rigid and intolerant attitudes" towards members of other groups. The research once again yielded a negative conclusion: "Catholic school Catholics are actually more tolerant with regard to civil liberties and are no more anti-Negro, anti-Semitic, or anti-Protestant." However, the study did go on to note that while there was no evidence of divisive attitudes among Catholic school products, neither was there any indication of a more heightened social consciousness.

But while the study showed an apparent neutrality on the part of the Catholic schools in promoting greater social awareness in Catholic school graduates as opposed to public school Catholics, there were reassuring signs. Upcoming Catholic graduates scored low on measures of anti-Semitism, indicating a statistically significant relationship between their Catholic education and their positive attitude toward Jews. The Greeley-Rossi Report at least suggested that there was supportive evidence to the effect that "Catholic schooling had a positive social effect on the younger and better educated."

The third major area explored by the Greeley-Rossi study was that of aspiration in terms of the economic and occupational achievement of Catholic graduates. Seeking to find out whether Catholic education had

---

23Ibid., p. 137.
24This point was addressed in the meetings of the National Catholic Educational Association for a number of years following the publication of the Greeley-Rossi Report. To Teach As Jesus Did (1972) was a prime example of how the Church later made up for the poor educational showing in the area of social commitment.
25Greeley-Rossi, The Education of Catholic Americans, p. 137.
an adverse effect on its graduates in the above area, the research team came up only with negative findings. Catholic education in no way interfered with achievement. In fact, the authors found that "Catholics who went to Catholic schools were more successful than Catholics who did not." 26 Also the degree of success was in direct proportion to the socio-economic status of one's family and the amount of education already experienced. Likewise, the degree of difference in achievement between high socio-economic status graduates of the Catholic and public schools, was much greater than between high and low socio-economic status coordinates of the same system, Catholic or public. 27

The net effect of the Greeley-Rossi study was that for the first time in the history of Catholic education there was statistical evidence based on comprehensive research to support the claims of Catholic education. 28 In an article written for Our Sunday Visitor in 1966, Andrew Greeley summed up the impact of his study in the form of six positive conclusions and six reservations. 29

First of all in the area of positive results, Greeley pointed out these important benefits:

1. There is absolutely no evidence that Catholic schools are academically inferior.

26 Ibid., p. 156.  
27 Ibid., p. 147.  
28 While Neuwien's Catholic Schools in Action rendered some interesting statistics in terms of the 1962-1963 Catholic school picture there was little in the report upon which to base a long-range evaluation of the effects of Catholic education. Moreover, the study was seriously hindered by some serious methodological errors.  
2. There is absolutely no evidence that Catholic education isolates Catholics from other Americans.

3. Catholic schools have considerable influence on the religious attitudes, knowledge, and behavior of those who attend them.

4. There is some evidence that the schools are feeling the influence of the recent changes and developments in the Church.

5. Despite all the criticism and controversy, Catholic schools are still extremely popular.

6. There is no reason to think, at least in the short run, that Catholic schools will not survive.

In a more sobering vein, the Chicago sociologist priest then gave his six reservations.

1. Catholic schooling has relatively little impact on those whose families are not devout Catholics.

2. Catholic schools have many bitter enemies both inside and outside the Church, and while sympathy is growing for the schools, especially among non-Catholics, so is enmity growing among Catholics.

3. There is a severe lack of dynamic and creative leadership within Catholic education, at all levels.

4. The morale of many Catholic educators (particularly those in the Religious Orders) is very low, and in some instances near collapse.

5. There is an appalling lack of coordination and cooperation in Catholic education at every level.

6. While great strides have been made, there is still a tendency to think that order is a greater value than freedom and that external conformity is more important than a respect for the dignity and the uniqueness of each personality in the school.

The second study published in 1966 was Catholic Schools in Action, also called the Notre Dame Study; its major editor was Reginald A. Neu-wien. The work was funded by the Carnegie Foundation and Catholic school
personnel\textsuperscript{30} to study the situation of Catholic education at the time.

The study, which was conducted in the 1962-1963 school year, involved 9,451 elementary and 2,075 secondary Catholic schools in thirteen dioceses, and represented a cross population of students all across the nation. As such, the study was meant to be "objective and informative"\textsuperscript{31} rather than evaluative as is evident from the fact that the study made no comparison with public school counterparts. Basic areas covered by the report were Goals of Catholic Education, Enrollment in Catholic Schools, Staffing, Preparation of Religion Teachers, Catholic School Students' Religious Understandings, Inventories of Student Attitudes and Opinions, and Parental Reflections on Catholic Schools in General.

The core of the Notre Dame Study was composed of the findings of a special instrument called, the Inventory of Catholic School Outcomes, (ICSO). Presupposing religious education to be the main reason for the Catholic School's existence as a separate system,\textsuperscript{32} Neuwien was concerned about three specific measures of the school's effectiveness; 1) what the students knew about their religion, 2) what their attitudes were about applied religion in general, and 3) what their opinions were about their Catholic education.

Beginning with the first area of religious understanding, Neuwien found that students as a whole did well, although there was no discernible

\textsuperscript{30}The funding came as a reaction to the publication of Mary Perkins Ryan's book, \textit{Are Parochial Schools the Answer?}
\textsuperscript{31}Neuwien, \textit{Catholic Schools in Action}, p. X.
\textsuperscript{32}Ibid., p. 145.
pattern which the responses took. Of the two groups tested, i.e., eighth graders and seniors, there was a significant difference, but not as great as expected. As a group, girls in all-girl high schools showed the best understanding of their religion. It should be mentioned, however, that measuring religious outcomes in the area of knowledge was based on Post Vatican II theology, which could have affected responses, especially in more conservative schools.

The next area of the ICSO concerned itself with students attitudes and values in the area of religious vocations, minority groups, mixed marriage, and other facets of the Catholic picture. Specifically treated were the areas of religious-moral attitudes, occupational aspirations, civic-social attitudes, attitudes toward family values, and finally educational aspirations.

The summary conclusions presented by this section of the inventory declared that the Catholic position was most often espoused by girls than by boys, and then mostly on the elementary level. These respondents had spent most of their schooling in the Catholic system, and planned to continue. They viewed themselves as being successful in school and associated in the main, with fellow Catholic school students. As for their religious practice, they attended Mass over and above the usual requirements.

---

33 Ibid., p. 166.
34 Interesting enough, Greeley and Rossi found the opposite to be true in the NORC Study. Their findings indicated that males, especially on the college level, had a deeper commitment to the Catholic position.
35 Neuwien, Catholic Schools in Action, p. 220.
In terms of the other categories included in part two of the ICSO, the students interviewed had two Catholic parents, one or both of whom were highly educated in Catholic or secular institutions. When it came to social class, it was found that the higher the level of accomplishment, the greater the tolerance of minority groups and the more recurrent Mass attendance. Families represented by the middle and lower level of the social ladder showed a stronger endorsement of religious vocations and traditional Catholic family values, such as a reluctance to sanction divorce or even mixed marriages. Also these families were actually involved in joint prayer and religious discussion.

The third phase of the ICSO sought to find out how students viewed the goals of their schools, and the relative success of the schools in carrying out these goals. Also solicited were students opinions regarding parental interest in the schools and their respective influence on religious formation.

The survey yielded the following conclusions. First of all, as regards the goals, students ranked the religious-moral aspirations of the school as most important. When it came to occupational-vocational goals as opposed to intellectual-academic, the respondents favored the former by a small margin. However, when it came to the achievement of the schools in implementing these goals, the students assigned greatest success to vocational goals with religious and intellectual goals in second and third place respectively.36 Also in this connection, students

36Ibid., p. 255.
who rated themselves academically higher gave the schools a higher success rating.

Finally, in the sphere of religious-moral goals, also included in part three, there was a low perception of success. Fewer high school students assigned success than the elementary students did.37

Whatever its merits, the Notre Dame Study was not without its limitations. In 1966, when the report was still a recent publication, William H. Conley, under whose leadership the study originally began, before Neuwien took over, harshly criticized the work.38 His initial complaint was that because of a publication delay, much of the factual information was out-of-date due to the rapidly changing Catholic educational situations. However, in terms of the actual study, Conley went on to fault the instruments used for measuring the religious outcomes and student attitudes, as being inadequate to render altogether useful information. Moreover, the depth studies themselves were subject to serious misinterpretation. When it came to the interviewing process, for example, Conley noted that insufficient documentation was made throughout the study. Finally, the major problems of education were not specifically enumerated. The Notre Dame Study was rather hazy in pin-pointing current issues, such as "centralization at the diocesan levels, equalization in financial support, clarification of status of

37Only 28 percent of the high school students saw their schools as successful in implementing religious-moral goals as opposed to 43 percent at the elementary level, (Neuwien, Catholic Schools in Action, p. 256).

the office of the superintendent, long-range regional planning, development of school boards," and the like.39

In 1968 the University of Notre Dame in conjunction with its Office of Educational Research undertook two distinctive studies dealing with the Diocese of Denver, Colorado, and Saginaw, Michigan. Both areas were experiencing a decline in the number of parochial school students and inquired into the relative effectiveness of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine as opposed to the religious education in the Catholic school program. While the results were understandable and predictable in the light of earlier studies, the recommendations of both reports had import for the future role of Catholic education. Among the suggestions were a stronger commitment to the world as advocated by Vatican II; centralized planning, programming, and budgeting; consolidation and cooperation in the use of elementary facilities; investigation of inexpensive teaching aids; establishment of tuition and school fees; formation of an equalization fund to help poor parishes support their schools. In the area of Catholic school personnel, the Denver and Saginaw reports suggested increasing teacher specialization, improved academic quality, salary scales, and subsidies for teacher education. In the sphere of administration, the Notre Dame sociologists recommended the establishment of regional councils to act in an advisory capacity to school boards and as channels of information, the centralization of authority over high schools, and in general, a greater cooperation between public and Catho-

39 Ibid., p. 30.
The previous studies listed in this chapter gave us some indication of the scientific findings about Catholic education in general, and a few sidelights about Catholic education on the secondary level. Any survey on Catholic education during the later 1950's and the early 1960's would not be complete without some mention of the plight of Catholic higher education. The following are two representative studies dealing with Catholic graduates, the other with lay and religious professors in the institutions themselves. Obviously, the research done in this area could absorb an entire chapter by itself. But since this is not the particular focus of this study, only a brief treatment will be given. The two studies cited are Andrew Greeley's, Religion and Career, and John D. Donovan's, The Academic Man in the Catholic College.

One of Andrew Greeley's works, which treated the nature of Catholic higher education was published in 1963 under the title of Religion and Career. The study dealt with college graduates of June, 1961, and examined their undergraduate experiences as well as their future career plans. Greeley's basic hypothesis was the rather negative criticism mounted by John Tracy Ellis that Catholic higher education was anti-intellectual by nature. Supposing that Ellis' contention was correct that Catholic higher education limited its graduates due to lack of ac-

---

accomplished professors, adequate libraries, and research facilities, Greeley set about finding a negative correlation. Sampling 40,000 graduates of 135 Catholic colleges, Greeley reached the following conclusions:

1. Catholics are as likely as Protestants to graduate from college.

2. Catholics are more likely than Protestants to go to graduate school and to choose the arts and sciences.

3. Catholics are persevering in graduate school, planning to get a Ph.D. and pursuing research careers in about the same proportion as Protestants.

4. Catholics in Catholic colleges and Catholics in secular colleges are strikingly similar in their career plans, occupational values, and intellectual orientations.

5. Catholic college graduates, as compared with non-Catholic college graduates, are less likely to fall away from the faith and more likely both to attend Church regularly and to evaluate their religion as a source of satisfaction.43

6. Catholics are more likely to plan business careers and to work for large companies than either Protestants or Jews.

7. Catholics are more interested in making money and less interested in helping others than are Protestants, yet consider their religion as important as a career among sources of life satisfaction.44

A sociological study, Greeley's Religion and Career, established that Catholic higher education was not anti-intellectual, even though there might not be high visibility in terms of the number of Catholics doing extensive research and gaining prominence through publication in scientific journals and other scholarly periodicals. The absence of

43The Catholic apostacy rate according to the study increased among scholars by only 2 percent.
intellectuals in Catholic and non-Catholic circles was not due to the system but to the nature of immigrant Catholicism in the United States. As the author explained it, "the lack of Catholic scholars in the past was related both to poverty and to...the tardiness of some of the ethnic groups in adjusting to the American attitude toward higher education."45

Another study related to the anti-intellectualist argument on Catholic education is found in the book, The Academic Man in the Catholic College, by John D. Donovan, published in 1964. The study, financed by the Catholic Commission on Intellectual and Cultural Affairs, had as its purpose the examination of the intellectual growth of Catholic college professors. To reach his conclusions, Donovan surveyed about 300 randomly selected, lay and religious professors in twenty-two Catholic colleges and universities.

Donovan's work is divided into three parts and a summary. The first section deals with the historic and religious structure of Catholic higher education. The second gives the social origins of those interviewed, along with their own personal progress from elementary to graduate schools, and their present professorial situation. And finally in the third section of the study, Donovan presents a correlation between professional values and rates of publication with family and school socialization. The summary of the work contains the author's basic findings.

45Greeley, Religion and Career, p. 100.
Obviously, for the purpose of the present survey of scientific data concerning Catholic education, Donovan's conclusions are most important. The basic thesis—presented in the author's summation—is that Catholic higher education of the later 1950's and early 1960's was relatively ineffective in the sense that it lacked the resources to pose ultimate questions. Schools lagged behind their secular counterparts. The professors lacked the intellectual underpinnings of their profession. Because they came from families with low socio-economic backgrounds, which tend to put a low value on intellectual achievement, the Catholic professors studied, similarly lacked the academic appreciation of their profession. They valued teaching above research and scholarship, a fact which accounted for the scarcity of published works. Moreover, because of the religious monopoly in Catholic education, Catholic lay educators were hindered by a system of religious training, which lacked an essential respect for experimentation and free thought.

While The Academic Man in the Catholic College is essentially a telling study about the professional atmosphere of the typical Catholic college, Donovan's work must be put into perspective. The basic weakness with this study is that there is no comparable information concerning non-Catholic professors or Catholic professors in secular institutions. Also, the study does not differentiate between the situation of lay or religious professors at older, relatively well-established Catholic institutions and the circumstances surrounding newer, struggling schools. The implication of many reviewers of this study is that the Catholic situation may just be reflecting the general state of education
in general.

Before attempting any comment on the scientific studies undertaken during the late 1950's and early 1960's, several comments should be made about the general state of research on Catholic education. First of all until a relatively late date, sociology as a science was looked upon with a great deal of suspicion. Understandably, the few Catholic sociologists that there were, were considerably hindered in their attempts to encourage Church leadership to delve into the concrete, observable phenomenon underlying the Church's teaching mission.46

Somewhat related to this first point, the American hierarchy as a whole had shown little interest in its leadership role in Catholic education and for the most part exercised cautious restraint in fostering research. It was only the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), a private professional organization that took the initiative to encourage study on the Catholic system however limited until the present.

A third factor hampering scientific studies has been the lack of financing, which when allied with factors one and two, had made Catholic educational research virtually impossible. It has been only with the advent of major universities, such as Notre Dame, and the offer of assistance from charitable foundations, such as Eli Lilly and the Carnegie

46 John D. Donovan, "Creating Anti-Intellectuals?", *Commonweal*, October 2, 1964, pp. 37-39, calls attention to the irony of sociologists such as Andrew Greeley, coming to the defense of Catholic education when their own science was given a "traditionally low estate" (p. 38) by that same system.
Corporations that any research took place at all.

And finally, the Catholic sociologist was hindered by the sheer lack of baseline statistics on Catholic education on the national level. As Frank Bredeweg remarked in *U.S. Catholic Schools, 1973-74*, before 1969 when the NCEA data bank went into operation, there were no meaningful statistics on the nationwide status of Catholic education.47

Thus the lack of scientific esteem, the want of Church leadership, and the scarcity of funds combined to frustrate any sociological treatment of the Catholic schools or to provide any significant data for further research.

For the most part, the scientific studies enumerated in this chapter are of limited value. And while they exhibit a dramatic rise in the quality of sociological research itself, they also raise numerous questions about the methodology and validity of content. For instance, when it came to sampling, an important part of the sociological method, Fischer concentrated on only two schools: one Catholic, one public. While he gave us a comprehensive picture of a seemingly typical parochial school, his study had little to offer about Catholic schooling in general. While Donovan presented a wide sampling in the study of Catholic college professors, he did not make use of a significantly uniform population. On the other hand, Neuwien made use of an exhaustive sampling, yet raised a number of doubts about the reliability of his findings. Much of his

data had to be first processed by the U.S. Bishops in Washington, D.C.\textsuperscript{48} and thus was dated. Some of his questionnaires, as mentioned earlier, were phrased in ambiguous language.\textsuperscript{49} Likewise his interviews were not as representative as they might have been.

Perhaps the only consistent contribution to the state of Catholic schools has been the research done by Andrew M. Greeley and his associates. \textit{Religion and Career}, \textit{The Education of Catholic Americans}, and Greeley's follow up study, \textit{Catholic Schools in a Declining Church},\textsuperscript{50} all exhibit a steady, painstaking approach to the study of the Catholic schools. For the most part, Greeley is very careful in setting up his hypothesis and follows through with a clear presentation of the evidence. While his works abound with complicated statistics and tables, he nonetheless provides many direct summaries.

Taken together, the various studies touched upon in this chapter, indicate that Catholic schools are here to stay. Beginning with Fichter's classic study, we find out that Catholic schools in the late 1950's were not second-rate institutions. Although classrooms were more crowded than the public schools, and while teachers sometimes lacked the degrees and professional involvement of their secular colleague, Catholic students were nonetheless on an intellectual par with other students.

\textsuperscript{48}James Michael Lee, interview held during the Religious Educational Association Convention, St. Louis, Missouri, November 22, 1977.
\textsuperscript{50}Andrew Greeley, William McCready, and Kathleen McCourt, \textit{Catholic Schools in a Declining Church} (Kansas City:Sheed and Ward, 1976).
And while Catholic schools lacked the sophistication of public schools in terms of buildings, programs, and financing, these Church-run institutions had an advantage which their secular rivals could not offer: a more intimate, personal atmosphere where religion was fostered and students learned discipline and patterns of Christian living.

As Andrew Greeley brought out in his massive NORC study, Catholic education did make a difference, but under two conditions: that students came from devout practicing families, and that the Catholic education received was continuous from elementary to graduate school.

But the studies also pin-pointed an area where the Catholic schools were mediocre, especially in the light of formalized teaching: social attitudes. Most reports seemed to agree that Catholic students had the same basic prejudices and social misconceptions as their public school friends.

In the area of higher Catholic education, studies indicated that Catholic graduates were more hopeful and optimistic than many other graduates. Catholic students were just as likely to graduate and go on to be successful as their secular counterparts. And the more successful they became, the more value they put on the Catholic schools.

But here too, the studies found areas for improvement. Catholic professionals had to take a more intensive look at research and publication. And institutions themselves had to improve their libraries and research facilities.
After examining the various studies, it seems that the most significant thing about Catholic schools is that they do have an impact on adult behavior. At a time when most educational research is coming to the conclusion that schools in general have relatively little effect on life after graduation, this is no insignificant revelation. In commenting on his study, The Education of Catholic Americans, Andrew Greeley makes this very point:

...in the light of the educational research done since 1963 by such scholars as Christopher Jencks, James Coleman, Daniel P. Moynihan, the most striking phenomenon reported...is that parochial schools have any impact at all. For the basic theme that runs through contemporary educational research is that education doesn't make much difference at all. It would seem to me that if the work of Coleman, Jencks, and Moynihan had been done before The Education of Catholic Americans, the response, at least from the secular education world, would have been one of astonishment and perhaps joy, because somewhere, somebody had found at least some evidence that what went on in the classroom had impact on adult life.51

Thus we might conclude with Andrew Greeley and many others' comments on the American Catholic scene that Catholic schools are valuable and effective alternatives to the public schools.

The scientific studies documented above did much to clarify the debate of the 1960's. Although, ironically, many of the issues chronologically current with the publication of research, might have been eradicated by reference to scientific data, the studies eventually vindicated the existence of the Catholic schools. They accomplished the purpose for which they were established: religious education in the context of secular learning. The credibility of institutional learning hav-

ing been established, the task of the Church was now to pick up the pieces, to heal the ideological gap and recommit itself to Catholic education. The time was ripe for bringing Catholic leaders together for the purpose of moving into the future. The next chapter documents the Church's major thrust toward the future of Catholic education.
Thus far we have examined the historical factors that were part of the milieu of the 1960's in Catholic Education. We have seen how Mary Perkins Ryan, by her book, *Are Parochial Schools the Answer?*, occasioned the beginning of a stormy period for the Catholic schools. After answering the ultimate question about the existence and continuation of the schools, we found that questioning had become a way of life for Catholic educators, and that all facets of the Church's teaching mission were now subject to vast debate. In the subsequent chapter on scientific studies, we saw that Catholic schools were not as bad as some of their harshest critics claimed, nor as good as the staunchest defenders would have us believe. The schools merely reflected the turmoil and internal questioning of the period.

The current chapter will focus on the Washington Symposium, which convened during the week of November 5-10, 1967, in the nation's capital. In many respects this meeting served as a Catholic educational summit, a kind of watershed in which new ideas were expressed and serious problems were met head on. As the chapter will indicate, the five-day session brought about a certain amount of consensus and helped channel much needed energies into the unfinished task ahead: to pick up the pieces of the Catholic educational debate of the 1960's and to move into the future with a renewed sense of mission. The final statement of the Symposium
was not without its critics but the major work of reconstruction had begun.

The original idea for a symposium on the future of Catholic education grew out of a suggestion at a meeting of the Problems and Plans Committee of the National Catholic Educational Association shortly after the close of Vatican II. In a discussion of The Declaration on Christian Education, the committee suggested that small groups of scholars be convened to make some inferences from the document for the United States. They also suggested a restatement on the Catholic philosophy on education so that it might relate to recent social change. Toward this latter end, the committee envisioned an assembly of Catholic philosophers, theologians and educators. The proposal was discussed in various forums and eventually resulted in the convocation of the Washington Symposium.1

In the mind of Father C. Albert Koob, Executive Secretary of the National Catholic Educational Association, which was the sponsoring organization, the Washington Symposium had as its purpose

"to generate a great deal of interest in three problems, namely, financial problems, the structural problems, and the problems of lay involvement, with a view toward getting some new ideas and new viewpoints that perhaps have been overlooked before.2

However, the greatest difficulty facing the meeting was that what-

---

ever document or consensus, which would be forthcoming, would have no
tying force or official approbation; the work of the Symposium would
merely be exhortatory. Commenting further on this point, Koob went on
to point out:

The Symposium is intended to furnish guidelines that will look for­
ward to possible solutions to our problems. What we would hope for,
since the national level does not and will not have the power to
make decisions on this, is that in each diocese, the materials gen­
erated by the Symposium, will become working papers for a local con­
ference or symposium. And then in the light of agreement or dis­
agreement with what has been suggested, or their ability or in­
ability to do what has been recommended, they will then formulate
their own policies in accord with what we have suggested. 3

Seemingly, the Washington Symposium only set up a model for renewal on
the local level.

As to the particulars of just how the Washington Symposium would
be convened and who would be attending, Father Koob also had a rationale.
Since it would be a summit meeting, the Executive Secretary of the NCEA
and his staff sought out prominent educators within the Catholic system,
representing every range of thought on Catholic education. In addition,
Father Koob invited people outside the Catholic schools, and civic
leaders who would contribute their own particular viewpoint to the con­
ference. An initial listing of possible Symposium participants showed
a rather unmanageable 500, which the NCEA staff eventually reduced to
slightly over 100. The final number arrived at was 1094 plus sixteen
NCEA staff members. Included in the participants were Bishop William

3 "Father Koob Looks at the Future of Catholic Education
4 The official proceedings of the Symposium published by the NCEA
lists 108 and 14 staff members.
McManus of Chicago, Sociologists Andrew Greeley and Reginald A. Neuwien, John Cogley, Robert Hoyt, editor of the National Catholic Reporter, Mary Perkins Ryan, Jacqueline Grennan, Msgr. O'Neil D'Amour and many others.

The basic procedure employed by the NCEA was to send out four position papers dealing with the areas of sociological backgrounds, structure, finance, and lay involvement in the area of Catholic education. The participants who then received the papers, were invited to respond prior to their actual attendance at the Symposium. The responses were processed and formed the basis of discussion at the gathering. The major work of the five-day meeting was done by six groups of roughly about fifteen participants. At the end of each day, a summation was given on each group's discussion. Finally, on the last day of the Symposium, a statement was issued regarding the future of Catholic education.

If the impression was given in the months preceding the Washington Symposium, that the meeting would be a typical dry, bureaucratic working out of ideas and solutions, the impression was soon dispelled. A week prior to the Washington meeting, fifty-six religious educators met at Oklahoma City, during a national convocation of the Catechetical Forum, and expressed dissatisfaction with the rather narrow focus of the Symposium. Under the leadership of such luminaries as Mary Perkins Ryan, Bernard Cooke, Gerard Sloyan, and Gabriel Moran, the organization of

5In "Father Koob Looks at the Future...," p. 49, Fr. Koob mentions that the four areas emerged after a committee of fourteen summed up all the problems they saw in Catholic education.
professional religious educators issued a six-point "reminder" to the NCEA. Their concerns phrased in the form of question, were as follows:

1. How can available personnel, facilities and finances be best used for the education of the total community?

2. How can parishes be encouraged to hire professional religious educators to coordinate education programs?

3. Is it possible to set up several research centers to give religious educators advanced training?

4. How much freedom should religious educators have to create their own programs?

5. What variety of adult education programs can best be developed at the present time?

6. What steps should be taken to develop with other churches classes about religion for the public schools?

It appears on the surface that Mary Perkins Ryan and her fellow religious educators suspected the NCEA of being rather partial to the Catholic school interests of the Washington Symposium.

Regardless of what suspicions filled the air, the Washington Symposium got off to a start on Sunday, November 5, 1967. The site of the meeting was the Marriott Twin Bridges Motel-Hotel, Washington, D.C. From the very beginning the participants were aware of a lack of organization which was especially noticed by several bishops attending the meeting. Referring to the obvious lack of structure, Father Koob mentioned that this had been done deliberately to avoid any impressions that the Symposium was partial to any given Catholic educational interest.

---


However, despite Koob's quest for balance at the Symposium, it soon became evident that the task of designing a blue print for Catholic education, would not be an easy one because of the seeming impossibility of getting people and viewpoints together. Moreover, the rather fixed nature of the discussion groups stifled some of the cross fertilization of ideas.

As mentioned above, there were four major papers which were treated at the Symposium. They were entitled: The Social Functions of Catholic Education, by Dr. Robert Havighurst of Fordham; Efficiency, Equity, and the Economics of Catholic Schools, by Father Ernest Bartell, C.S.C.; The Role of the Layman in Catholic Education, by Dr. John J. Meng, executive vice president of Fordham University; and a final paper, Structures in the Catholic Schools, by Dr. John I. Goodlad, dean of the graduate school of education at the University of California.

The first paper, Social Functions of Catholic Education, by Havighurst, dealt essentially with a sociological and historical discussion of Catholic schools. Havighurst put into perspective the developments taking place in Catholic education since the schools' beginning, especially in regard to the suburban schools. By contrast he listed the difficulties facing the inner city schools, the upward economic and social rise of the Catholic population, and the "suburban captivity" of the Church, which brought about a loss of contact with the inner city. Havighurst was quick to point out that as Catholics became upward mobile, they tended to enroll more of their children in non-public schools. Since these schools are value-oriented institutions, they cannot teach
or change these values but only clarify those of society. It was here that the author heavily emphasized that the schools have little effect on moral and social character since the family, peer groups, and society are the most important factors. His concluding remarks pointed out the irony that the more successful the Catholic population becomes, eventually moving out to the suburbs, the less institutional support it gives its former schools in the inner city.

The second paper considered at the Symposium was Ernest Bartell's paper, entitled, **Efficiency, Equity, and the Economics of Catholic Schools.** The basic thrust of the treatment was that the current system of providing financial support for the schools contrasts strongly with the Church's teaching on social justice, imposing undue burdens on the poor and on religious orders.

In the main body of the paper, Bartell enumerated many of the financial woes facing the Catholic schools and explored new possibilities for supporting them. In the mind of many, Bartell's approach was too negative in approach and provided little substance for adequately discussing the financial problems of the schools.

The third paper for discussion, **The Role of the Layman in Catholic Education,** by Dr. John J. Meng, had a very clear message: Catholic edu-

---

cation has changed, the Catholic laity has changed; therefore, a pastoral approach to Catholic schools based on piety and religious deference and not on the informed advice of the Catholic majority, is no longer tenable. To illustrate his point, Meng cited the new involvements of the Catholic laity as members of public school boards, non-parochial parent-teacher organizations, and other groups. As Meng's paper pointed out, Catholic lay people were now fully capable of making decisions about construction and maintenance costs, educational developments, problems of curricula, and many other facets of the educational ministry. Meng concluded with several questions regarding whether Catholic schools should teach secular subjects as well as religious subjects, whether Catholic education should be controlled in whole or in part by lay people, and whether Catholic education should move into the field of social problems.\[1]

The fourth and final paper considered by the Washington Symposium was entitled: The Structure of Catholic Education, by Dr. John Goodlad. Rather surprisingly the paper said nothing about the structure of Catholic schools themselves but rather made suggestions for the future, based on the author's own research involving the University School at UCLA. Goodlad suggested that the ground work for innovation be laid by selecting specific schools for innovation and then granting them a higher degree of authority and responsibility. Some innovations he found helpful

were the non-graded and team teaching methods, which created a freer environment and greater flexibility in working with students. He concluded his remarks by strongly stressing the need for teacher training both before and during a teacher's employment. While stressing the individual needs of both the beginning teacher and the more experienced professional, Goodlad also suggested the possibility of hiring both for an eleven month period, which would include time to upgrade the quality of the teacher's instruction. 12

The first full day's session got underway on November 6 with a general period which set the tone for the individual workshop groups that would be working on issues raised by the four major Symposium papers.

There seemed to be two major topics discussed in the two general sessions which began and ended the day's agenda: the relationship of the educationally disadvantaged to the Catholic schools, and the scope of Catholic education itself.

Beginning with the first topic, the area of Catholic education and its social functions, the question was raised whether improving the social studies and humanities curricula of the existing Catholic elementary and secondary schools was the answer to improving the social lot of the poor, when many religious would rather move out of education into the direct social service sphere. Havighurst answered in the af-

---

12Catholic Education Today and Tomorrow, p. 78.
firmative although he readily admitted the expanded role of the Church in meeting the needs of the socially disadvantaged.

At this point Robert Hoyt of the National Catholic Reporter raised the question of Catholic enrollment policies and their effect on public education. The issue addressed by Havighurst was that of parents removing their children from the inner city public school in order to expose them to the more socially advantageous atmosphere of the private school. Havighurst admitted this was a fact of life but advocated giving top priority programs for residential integration in the inner city. Discussion followed relating the Havighurst paper to some current sociological studies, in particular, the Moynihan report on the negro family.

As the discussion progressed, it became evident to many, including Dr. Gerald Gutek of Chicago's Loyola University, that before justification might be given to the existence of Catholic schools as an adjunct to American pluralism, the distinction between Catholic schooling and Catholic education had to be made. In most of the discussions thus far, Dr. Gutek observed, the two terms were being used as opposites. What should be done before going any further in the deliberations, would be to subsume the two under the general category of Catholic education, meaning the entire educational effort of the Catholic Church. Mary Perkins Ryan took advantage of Dr. Gutek's clarification, to reiterate her basic contention that what the Church needed to do at this time in its history was to consider "the whole problem of educating the People of God" before looking at the Catholic schools in isolation.
At this point Sister Joan Bland brought up the fact that while everyone involved in Catholic education agreed on the ends, very few reached consensus on the means. Sister called for some united effort to set priorities and encourage national planning.

Another clarification was called for by Mr. Scott, who stressed the need to differentiate the three end products of Catholic education: secular service, religious education, and adult education. In his mind, he thought that the three areas should be separated and discussed individually and then arranged in priority if the continuing discussion were to be fruitful.

On the second day of the Symposium, there seemed to be a general climate of cooperation as Mary Perkins Ryan and Sister Emil, IHM, former head of the Sister formation movement, issued a joint statement on the problems of Catholic education. The statement, which acknowledged the need to give all positions due attention, emphasized three main points: 1) the belief that Christians had a special commitment to the total education of all peoples, 2) the recognition of the fact that religious education was wider than the structures of Catholic schooling, and 3) the realization that by fulfilling the needs of religious education all agencies of education within the Church would prosper. Although the statement was rather optimistic in view of the Church's dwindling resources, the statement was a good example of the cooperative spirit presented in Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, the statement never became part of the Symposium record. 13

---
As the Symposium began to generate controversy, a number of issues divided the membership. For one thing, there was considerable discussion on the subject of tax aid. One particular group came out quite strongly for the "freedom of choice" argument of the Citizens for Educational Freedom and the organization itself. Another group was a bit more cautious, merely acknowledging the right of citizens to work for public assistance to non-public schools. In qualifying their support, the latter group mentioned that any attempt at securing government funds should "respect the integrity of politics" and not put obstacles in the path of ecumenical progress.

Another controverted point, was the proposal to grant religious and priests direct negotiating powers between themselves and educational administrators. The proposal made by Father Michael O'Neill, Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Spokane, Washington, was an attempt to introduce greater professionalism and accountability among the Church's teachers. As O'Neill envisioned it, the contract provision would include such things as salaries, working conditions, terms of service, and the like. Obviously, such an innovation would greatly complicate the work of religious superiors, accustomed simply to assigning individuals at will, without deference to competency or personal preference.

A related proposal aimed at putting the salary of religious on a par with lay teachers. In that way, instead of the parish budgeting so

much for room and board, transportation, and other expenses, religious teachers could take care of it themselves. The result of such a plan, of course, would loosen the control of the religious orders over their members while at the same time granting them greater freedom in line with the spirit of Vatican II.

There was also a bit of controversy on the issue of granting Catholic teachers — priests, brothers, and sisters — freedom to choose an individual career or area of specialization. The proponents of this proposal stated the vocations would be greatly stimulated, if aspirants to the religious life knew they had some direction in their own professional development.

On the final day of the Symposium, it was only too evident that the ambitious hopes envisioned in the planning stage, were not to be realized. The shortness of time and the difficulty of coming to consensus, made possible only a rough working paper of the issues and recommendations of the Washington meeting. But all participants despite their own personal reservations, came to a deeper awareness of the need to continue what had been begun in their workshop sessions.

Some of the recommendations of the Symposium were as follows:

1. To establish a national commission of people involved with all phases of Catholic education to complement the work of the restructured National Catholic Educational Association.

2. To form boards of education on the diocesan level, which would be responsible for total religious education and would work for such things as centralized financing, coordination and placement of personnel, and articulation with the various state and regional organizations.

3. To make the Catholic college or university the "creative center
of the diocese" in solving educational problems

4. To initiate immediately, a large scale, adequately financed study of resources, personnel training, religious facilities, theology and philosophy courses, and programs of ecumenism, liturgy and social services available.

5. To study the adult education movement in the Church and to critically appraise traditional forms of adult involvement.

6. To study the trend to actively involve the handicapped in classroom study and in other levels of life and work in the community.

7. To communicate and cooperate with all types of existing agencies involved in the development of pre-school education.

8. To make professional competence the primary criteria in filling teaching and administrative positions in every phase of Catholic education.

9. To initiate direct negotiation of salary scales and other contractual conditions between educational administrators and individual members of religious communities.

10. To bring about full fiscal accountability and community involvement in establishing financial priorities and needs, and to establish budgets for education and welfare activities based upon parishioners' ability to pay.

11. To develop new methods for educating disadvantaged children and to involve the Catholic schools in this development.

12. To make available the practice of budget planning, uniform fiscal accounting, and other sound procedures to those who have a legitimate interest in them.

13. To develop a spirit of openness and candor between Catholic education personnel and the public and news media.

14. To endorse broader participation of those involved in Catholic education, in ecumenical dialogue and in programs of cooperation.15

When the Symposium ended its five day period, there was no great feeling of consensus, but nevertheless participants were fairly agreed

---

on the following:

1. The scope of Catholic education as including more than schools.

2. The desirability, if not the necessity, for research on all problems of Catholic education, including outcomes of schools and of alternative forms of education.

3. The continuation of Catholic schools.

4. The role of the laity in all positions in Catholic education.

5. The need for rapid development of boards of education.

6. Participation in a national assessment of all of American education.16

Since the Symposium ended with a rather unrefined statement, the membership selected twelve representatives to draft the final document. Father Koob and Russell Shaw, agreed to serve as chairman and secretary, respectively, for the ongoing work of the committee. Notable personalities on the committee included Father Virgil Blum, S.J., founder of Citizens for Educational Freedom; Philip H. Des Marais, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; Father Paul C. Reinert, S.J., President, St. Louis University; Robert Hoyt, Editor, National Catholic Reporter, and Mary Perkins Ryan, Editor, The Living Light.17

17Other committee members included: Msgr. Bennett Applegate, Superintendent of Schools, Diocese of Columbus, Ohio; Rev. James M. Darby, S.M., Provincial Superior, Dayton, Ohio; Msgr. Justin A. Driscoll, President Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa; Rev. Pierre DuMain, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Archdiocese of San Francisco; Dr. Thomas A. Garrett, Executive Director, College of Admissions and Information Center, Washington, D.C.; Brother James F. Gray, S.M., Director of Education, Society of Mary, Glencoe, Mo.; Rev. Thaddeus J. O'Brien, O. Carm., Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Archdiocese of Chicago; and Msgr. William M. Roche, Superintendent of Schools, Diocese of Rochester, N.Y.
One of the most heated arguments ensuing in the revision of the initial Symposium statement involved the proposal that salary scales and other contractual conditions be negotiated directly between the administrator and the individual member of a religious order. Understandably this provision cut into the core of the Catholic educational establishment, where religious orders were autonomous and individual members assigned at the discretion of their superiors. The difficulty which the proposition wanted to correct, was the lack of accountability on the part of religious superiors and the placing of inadequately trained or incompetent religious in the schools. If a teaching religious could be hired on his/her own merits, and as individuals, the quality of the Catholic schools could be safeguarded.

The above contract proposal appeared in the nearly completed, final draft of the Symposium. But before the committee accepted it, a strong opposition was voiced, calling for exclusion. When the initial framers of the provision themselves reacted, there seemed no way to compromise except by removing the contract section and making note of it in the footnotes.

When the final revision was made to the statement of the Washington Symposium, and the document published in February, 1968, there were a few participants who disassociated themselves from it. They included Dr. Francis L. Broderick, dean of Lawrence and Downer University, Appleton, Wisconsin; Sister Miriam Joseph Farrell, P.B.V.M., supervisor of Catholic schools, Gilroy, California; Auxiliary Bishop Mark J. Hurley of San Francisco; and Mrs. Mary Perkins Ryan, editor of *The Living Light*.
While the contemporary literature did not indicate Dr. Broderick's reason for rejecting the Symposium statement, there seems to be some indication that he objected to the government support aspect of the document. A critic of federal aid to Catholic education, Broderick contended that church schools have no right to request such assistance. Sr. Miriam Joseph said the draft lacked the real flavor of the November 5-10 meeting. In a statement made to the National Catholic Reporter, the Catholic school supervisor gave her reasoning:

I thought it did not reflect the vibrant discussions (at the symposium), that it was a bland statement rather than a stimulating blueprint for the future, and that it assumed certain things and treated them as facts. For example, it assumed such things as diocesan boards of education do not exist; in fact, they do in some instances.

Bishop Hurley had difficulty with the Symposium statement on two points: balance and wording. As Hurley saw it, the document made serious omissions of the role of superintendents of schools and their staffs as professional leaders. Moreover, there was no specific mention of the role of elementary and secondary schools, as well as their teachers and students, who comprise the largest segment of Catholic education and NCEA membership. By contrast, he thought too much attention was given to high, special, and adult education and to what he referred to as the "special pleadings" of the Symposium. The above imbalance, in the mind of the San Francisco auxiliary, did not adequately respect the discussions

which took place at the November 5-10 meeting.

A rather glaring defect of the final document according to Hurley was the improper allusion to Vatican II documents for support in appealing for funds to keep the Catholic schools going. As Hurley pointed out, the wording of the Symposium statement gave the impression that Vatican II sanctioned the right of Catholic school administrators to impose the onus of financing on Catholic parents. In actual fact, the Vatican II documents alluded to say nothing of the kind; they merely respected the right to freedom of choice in education. If anything, Hurley said, Vatican II documents, such as the declarations on Christian Education and on Religious Liberty upheld the right of parents not to have unjust burdens imposed upon them for the sake of "a genuine, free choice of schools."

In a more summary vein, Hurley objected to the Symposium document because it failed to reflect the "truly free spirit of discussion" which took place in Washington. The final document represented what he implied were "doctrinaire and facile solutions to sophisticated problems."

Perhaps the most vocal of all the critics of the Symposium document was Mary Perkins Ryan. While she frankly admitted to benefitting very much from the process of the actual Symposium, and from her work on the finishing committee, she had great difficulty with the tone engendered in the finalized document. Her basic criticism was that the culminating statement was too "cool, calm and collected" and did not ade-

21Ibid.
22Ibid.
quately convey the urgency of the contemporary Catholic educational picture. Mary Perkins Ryan expressed her reservations in an article in the *National Catholic Reporter*, excerpts of which follow:

The document does, certainly state the need for 'renewal,' experimentation, creativity and so on. But it does so, I feel, without communicating any sense of the frightening urgency of the present situation in which the related problems of poverty and peace grow more pressing every day.

Again, the statement seems to me to assume that all is serenely well with the Church in the United States. We need simply to plan more intelligently, use our resources more effectively and communicate with the Catholic and non-Catholic more persuasively to increase our resources. We shall then be on the way not only to maintaining and improving Catholic education in the sense of schools and colleges, and to providing adequately religious education for all Catholics, but also to expanding the educational service of the Church to society — e.g., in the inner city...

Thirdly, the statement gives the impression that 'an enduring but flexible structure' constituting 'an institutional base for educational service' actually exists in the Church, a structure needing modification, updating, strengthening, expanding, but basically sound and in good shape...One of the objectives of the symposium was precisely to work toward such a structure — but it doesn't exist now. Moreover, to me the statement does not project any real awareness of the variety and potential value of means of Christian education which are life-centered rather than school or class-centered. Its basic viewpoint is an academic one — one increasingly finding to be too narrow.24

Other negative comments on the final Symposium statement included those of the committee of the Secondary School Department of the NCEA.

Included in comments are the following:

1) the notion that diocesan school boards might bring about confusion and disagreement rather than clarity.

2) the idea stressed in the symposium statement that priests, brothers, and sisters be free to "participate in different

---

24Ibid.
professional endeavors in the Christian apostolate"25 seemed ironic in view of the fact that the current difficulties in Catholic education call for closing the ranks and a recom­mitment on the part of priests and religious.

3) the suggestion that members of religious orders be free to negotiate their salaries and other contractual agreements was thought to unleash a whirlwind of dissension and conflict.

As was indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the Washington Symposium marked a turning point in the 1960's discussion on the Catholic schools. Originally summoned to construct a new philosophy of Catholic education subsequent to Vatican II, the conference had the effect of gathering all the Church's energies together for a new and unified leap into the educational future. While its gains seemed modest at the time, in retrospect the Washington Symposium gave clarity and precision to the work of refashioning the schools and restating school policy. The following chapter will attempt to indicate the overall benefits derived indirectly from the Symposium, and to make some reflective comments and observations on the foregoing treatment.

CHAPTER VII

POSTSCRIPT TO THE 1960'S: PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS
AND COMMENTS

As indicated in the last chapter, the Washington Symposium had the effect of calming the troubled waters of controversy in Catholic educational circles. This is not to say that all questioning ceased, but only to point out that much of the negative, destructive criticism had abated as American Catholic educators took a more realistic look at the future. The conference did much to create good will and to get people communicating, to jointly confront problems and to work for solutions. Perhaps most symbolic of the new spirit of cooperation, though virtually unnoticed in the Washington Symposium proceedings, was a joint statement on Catholic education issued by Mary Perkins Ryan and Sr. Mary Emil Penet, who represented opposite poles of the academic spectrum: the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) and the Catholic schools.¹ Though the statement was deleted from the official record of the Symposium, it nonetheless represented the new mood in Catholic education — one of unity and cooperation among, for want of a better name, liberal and conservative educators.

Looking back on the 1960's, this author now sees a time that was out of joint. Aside from the effect of the cultural and political

changes taking place during that period, the religious upheaval in the life of the American Catholic Church was of crisis proportions. For the first time the laity witnessed such phenomena as a bishop leaving the active ministry to marry a divorcee, a community of nuns opting out of their traditional garb in favor of new experimental lifestyles, a priest publicly accusing his bishop of racism, a band of militant lay persons picketing a tea given by the racially purist Catholic Daughters of the American Revolution, and finally a frail New Hampshire housewife calling for the demise of the parochial school system. Truly as one commentator put it, the entire decade could be summed up by saying that "the old has been destroyed but the new has not been build."  

The question that now confronts us is Why? What accounts for the explosive situation that occurred in American Catholicism, and Catholic education in particular? What transformed pious, quiet believers into outspoken critics and malcontents? The answers are not quick in coming, because the phenomenon of the American Catholic Church is very similar to that of the nation at large. Some may claim that it was Vatican II that ignited the fuse and started Catholic educators debating. Others point to an even broader movement of reform already afoot in the 1950's, under the leadership of such men as John Tracy Ellis, Gustave Weigel, and Thomas F. O'Dea, which did not surface until the following decade. Still others see contemporary explanations in the social, economic, political, and cultural undercurrents of the period. It is the opinion

---

of this writer that all of these interpretations have import in composing a true picture of the stormy 1960's yet none stands by itself.

Perhaps the greatest reason for the crisis in Catholic education was the absence of a modern philosophy of Catholic education. When Catholics took their place alongside their fellow countrymen, a great identity crisis was created. It appeared that the ghetto had been dissolved and hence Catholic Americans could never again dissociate themselves from civic concerns. However, the progress of the 1960's showed that that was only a surface reaction. As educators considered a Catholic education without parochial schools, more and more it appeared that there were non-negotiable values that only Church institutions could provide — values such as religion, liturgy, and a theological point of view. Upon reflection, what Catholic education really needs was, borrowing Greeley's words, a "new agenda." In effect, much of the argumentation of the 1960's resulted from an inadequate understanding of the nature of Catholic schooling, and the lack of sufficiently detailed goals and objectives. Vatican II with its schema on Christian Education, Ecumenism, and Religious Freedom, called for a bold new direction for Catholic schooling; but unfortunately, no one knew what to make of the deeper question of purpose. Even the Washington Symposium, summoned ostensibly to forge a new philosophy in tune with Vatican II, failed to achieve

---

3 Confer Greeley's book by the same title cited elsewhere in this dissertation, where Greeley shows the transition taking place in Catholic thought, by mentioning the new focus of human development as opposed to the traditional purpose of sectarian education.

that end.

A second reason for the crisis in Catholic education concerns the priests and religious who staffed the schools. Pursuing this line of thought, Michael O'Neill, director of the Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership at the University of San Francisco, claims that the Catholic school crisis was essentially a crisis of vocation. Finding themselves in the midst of a Church that was now opening out to the world, and realizing that the concept of service was much broader than the schools, priests and nuns abandoned the classroom for other areas of the apostolate especially the inner city.

On a deeper level, the crisis of vocation concerned more than just the scope of apostolate. O'Neill indicates that many priests and sisters were going through a kind of "mid-life crisis." Having pledged themselves to the Church in their youth, at a time when their vocation was more fervor than commitment, these teachers found themselves suddenly caught up in the whirlpool affecting the Church at large. Many then left the priesthood and the religious life in favor of other lifestyles and modes of Christian witness. As a result, the schools were in an uneasy balance as lay persons pondered questions of finance and Christian identity. Had the schools been staffed with lay persons to begin with, O'Neill opines, there would have been no crisis in Catholic education.5

A further reason for the Catholic educational crisis is cited by

Andrew Greeley as the "failure of nerve" on the part of the hierarchy. Having never actually provided leadership in Catholic education other than endorsing papal statements on the topic, the American bishops began to waiver in their support of schools in the 1960's. Instead of publicly encouraging the faithful to continue their efforts in behalf of Catholic formal education, the bishops put a moratorium on new school construction. This was especially true of the suburbs where population and financial resources abounded.

Greeley gives many reasons for the lack of nerve on the part of the Bishops. First of all, should the Bishops undertake a program of building, they would have to have greater recourse to the laity for the actual financing of these schools. However, in so engaging the laity, the Bishops would have to cede partial control in view of the laity's investment, which of course, Greeley implies, the Bishops could not do. An additional reason for the Bishop's reticence in the school question was their isolation from the fact gathering processes. Thus whatever the reasons for their lack of leadership in supporting traditional structure, the Bishops presented a weakening front as more and more dioceses dropped grades and eliminated schools.

Having briefly indicated factors that in some way contributed to the Catholic schools crisis, the author would now like to comment on some direct outcomes of the debate. They appear to be three in number:

---

6Confer statements made by Andrew M. Greeley in Catholic Schools in a Declining Church, (cited elsewhere), pp. 311-12, 324-25.
1. a better understanding of the nature and scope of Catholic education in general,

2. a greater appreciation of the role of the school in the light of the Church's broader educational mission, and

3. a deeper awareness of the universal value of religious formation no matter where it is found, in the schools or in partial programs of Catholic education; or in other words, total religious education.

The first major result of the 1960's debate was a better understanding of the nature and scope of Catholic education in general. Up until the beginning of the above decade, the idea prevailed that Catholic education was synonymous with parochial schooling. This was of course understandable when one reflects on the dictum of Baltimore III: "every Catholic child in a Catholic school," which brought parochial schools into being even before the church itself was constructed. However, whatever the cultural and historical reasons for the improper identification, the same mistaken notion carried over into the 1960's.

It was only when the debate had run half its course that a process of interiorization took place. The process went something like this:

1. Critics look at the outcome of parochial schooling and see them lacking as regards Catholic education.

2. Critics propose alternative programs of Catholic education and exaggerate their potential.

3. Not satisfied with either position, the critics return to the drawing board and re-examine their basic assumptions; Catholic
education is much wider than they thought. Thus critics made a complete circle beginning with the question whether Catholic education and ending with the more incisive question, wither?

As indicated above, the initial failure of the Catholic schools debate was in not defining what Catholic education was. Mary Perkins Ryan began with the assumption that Catholic education was religious formation, and naturally enough found the schools wanting. Edward M. Keating, editor-in-chief of Ramparts magazine, mistook the contemporary form that Catholic education was taking in the schools and made the historical mistake of false chronology. Other critics looked at enrollments and failed to see who was being served.

Fortunately as the 1960's progressed, the precision required for debate revealed the obvious breakdown of terminology. Commenting in an informative booklet, entitled The Purpose of Catholic Schooling, James Michael Lee introduced a note of clarity:

The terms "education" and "schooling" should not be taken synonymously, since there is a vast difference between the two. Education is the process whereby a person learns something. Consequently, a person is always in the process of being educated at every moment of his waking life and in a vast panoply of situations. Learning to walk or to play the piano, watching a baseball game on television, strolling along the beach, developing facility in speaking German, falling in love -- these are all part of a person's education.

Schooling, then, constitutes only one segment of a person's education. Sometimes schooling is called "formal education," indicating that it is a planned, systematic, deliberate activity which has as its main objective to sharpen, enhance, and codify the educative process. As a definition, formal education is the totality of ex-

---

periences which the school directly or indirectly furnishes the student to enable him to develop and mature. These experiences include intellectual learning, moral conduct, social skills, emotional growth, spiritual satisfaction, and guidance.8

Once the necessary clarification had been made, pedagogical leaders began to look more deeply into the overall nature of Catholic education. What was the element that all programs had in common? What integration had to take place for the Church's teaching mission to be fully implemented? What response did Catholic education call for? Was it intended to bolster sectarian commitment, or was there a wider implication for secular society? These questions were taken up by the American bishops and also by the NCEA. Under the aegis of the United States Catholic Conference (USCC), these questions were answered in the form of a revolutionary document entitled To Teach As Jesus Did.9 (The document will be treated in a later part of this chapter.)

The second broad effect of the 1960's debate was a greater appreciation of the role of the school in the light of the Church's general educational mission. As early arguments showed, many critics of the 1960's had an unrealistic notion of what the schools were supposed to accomplish. The schools were criticized for everything from being a bastion of sectarian piety to being institutions of strictly secular learning. The dialogue ensuing from this period helped to limit what could be realistically expected of the schools: a rudimentary education in a context of Christian values and religious truth.

---

8James Michael Lee, The Purpose of Catholic Schooling, pp. 6-7.
9To Teach As Jesus Did (United States Catholic Conference, 1973).
The process by which the American Church came to the above conclusion was much like the way educators came to the definition of Catholic education. However, when it came to the schools, there was the added realization that Catholic Americans had to receive a formal education anyway; why not infuse that time with a religious dimension? Moreover, educators were no longer convinced by the earlier arguments that basic religious attitudes were formed in the pre-school years and hence parochial schooling was a waste of time. As C. Albert Koob pointed out, religious attitudes do not just suddenly happen; they are implanted no doubt in childhood, but require a lifetime of assimilation. Catholic schools provide the nurturing assimilation. This point of view was also supported by the Greeley-Rossi Study, which showed that Catholic schools did make a difference, even though small.

As a postscript to the financial argument of the parochial schools debate, further research has revealed that these institutions are not beyond the resources of the Catholic faithful. Andrew M. Greeley in research such as Religion and Career has shown that Catholics are much more prominent economically and socially than ever before in American history. In fact, the higher up Catholics are on the socio-economic ladder, the more supportive they are of Catholic education. As the University of Chicago sociologist points out, the money for Catholic schools is there; it is just a matter of tapping that resource.10

The third outcome of the 1960's debate is a deeper awareness of

10 Confer Andrew M. Greeley, Catholic Schools in a Declining Church, pp. 244-62.
the universal value of religious formation, or the recognition of the need for total religious education. In the early 1960's much friction existed between the proponents of the Catholic schools and CCD, each holding a rather intransigent position on the relative merits of their area of the apostolate. However, the 1960's discussion once and for all cleared the air as both factions realized that neither was the full answer. Catholic school officials realized they could not be satisfied with merely educating children, without also affecting the entire Catholic learning community. On the other side of the coin, staunch CCD advocates, such as, Mary Perkins Ryan, recognized that they had been somewhat naive in their expectations of the informal learning process and again validated the schools.\textsuperscript{11} The net result of the debate was a greater sharing of Catholic educational resources and a more genuine spirit of cooperation.

Related to this new mood of cooperation was the insight that religious formation, the aim of both formal and informal programs, was a trans-institutional and trans-generational phenomenon. No matter where Catholic education takes place and regardless of who happens to be its recipients at the particular time, the new thrust of the Church's program of education is total religious education. In this light Catholic education is a lifelong learning process. The Diocese of Rockford, Illinois, is especially helpful here in shedding light on this all-inclusive notion. In its curriculum guide it defines religious (Catholic)

\textsuperscript{11}Witness Mary Perkins Ryan's comments in the introduction to her book, \textit{We're All in This Together} (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), p. x.
Religious education is a lifelong process in which the person is invited to synthesize his life experiences, to recognize (integrate) the presence and truth of Jesus Christ in those experiences, and to affirm the goodness of his life. This process is cumulative: there is the moment of initial integration (or conversion to Christ); there are intermediate moments of challenge, reintegration, and reaffirmation (or growth in Christ); and there is a final affirmation of the ultimate meaning of life (or eternal salvation).  

Thus the 1960's debate emphasized a new focal point -- not the parochial school, not the CCD programs, but all Catholics whatever their religious stage of development.

The latter part of this chapter deals with the U.S. Bishops document, To Teach As Jesus Did, published in 1972. Although the Bishops had summed up some of the traditional reasons for continuing to support Catholic education, in November, 1967, almost concurrent with the Washington Symposium, as one author put it, the document expressed "more commitment than conviction."  

To Teach As Jesus Did is a much more revolutionary document; it actually expresses the finest synthesis on the 1960's Catholic educational debate.

The pastoral letter begins with a summary on the nature and scope of Catholic education in general. According to the Bishops, Catholic education was the embodiment of Christ's commission to the Church to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This mandate is the core concept of the Church's teaching mission. It is a call not only for Christians to

---

fulfill their vocation in life, but to transform society in general and imbue it with Gospel values. As the Bishops put it:

Catholic education is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church He founded. Through education the Church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to translate this proclamation into action. Since the Christian vocation is a call to transform oneself and society with God's help, the educational efforts of the Church must encompass the twin purposes of personal sanctification and social reform in light of Christian values.14

The dimension especially affected by the Catholic education debate was the contemporary aspect of the teaching mission. In the past critics, such as Mary Perkins Ryan, Robert Francouer,15 and many others called attention to the way Catholic educators kept students isolated from the present world. This was particularly evident from some of the early 1960's studies which revealed a notable lack of social awareness. Accordingly To Teach As Jesus Did, drafted under the influence of Bishop William McManus, who was no stranger to the 1960's debate, stressed the necessity of social transformation.16

Further specifying the mission of Catholic education, the Bishops delineated three interrelated spheres of the teaching apostolate: Message, Community, and Service. As the letter continued:

The educational mission of the Church is an integrated ministry embracing three interlocking dimensions: the message revealed by God (didache) which the Church proclaims; fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit (koinonia); service to the Christian community

14To Teach As Jesus Did, p. 3.
16For an interesting article on the background of the pastoral, confer William E. McManus, "To Teach As Jesus Did: A Chronicle," Living Light 11 (Summer 1973): 278-83.
and the entire human community (diakonia).  

In effect, To Teach As Jesus Did, advanced the scope of Catholic education. It was no longer to be thought of as an other-worldly undertaking associated exclusively with parochial schools, but as an all-encompassing way of living the Gospel and transforming American society. This mission involves the three dimensions of instruction, worship, and social action. Thus Catholic education involves all types of communities with the Church and all levels of commitment. Catholic education is a global attempt to sensitize Christians to the truth of the Gospel and thus to better humanize and energize the community of man.

The pastoral was no less revolutionary when it came to the central focus of Catholic education: the parochial schools. In an attempt to reaffirm the value of the schools, the Bishops declared in rather emphatic tones:

Of the educational programs available to the Catholic community, Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to realize the threefold purpose (doctrine, community, service) of Christian education among children and young people. Schools naturally enjoy educational advantages which other programs cannot offer or can offer only with great difficulty. A school has a greater claim on the time and loyalty of the student and his family. It makes more accessible to students participation in the liturgy and the sacraments, which are powerful forces for the development of personal sanctity and for the building of community. It provides a more favorable pedagogical and psychological environment for teaching Christian faith.

Essentially what the Bishops stressed was that Catholic schools were the best means of implementing the threefold mission of Catholic education: teaching, forming community, and rendering service to the nation. In  

17 To Teach As Jesus Did, p. 4.  
18 Ibid., p. 28.
the treatment below, the author will draw some specific inferences for parochial schooling in the light of *To Teach As Jesus Did*’s threefold division.

The first aim of the Bishops in terms of schooling appropriately enough was Teaching. Traditionally the Catholic schools struggled with questions such as Who should teach? What should be taught? and How should it be taught? And depending upon whether one placed at the top of the list of priorities, wisdom, piety, or knowledge, the above three questions were answered. During the 1960’s, chiefly through the efforts of educators such as O’Neill D’Amour, a high value was placed on intellectual development and academic excellence. This stress linked with the newer insights about the need for community in the schools, and their service role to society, brought a new awareness of Catholic schooling’s Who? What? and How?

In answer to the first question of who should teach, the 1960’s came back with the answer: only competent professionals, whether religious or laity. Much of the discussion of this period centered on the educational outcomes of Catholic schooling, and the professional preparedness of instructors in the parochial school. The Sister Formation Movement begun in the late 1940’s and early 1950’s did much to update the professional standing of teaching communities of nuns, even though there still existed one or the other congregation that insisted on relegating sisters to the classroom, directly out of the novitiate. How—

---

ever, educational critics such as Mary Perkins Ryan, Michael Novak, and others forced the awareness that Catholic teachers could not rely on religious profession or personal piety to bolster their lack of educational background. Religious and laity alike had to conform to state and national standards set by their secular counterparts.

As to what to teach, the awareness that emerged at the end of the 1960's was that the primary focus of the Catholic school was religion. If Church schools had any validating purpose, it was the key Gospel message that all men are saved in Jesus Christ. In the pre-1960's religion was taken for granted due to the strong symbolic presence of priests and religious in the classroom. Despite the fact that religious instruction was usually cold and didactic, unimaginative, and compulsory, very little thought was given to professional training for the teaching of religion. Mary Perkins Ryan bemoaned the other-worldly context of religious instruction; Michael Novak inveighed against the religious lack-luster context in which the faith was presented.20 Gabriel Moran complained that too much doctrine was given too soon in the formal school context.21 Thus it was only a matter of time that Catholic school theorists saw the importance of revitalizing and re-emphasizing the religion curriculum in parochial education.

But even more than that, Catholic leaders viewed the importance of religion as an integrating discipline, giving a value context to the

other subjects in the syllabus of studies. Thus religion became not so much a what in the curriculum so much as a how, a manner of relating and interpreting. In effect, religion was more than just an academic subject; it was the justifying reason for all teaching and learning in general. And as such, all teachers were religion teachers.22

When it came to how to teach the message of the Gospel and those secular subjects that provided its cultural milieu, the Bishops challenged Catholic educators to abandon those traditional methods, which seemed out of tune with modern pedagogy. Many of the 1960's critics attacked the traditional, apologetic, teacher-centered approach to Catholic education then in its decline. As one educator put it:

...if the Catholic schools are to fulfill the nation's need for a really free education, they must implement this modern philosophy of education. They must educate for understanding, not indoctrination; self-knowledge, not memorized recall; for freedom, not docility. Only then will the schools justify their existence and exhibit their divine purpose, for only then will they have created human beings, not animals; freed men, not slaves; co-heirs with Christ, made in the image and likeness of God.23

The implications of this new approach of how to teach the faith, were many. First of all, education should aim at critical consciousness; students should be invited wholeheartedly in the learning process to assimilate Gospel values -- not in a disinterested manner, but on predisposing faith and open to ongoing revelation. Moreover, teachers should also be viewed as learners, mature faith-filled adults who although superior in knowledge and experience, are nevertheless still in the process of their own education.

Secondly, learning should be linked with life. If Catholic education is to have permanency in the life of the adolescent, it must deal with the vital issues of the present. The content of instruction must not only enculturate and humanize, but also prepare the young adult for witness outside the school context. In this sense the message of Catholic education is intimately linked with the service aspect.

And thirdly the how of the message of Catholic education should also be ritualized in liturgy and linked with the life of the sacraments. If education is to build community and transform society, it must necessarily incorporate an element by which the future kingdom of God is celebrated as already eminent. The 1950's model of Catholic education was justly criticized because patterns of worship and sacramental involvement were forced upon the student. Whether it was daily Mass at which student leaders intoned the prayers and their peers responded in slow labored fashion, or First Friday confessions, there was less celebration and more routine boredom. The decade that followed made educators aware of the need for real freedom if students were to take up the call to true discipleship. Students should not be coerced to approach the altar but rather invited in the spirit of the worshiping, believing school community.

The second end of the Bishops' pastoral, To Teach As Jesus Did, was Community. Up until the beginning of the 1970's the notion was fairly prevalent that what was important about the Catholic schools was their product: the final output in terms of learning, behavior, and values. But very little stress was put on the interaction by which the
student arrived at these significant outcomes. Father C. Albert Koob, former president of the National Catholic Educational Association, in the same year as the pastoral, stressed the same communal emphasis as the Bishops:

The fundamental goal of the entire school program is the creation of a community of faith where human knowledge and culture are transmitted and brought to life by this faith, and where wisdom is shared in a spirit of freedom and love.²⁴

The important point that Koob was making was that personal witness was an essential part of any learning. Students developed mentally, morally, and religiously especially through role models. Depending upon whether or not their teachers lived their lessons and challenged their students to do the same, the final product would be lasting or ephemeral. The same held true in the matter of how the teaching community themselves modeled the faith as a group in the school environment.

The community of faith emphasis was no doubt a benevolent response to harsher criticisms of the early 1960's by such writers as Michael Novak, who claimed that the school structure was overly authoritarian and did not allow for any kind of free discussion.²⁵ Outspoken journalists of the period called for a spirit of inquiry and healthy skepticism. Values, they insisted, could not be imposed from without; they had to be internalized and espoused as one's own. And it was particularly the teacher, as even secular studies as the Coleman Report later

indicated, who had a significant although small effect on what was learned and valued.

The final end of *To Teach As Jesus Did* involving the schools was Service. While Catholic social encyclicals long advocated involvement on the part of Catholics in the issues and concerns affecting the community, the early 1960's model of the school was little able to translate these imperatives into action. Little wonder that critics such as Daniel Berrigan\(^26\) complained that almost every other religious group had a consciousness raising educational process but the Catholic Church. Even the physical lack of any large number of blacks and other minority groups in the Catholic schools caused editorial comment by such writers as John Sheerin.\(^27\)

As envisioned by the Bishops, the notion of service was much broader than mere social education and even integration. Service involved everyone in the educational community. It involved creative ways of both students and faculty engaging in the social betterment of the community in which they lived, not only through the curriculum where attitudes could be changed and greater understanding generated, but also outside the school context where actual service could be rendered. The Bishops' pastoral letter challenged Catholic educators to once again turn outward, after the introspection of the 1960's, and find new avenues to replace those programs which were abandoned, such as, the Catholic


Students Mission Crusade, the Young Christian Students movement, and many others.

Thus when all is said and done, the Catholic schools debate had a very salutary effect on the American Catholic Church. It served as the major vehicle whereby the principles and concepts of Vatican II were applied to everyday American Catholic life. Moreover, coming at the beginning of a new era when Catholics were loosening their ties with the institutional church, the Catholic schools debate proved that the Church's structure was still viable. Even though Catholics were more liberal in their thinking and allegiance at the end of the 1960's, they still would endorse the notion of a Church that perpetuates the teaching mission of Christ. Not only did the debate enable Catholics to better understand the educational nature of the Church and her mission, but the 1960's discussion also reaffirmed the necessity of formal schooling for the future.

This being said, the Catholic schools debate of the 1960's takes its place in the annals of American Catholic education. It was an exciting period -- a period full of fire and fury, when issues were clarified and bold new paths forged for the future. But whatever insights the decade brought, we now can repeat the words of John Cogley, a colorful writer of the period, who himself has passed from the scene:

An era has ended; an historic period has passed. Like all historic periods, it was on balance a mixture of magnificence and mistake, of benevolence and mischief, of accomplishment and stupidity. We can praise it or denounce it, but we cannot pro-
long it. It is over. A new day has dawned for the Church and with it a new day for Catholic education.28

SUMMARY

The basic thesis of this work was that Catholic education in the United States, during the 1960's, reflected the general state of unrest and uncertainty as the nation at large. The parochial schools much like their public counterpart were caught up in the political, cultural, social, and economic upheaval of the period. The author developed his thesis by means of seven chapters, beginning with an introduction setting up the general background and scope of the study, and ending with a personal postscript commenting on the foregoing period. The fundamental conclusion of the work was that Catholic schools still serve an important function in providing a religious, value-laden education against the background of a unifying theological world view.

The heart of the dissertation began with chapter two, which explored the historical situation out of which the parochial schools arose, and documented several controversies leading into the 1950's. The author's basic conclusion was that the parochial schools were never absolutely necessary for the preservation of the Catholic faith, nor was the mandate imposing Catholic education ever justified from a consideration of the early Baltimore Councils. It was merely the existence of bigotry in the public schools, and the intransigence of the American Catholic bishops that brought about the prolific growth of the schools. Only when American Catholics had arrived as first class citizens, and against the background of Vatican II, was it that Catholics began to
openly question the continued existence of the schools.

The following chapter examined the arguments of one of the first critics of the parochial school system in the United States: Mrs. Mary Perkins Ryan. Mrs. Ryan's main contention was that the parochial schools represented an obstacle to ecumenism and Catholic participation in democracy. After exploring the main tenor of Mrs. Ryan's thought, the author then commented on the methodology and content of her work, Are Parochial Schools the Answer? The chapter ended with an evaluation of the Ryan contribution to the Catholic educational debate of the 1960's.

Given the continuing need for Catholic schools, chapter four examined three wider issues of the debate: 1) the new emerging purpose of Catholic schools, 2) the problem of finances, 3) the future locus of Catholic education. After indicating developments in all three of the above areas, the writer concluded that while economic and social factors were at work modifying the externals of Catholic education, the traditional function and purpose remained the same: parochial schools existed to provide a quality education permeated with religious truth and values for as large a segment of the American population as possible.

In chapter five, the author attempted to reinforce the discussion thus far presented, with factual, scientific evidence supporting the effectiveness of the parochial schools. Main studies cited included those of Joseph Fichter, Andrew Greeley, Reginald Neuwien, and John
Donovan. Although the Donovan Study raised some important questions regarding the quality of intellectualism in Catholic education, the studies showed that Catholic education had been effective. With a few minor exceptions, the studies indicated that Catholic schools had been successful in producing the results for which they were intended.

Chapter six dealt with the Washington Symposium, held in the nation's capital from November 5 to 10, 1967. The author contended that while the conference did not directly bring about a definitive end to the Catholic education debate, it had great symbolic significance in attempts at reconstruction in the period following the 1960's. At least from a logical standpoint, the Symposium for the first time in recent history brought together the diverse elements of the conflict for the purpose of ending the strife and facing the future cooperatively.

In the final chapter the author gave a postscript to the 1960's. He examined some of the possible reasons for the Catholic education crisis in the first place, and briefly listed the general outcomes of the debate. Lastly, the author expatiated on To Teach As Jesus Did, the pastoral letter of the American bishops in 1972, which set the scene for future developments. The chapter ended with an explanation of the historical significance of the 1960's debate in the context of the wider development of the Church in the United States.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. BOOKS


II. ARTICLES


"Are Parochial Schools Necessary?" Commonweal, April 17, 1964, pp. 99-100.


Broderick, Edwin B. "Let's Stick with Our Schools." Catholic Educator, April 1968, pp. 73-75.


Carney, Gene, S.M. "The School As Community..." Catechist, November 1972, pp. 7-9.


_____. "The Plan Within the Plan." America, April 1, 1972, pp. 338-40.


"Father Koob Looks at the Future of Catholic Education — an inter-

Fichter, Joseph H. "Are Parochial Schools Worthwhile?" Catholic

Fichter, Joseph H. "Catholics and High School." America, September 15,
1962, pp. 718-719.


Fleming, Thomas J. "The Crisis in Catholic Schools." Saturday

Francoeur, Robert T. "The Price We Pay." Commonweal, January 31,
1964, pp. 538-42.

"Future of Catholic Education: Concerning Symposium in Washington,
D.C. November 1967." School and Society, February 3, 1968,


Greeley, Andrew M. "Catholic Schools: Survival or Suicide?" St. Anthony
Messenger, May 1971, p. 32.

Greeley, Andrew M. "The Effects of Catholic Education." Three Part Report:
Critic, December 1963-January 1964, pp. 34-38; October-Novem-

Greeley, Andrew M. "The Facts About Catholic Schools." Our Sunday Visitor,
November 1966, as condensed in Catholic Digest, February 1967,
pp. 14-16.

Greeley, Andrew M. "Theories of American Catholicism." Critic, June-July
1965, pp. 28-32.

Greeley, Andrew M. "Yes, Parochial Schools Are the Answer: A Sociologist's


"Here's What is Happening to Catholic Schools in the U.S.A." U.S. Catholic, April 1967, pp. 6-18.


"Perspective on Catholic Education: What the Public Sees and Hears." National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin, pp. 241-244.


ed. "To Teach As Jesus Did." Notre Dame Journal of Education 6 (Fall 1975): No. 4.


_____. "Review of Are Parochial Schools the Answer? by Mary Perkins Ryan." Critic, April-May 1964, pp. 53-54.

_____. "To Teach As Jesus Did: A Chronicle." Living Light 11 (Summer 1973): 278-83.


Moser, Susan M. "Do We Really Need Catholic Schools?" U.S. Catholic, March 1975, pp. 6-12.


168


and Rossi, Alice S. "Some Effects of Parochial School Education in America." Daedalus 90 (Spring 1961): 300-328.


"One Year Later: Further Thoughts on Are Parochial Schools the Answer." Commonweal, April 23, 1965, pp. 139-41.

Saldahna, Shirley; McCready, William; McCourt, Kathleen; and Greeley, Andrew M. "American Catholics—Ten Years Later." Critic, January-February 1975, pp. 14-21.


The dissertation submitted by Reverend Karl Peter Ganss has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Gerald Gutek, Director, Professor
Foundations of Education, Loyola

Dr. Rosemary V. Donatelli, Associate Professor
Foundations of Education, Loyola

Dr. John M. Wozniak, Dean
School of Education, Loyola

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

September 13, 1978

Date

Director's Signature