Companion on the Journey: Peer Influence on Spiritual Development in College Residential Communities

By

Eric T. Baldwin

A Project Thesis

submitted to the faculty of

Virginia Theological Seminary

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Ministry

March 29, 2023

David T. Gortner
David T. Gortner (Mar 29, 2023 12:53 PDT)

Rev. Dr. David T. Gortner

Lisa Barrowclough
Lisa Barrowclough (Mar 29, 2023 17:17 EDT)

Rev. Dr. Lisa Barrowclough

Nina Salmon (Apr 1, 2023 00:12 EDT)

Rev. Dr. Nina Salmon

Allison B Jablonski
Allison B Jablonski (Apr 1, 2023 19:08 EDT)

Allison Jablonski, Ph.D.

Table of Contents

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis project is to examine a new opportunity for students to explore spiritual development beyond programs offered through the office of university ministry. Central to this project is the idea of how peers influence spiritual development in residence hall environments. This project was selected because of documented declines in spiritual practices (i.e., attending church services, active prayer life, volunteering) by current college students, and relevant research that indicates colleges have significantly shifted their focus to ensure students gain employable skills – this at the unintentional expense of addressing inner-life development. Specifically, at Gonzaga University, two contradictory trends were observed when analyzing campus surveys and data collected during the admission process – there is a clear desire expressed by students to grow in the area of spirituality but a significant drop in religious activities over their four years of being students.

Based upon this information, a joint project between the university ministry, housing and residence life, and the office of student wellbeing was proposed. The central element of this project was the development of a resident minister (RM) position who would live in community with first- and second-year students. This thesis project describes the process of developing this position and the impacts of peer residential ministers in the communities where they lived. The placement of spiritual peer mentors in residence is unique and significantly different from traditional resident assistants (RAs). Additionally, the residence hall setting provided an environment for daily interaction and engagement as opposed to singular programming models.

This project was evaluated through ethnographic observational data, regularly scheduled debrief and support meetings with the RMs, and a corresponding pre-test and post-test given to the residents in these communities. The length of this project and evaluation was conducted over an entire academic year. Two communities were selected for residential ministers and one control community was used to compare impact. Communities with resident ministers had approximately 24 students in their immediate charge. RMs also worked with the staff of resident directors and resident assistants to provide programming and support for the entire building. The control community included approximately 36 students. A select sample of this community was included in pre-test and post-test surveying.

Pre-tests were administered in the three communities (resident minister-A, resident minister-B, and the control community-C) during the first 14 days of the Fall semester (2015). The test consisted of 30 questions to establish a baseline from which to judge any eventual relative change in six pre-determined criteria focused on spiritual and inner life development. These six areas were: (1) decision-making - parental/peer influence, (2) values clarification, (3) behaviors of spirituality, (4) sense of meaning and purpose, (5) connection to community, and (6) awareness of personal change.

Before the final exams in the spring semester (2016), an identical 30-question post-test was administered to provide data to assess the influence of the residential ministers. In addition to the original questions in the pre-test, 10 questions were added to the post-test to allow respondents to provide feedback on their year and on the RM if respondents were members of community A or B.

Note: While the pre-and post-tests were confidential and voluntary, the instruments were numerically identified. This ensured the same student completed both the pre-and post-test. If post-tests were not completed, the corresponding pre-test was not used in the assessment of this project. Likewise, students who moved out of the community or into the community during the assessment period were not included. As a result, fully completed sample sizes for each community were 20 (community-A N=20, community-B N=20, and community-C N=20).

Introduction and Outline

In the fall semester of 2014, at Gonzaga University, I became curious about the various levels of spiritual development across our student population. Initially, my focus was on how students' sense of spirituality might be positively influencing their overall well-being. Through examination of this issue, I grew concerned that students were not being supported or challenged to incorporate spirituality more deeply into their experiences at Gonzaga. I found that while Gonzaga University is a mission-based Catholic, Jesuit community of learners, Gonzaga like most other universities, had diminished its commitment to students' spiritual development.[1] This declining focus on spiritual development has become a general concern of many churches and universities. Too often institutions operate on auto-pilot – failing to recognize or respond to the needs of a new generation.[2]

This topic took on more urgency for me because of my role at Gonzaga. Hired as the Assistant Vice President of Student Development, and Dean of Student Wellbeing, I oversaw many of the operational areas and programs that assisted students with personal growth outside the classroom. Additionally, my offices provided crisis support, mental health resources, and assistance during the adjudication of serious conduct violations.[i] As such. my responsibilities allowed me the opportunity to meet with students on a regular basis. Most of these interactions unfortunately, were with students in some state of distress. Because of the serious nature of these meetings, I attempted to engage with

[1] Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition, Loc. 27.
[2] Ibid., Kindle edition, Loc. 38.

students separately and distinctly from the incident or issue that required them to meet with me. I wanted to learn about them as individuals. I asked them to tell me about their hopes and dreams for the future. I encouraged them to describe the vision they had for themselves, and what they wanted to accomplish in life.

When appropriate, I followed-up with questions designed to allow students to be reflective and evaluate their actions or decisions juxtaposed with the image of the person and dreams they had described. These questions produce palpable moments of cognitive dissonance. I intended to offer students a moment of disruption – one that forced them to discern more deeply their own meaning and purpose.

In these situations, I wanted students to ask themselves what Alexander Astin and fellow collaborators described as "big questions" when they wrote *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*. They noted, "the 'big questions' that preoccupy students are essentially spiritual questions: Who am I? What are my most deeply held values? Do I have a mission or purpose in my life? Why am I in college? What kind of person do I want to become? What sort of world do I want to help create?"[3]

Routinely, my interactions with students would lead to these types of "inner life" topics. Students would express a desire to be more authentic and more intentional in seeing their lives through a spiritual lens (although they did not use that term). What was consistently missing for these students I met with, however, was an understanding of how to translate these "big questions" into action. Students frustratedly recognized their own lack of skills in this area and were also at a loss for how to develop them. I believed students' willingness to examine these "big questions" and began to question if we

[3] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*. Kindle edition, Loc. 186.

(educators) are providing the right approach or enough support for students to grow in this area. It was becoming clearer that an opportunity existed to meet students where they were, rather than enticing them to come to us.[4]

The Need to Explore Spirituality

University students are not typically shy when expressing their thoughts or needs. Whether it's the quality of food in the cafeteria, the types of investments in the university's endowment, or the quality of teaching in the classroom – students speak their minds. Another way they communicate is subtler. If something falls out of favor or loses its appeal, students will simply stop! They stop using the service, attending programs, or speaking about the issue. This is what I observed at Gonzaga as it relates to spiritual development. Fewer students were taking part in spiritual life programs, volunteerism and community service (while strong) were limited to the same predictable groups and individuals, and three of the four campus worship spaces had been closed. These closures spoke to the fact that students' needs weren't being met or suggested that interest in university offerings had fallen to the point of abandonment.

These observations do not change the fact that college is generally more of an individual experience than a collective experience. While the collective disinterest in the issue of spirituality may result in closing a chapel space, on an individual level there still exist personal needs. When students begin exploring various aspects of their identities – questions like "who am I" and "how do I navigate my environment" – their needs

[4] Rudenstine et al., "Meeting Students Where They Are."

become more apparent. As students wrestle with their spiritual identity, it should be expected that needs will arise and be voiced.

Identity formation is not a new idea (even if it has gotten more attention recently in media). Developmental psychologists such as Erik Erikson presented comprehensive work on identity formation in the late 1970s through the mid-1980s. In his model, Erikson explained that adolescents (emerging adults) go through a stage where "identity versus role confusion," and the individual seeks answers to the questions, "who am I, what do I believe and value?"[5] These are very similar to Astin's "big questions." For today's college students, expressions of identity are multi-layered and include areas such as race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, to name just a few. What is important to understand is that how students see themselves influences what they believe and what they value in the world around them.

Contemporary theorist Terrell Strayhorn, who writes extensively on the topic of "belonging" notes, "Identity is a bit challenging to describe in words on two-dimensional paper, when we know that the process is much more dynamic, synergistic, and three-dimensional than previously understood."[6] There is no denying that the concept of identity has crossed into areas such as politics, lifestyle, and wellness topics – including religion and spirituality. And rather than identity being a static experience, students' awareness of "self" exists on continuums – binary norms are no longer accepted nor are singular definitions. For instance, Carlos Rodriguez-Rad and Encarnacion Ramos-

[5] Mogler, "The Physical, Cognitive, Social, Personality, Moral, and Faith Development of Adolescence." p7.
[6] Strayhorn, *College Students' Sense of Belonging, A Key to Educational Success for All Students*. Kindle edition p. 22.

Hidalgo document over seventy definitions of spirituality in their research on identity.[7] If one accepts this, it is reasonable then to expect college students needing dedicated assistance in developing their thoughts and ideas about spirituality, morals, and character.

This generation of college students deserves the opportunity to evaluate the topic of spirituality with the same seriousness as they reflect on all other aspects of their lives. Nash and Murray defend this assertion: "University students are ripe for discerning a narrative that is worthy of the potential of a young life and for doing so in a way that enables them to see themselves as an integral part of a larger communal reality – a shared dialogue at the heart of the human enterprise, a disciplined dialogue that must embrace both the wonderful and the terrible…"[8]

The question remains, are universities providing adequate opportunity for this generation to participation in the dialogue about spirituality? Over the last decade, researchers continue to learn about this topic as it relates to today's college students. Studies like the one completed by Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, a seven-year examination of how students change during their college years – specifically in the areas of religiousness and spirituality, is an attempt to answer this question. In their findings, they chart students' general decline in outward expressions of religiousness (such as attending worship services), but perhaps surprisingly, they were also able to show a general increase in students' personal-awareness and acceptance of various types of spirituality. Their work clearly documents an increase in college students' desire to quest[ii] in the

[7] Selby, *Who Am I? Understanding Identity and the Many Ways We Define Ourselves*. Kindle edition, p.334.
[8] Nash and Murray, *Helping College Students Find Purpose: The Campus Guide to Meaning-Making*. Kindle edition, Loc. 110.

areas of spirituality.[9] In *Generation on a Tightrope,* Levine and Dean published their research completed over a nine years period. This study produced an additional portrait of today's college student. They describe this generation as being a complex paradox of completing tensions. These students "struggle to maintain balance as they attempt to cross the gulf between their dreams and diminishing realities of the world in which they live."[10] Likewise, "they want to be autonomous grown-ups but seem more dependent on their parents and the adults around them than any modern generation. They want intimacy – a partner and family – but they are isolated, weak in face-to-face communication skills and live in a hook-up culture[iii]."[11]

How then are colleges and universities responding? Research on this question reveals that colleges and universities have noticeably changed their focus over time, and have gradually moved away from addressing issues of character development (which negatively impacts spiritual exploration), in favor of "practical" skills development and the transfer of academic knowledge in order for students to ensure gainful employment upon graduation.[12] And while issues of religion and spirituality were not specifically addressed in Levine and Dean's research, it did expose how this generation interacts with institutions. Levine and Dean characterize this generation's relationship with college as "mirroring" their relationship with other services they purchase – "they expect convenience, excellent service, superior quality, and low prices."[13] This is a generation

[9] Astin, Alexander, Helen S. Astin and Jennifer A. Lindholm, Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives. Kindle edition.
[10] Levine, Arthur and Diane R. Dean, Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today's College Student. Kindle edition.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.

accustomed to operating in a transactional environment, but as Astin (et al.) suggest, they are longing for transformational experiences. This is a generation caught between potentially competing desires for material wealth and success, juxtaposed against finding deeper personal meaning and purpose.[14]

Students are coming to college campuses with a weaker connection to religious tradition[iv] but challenged by essentially the same questions that have dominated college students' minds for the past 40 years – questions concerning "academic integrity, alcohol and substance use, sex and intimacy issues, and relationship with others."[15] Even though a gap exists between students and the institutions they attend when it comes to answering questions of spiritual and inner-life development, there also exists an opportunity to attend to a deeper calling of mission and meet students where they are – in new and creative ways.[v]

Parker Palmer and Arthur Zajonc address this point in their book, *The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal.* They explored the questions of mission and its connection to the ideas of the *Academe* being more than just a transmitter of knowledge. They challenge educators and administrators to get back to the task of whole-person development. They encourage institutions to draw on the full range of human capacity for "knowing, teaching, and learning to forge stronger links between knowing the world and living creatively in it."[16] This is the "transformational" yearning that students appear to be longing for in Astin's research. Palmer and Zajonc go further in their conviction of higher education as an enterprise, and assert that colleges have forgotten their main

[14] Ibid
[15]Levine, Arthur and Diane R. Dean, Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today's College Student. Kindle edition.
[16] Palmer and Zajonc, *The Heart of Higher Education, A Call for Renewal*. Kindle edition, p.2.

purpose – to assist students in learning who they are as individuals and in their search for "larger purpose in life" rather than just a well-paying job. The authors use the analogy of connecting the "inner life" with the "outer life" and posit that it is an "eternal human yearning to be connected to something larger than one's own ego."[17]

It is from this backdrop that I engaged myself over a period of 18 months; assisting in the establishment and support of a program of peer resident ministers and studying their effect on the communities in which they lived and worked. This program envisioned creating a positive and safe mechanism for individual residents to be challenged and supported in their decision-making as well as to provide alternative opportunities for exploring spiritual and inner-life development. This paper represents the culmination of this project and will be presented in five chapters following the tenets of the *Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm* – context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation.[vi]

Project Outline

Chapter One – Context: Gonzaga University and Students

In this chapter, institutional information and supporting data will be presented that give context to the setting of Gonzaga University and to the student experience. This chapter will build the foundation for the act of ministry outlined in this thesis project. Relevant data will include admissions data collected over a five-year period – which will illustrate trend analysis of the religious identities of our most recent classes. Additionally, special

[17] Palmer, Parker and Arthur Zajonc, The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal. Kindle edition.

questions which were included in Gonzaga's American College Health Association – National College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA)[vii] survey (2015) that measured students' attitudes and awareness concerning spirituality and inner life development will show this populations interest in growth. Freshman CIRP[viii] data collected in 2012 and the College Senior Survey[ix] 2016 will be evaluated to show declines that have been measured in spiritual development and religious identity for that specific class, (freshmen in the Fall of 2012 and graduated Spring 2016). Lastly, the Mission Statement of the university will be shown to support the idea of communal exploration in matters of spirituality and moral development.

Chapter Two – Experience: This Generation of College Student

Having developed a sense of locational context in chapter one, chapter two will dive deeper into the social, political, and generational influences that make this cohort of college students unique. The information in this chapter will assist in developing the argument of my thesis and further build the foundation for a new approach to engaging spiritual development in college student populations.

Chapter Three – Reflection: Theological and Developmental Influences

In this chapter, various theological, social sciences, and developmental schools of thought that inform and challenge this project will be discussed. Specifically, from the theological realm, I will explore the teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola, commentaries from the Pauline school concerning ethical development lived out in communal structures,

applications of Moral and Practical Theologies as these apply to the project, and finally concepts of spirituality and religiousness within the student generational cohort.

From social and behavior sciences, I will reflect upon the developmental theories of Kohlberg and Gilligan as they apply to moral decision-making. Particular time will be spent discussing various theories of identity formation. Of particular interest to me for this project are the theorists and educators whose work represents an intentional intersectionality between the "holy" and the "psyche." These include individuals such as Sharon Parks, Parker Palmer, James Fowler, Urie Bronfenbrenner, and Craig Dykstra.

Chapter Four – Action: An Act of Ministry

In this chapter, the development of the peer residential minister project will be presented – from pre-planning to implementation. This chapter will include the formation process and inter-divisional team work necessary to under-take this project, as well as the budgetary decisions required to make this act of ministry possible. Detailed information will be presented on the selection and training process used in the residential minister position, as well as the on-going support and management offered to the individuals who took these positions. Finally, a detailed account of what the role of residential minister was like for those who performed the job, as well as feedback from the students they served. This information will be provided in narrative form with limited quantitative data.

Chapter Five – Evaluation: Analysis and Findings

In this chapter, data collected from the pre-tests and post-tests will be evaluated, and statistical significance of observed changes within the communities will be addressed.

Additionally, ethnographic and narrative information will be presented – this having been collected during debrief meetings with the residential ministers (RM) and gleaned from their community reports. As mentioned previously, influence from peer residential ministers is predicted to show positive movement within the community in the following areas: (1) an increase in independent decision-making and a decrease in dependency on parental and peer influence, (2) a deeper commitment to values clarification (3) an increase in behaviors consistent with spiritual development (4) a deeper sense of meaning and purpose, and (5) a deeper connection to community, and (6) a deeper self-awareness of positive change. Appropriate attention will be placed on topics for future learning based upon final analysis of findings.

Finally, a concluding chapter will be added to the end this paper. In this overview, I will synthesize the project and its outcomes (both observed as well as implied). I will include a brief but detailed evaluation of lessons learned – things overlooked and underestimated. I will reflect upon how this project has affected me personally as well on how it has impacted my idea of ministry to which I have been called. Lastly, I will offer my contemplation on a way forward for continued growth for my students.

ENDNOTES:

[i] AVP – Dean of Student Well-being & Healthy Living direct reports include; the Office of Community Standards (Conduct), the Office of Parent and Family Services, the Office of Health Promotions, the Office of Health and Counseling Services, the Office of Title IX Investigations, the Center for Cura Personalis (Case Management), and Campus Security.

[ii] Chickering, Arthur, Dalton, Jon, and Stamm, Liesa, Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006) Kindle edition. Throughout this book the authors refer to "quest" or "questing" as it relates to spiritual development. They cite research completed by C. Daniel Batson to establish a "religious orientation" recognized by psychologists in which, "there may or may not be a clear belief in a transcendent reality, but there is a transcendent, religious approach to the individual's life [Batson, 1993, p.116]. Additionally, Karen Armstrong's characterization of "quest" is key to the authors' understanding of this term. She wrote, "In the course of my studies, I have discovered that the religious quest is not about discovering "the truth" or "the meaning of life" but about living as intensely as possible in the here and now. [Armstrong, 2004, pp.270, 271].

[iii] Freitas, Donna, Sex and the Soul: Juggling Sexuality, Spirituality, Romance, and Religion on America's College Campus, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008) Kindle edition. The phenomena of "hooking-up" is not necessarily unique to this generation, but to the degree that uncommitted physical contact (ranging from kissing to having sex) is part of this generation's lived experience of relationships with others, speaks directly to issues of self-perception, meaning making, gratification, and moral development. Freitas directly connects decisions concerning physical intimacy that students make with their spiritual growth and development during college years. "The overwhelming majority (of college students) do not know how to reconcile their religious identities with their sexual selves" (p.21). She suggests that students live a divided life – one of public persona and another of private behaviors and conflict. This concept will be played out in numerous times in this thesis.

[iv] According to Pew research present from their 2007 and 2014 surveys reported in, *America's Changing Religious Landscape* (May 2015), there has been a decline in Mainline Protestant church goers as well as a decline in the number of self-identified Catholics over this period of time. These two statistics are further concerning when one considers the "rapid growth" of religiously unaffiliated adults in America. Clearly there is a decline in connection to particular religious traditions. Pew quotes, "One of the most important factors in the declining share of Christians and the growth of the 'nones', (a term coined to identify the none-affiliated) is generational replacement. As the Millennial generation enters adulthood, its members display much lower levels of religious affiliation, including less connection with Christian churches, than older generations [Pew, 2015].

[v] Gonzaga University's Mission Statement (2014), Gonzaga University is an exemplary learning community that educates students for lives of leadership and service for the common good. In keeping with its Catholic, Jesuit, humanistic heritage and identity, Gonzaga models and expects excellence in academics and professional pursuits and intentionally develops the whole person – intellectually, spiritually, physically, and emotionally. Through engagement with knowledge, wisdom, and questions informed by classical and contemporary perspectives, Gonzaga cultivates in its students the capacities and dispositions for reflective and critical thought, lifelong learning, spiritual growth, ethical discernment, creativity, and innovation. The Gonzaga experience fosters a mature commitment to the dignity of the human person, social justice, diversity, intercultural competence, global engagement, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and care for the planet. Grateful to God, the Gonzaga community carries out this mission with responsible stewardship of our physical, financial, and human resources.

[vi] While not a specific directive associated with St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm is a method of educational inquiry "based upon the dynamics and principles" of his *Spiritual* Exercises, and outlined for use in Jesuit education in a document originally published in 1993 (since edited and republished in 2013), through The Jesuit Institute under the title, *Ignatian Pedagogy – A Practical Approach.* This method is understood as a three-part process consisting of; context – a pre-educational step, experience, reflection, and action – the heart of the paradigm, and finally evaluation – a post educational step. [www.jesuitinstitute.org/Pages/IgnatianPedagogy.htm] accessed 08/20/16.

[vii] Gonzaga University takes part in this nation survey instrument on a bi-annual basis (during odd number years). Besides allowing institutions to measure their students' behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions against national trends, for an additional fee, universities are allowed to insert questions relevant to topics they wish to explore. In the 2015 administration of the ACHA survey a series of questions were included to evaluate where our student population was in relation to questions of spirituality and inner life development. [www.acha-ncha.org/overview.html] accessed 09/15/16.

[viii] The Cooperative Intuitional Research Program (CIRP), through the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA has been collecting data on college students for over fifty years. The Freshman Survey was introduced in 1966 by Alexander Astin and has been the basis of much of his research already noted in this introductory chapter. [www.heri.ucla.edu/cirpoverview.php] accessed 09/15/16.

[ix] The College Senior Survey (CSS) is also administered through the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. While it can be used as a stand-alone instrument to measure educational outcomes in areas of diversity, civic engagement, and academic achievement, "when used in conjunction with the CIRP Freshman Survey…it generates valuable longitudinal data on students' cognitive and affective growth during college." [www.heri.ucla.edu/ccsoverview.php] accessed 09/15/16].

Chapter One - Context
Gonzaga University and Students

The Importance of Context

Do college professors and administrators have a functional understanding of their students, or an awareness of the multiple external influences that shape them? How do students' experiences outside the classroom environment impact their worldview, their decision-making process, their level of self-awareness, (and most importantly for this thesis), their interest in and capacity for spiritual development? An important part of answering these questions begins by exploring the issue of context – in the case of this study, the context of Gonzaga University, the students who enrolled there, and the contemporary mindset of college-aged students as it relates to spirituality.

To begin understanding all of these elements with a clear mind, we must attempt to move past our own experiences, assumptions, and biases. Failure to do so limits our ability to recognize the differences between our personal lived experiences and those of the people we try to help. In *Millennials Rising*, the authors warn about such shortcuts: "If history always moved in straight lines (one could predict generational trends…), but history does *not* move in straight lines."[18] Thus, the events and elements that shape one group's context cannot be overlooked, underestimated, or simplified. When considering the importance of context in ministry, Robert Osmer describes it this way: "Context is composed of social and natural systems in which situations unfold, and it serves the flexible purpose of calling attention to micro- and macro-systems that are relevant to a

[18] Howe and Strauss, *Millennials Rising, The Next Great Generation*. Kindle edition, Loc. 617.

given case."[19] He points out in his four critical tasks of *practical theology,* you must begin with the question, "What is going on?"[20] Understanding context begins with this question: What's going on at Gonzaga?

Context is not just the cataloging of history and background. Context (as it relates to Ignatian Pedagogy) is not a simple academic exercise. Understanding context is an intentional process which results in a sense of *care and concern* for an individual, group, or community. Care and concern for others is an important practice of Jesuit education and underpins the philosophy of *cura personalis.*[x] This concept is described as having an "abiding care for the whole person – their physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual wellbeing." Having contextual understanding of another person is necessary for *cura personalis* to exist. Understanding students in this manner equips professors and administrator with the ability to *accompany* students in the educational process.[xi]

Like most things "Jesuit," there are multiple layers to any concept. In this case, learning about students is not just the mechanics of teaching and assisting them in mastering a subject, it also includes learning how they navigate the incongruences that exist when issues of self-awareness, values, and choice collide. Likewise, being taught and learning how to navigate life does not happen in isolation, it requires other individuals – others who know you and care about you. This is why educators must "become as conversant as possible" with the student's environment, background, community, and potential.[21]

---

[19] Osmer, R. *Practical theology: an introduction*. Kindle edition, Loc. 195.
[20] Ibid. Loc. 92.
[21] Gonzaga University Mission Statement.

In its purest form, the *Ignatian pedagogy*[xii] is an experiential learning model and traditionally used in the classroom setting. In the pedagogy, the contextual phase is sometimes referred to as the "*who"* segment of the model – meaning an individual student. As explained previously in the introduction, I will employ the pedagogical framework in a broader sense to give structure and flow to the chapters of this thesis. It will become clear that context is an irreplaceable step[xiii] of the *pedagogy* and to the degree that understanding is achieved, all others steps of the model will be addressed successfully.

In this chapter, Jesuit education, Gonzaga University, specific data on spiritual and religious identification of our current students, and recent research on religious attitudes will contribute to better understanding of this thesis project. This understanding will help to identify opportunities that exist for helping students grow and develop – contributing to meaning and purpose driven lives.

The University and the Student Experience

Gonzaga University is the setting for this act of ministry, but it is my goal to provide other colleges and universities with practical information and guidelines to establish similar ministries if the need exists. This chapter entitled "*Context*," will focus on Gonzaga University and its students. The issues of religious identity formation and spiritual development for these students will be emphasized and evaluated as well. To begin examining Gonzaga University's climate of identity formation and spiritual development, a brief overview of Ignatian spirituality, Jesuit education, and the Mission of the university is necessary.

Ignatian Spirituality and Jesuit Education

The Jesuit order was founded by Ignatius of Loyola, and approved by Papal decree in 1547. Formally referred to as the Society of Jesus (SJ), they are known for working with the marginalized and vulnerable as well as for establishing schools and universities throughout the world.[22] In 1599, the Jesuits promulgated the *Ratio Studiorum* – the methods and system of studies which remains the guiding force of Jesuit education.[23] Central to the mission and purpose of Jesuit education, *St. Ignatius wrote,* "We tend in our colleges to stress the formation of life rather than the acquisition of knowledge."[24] These two elements, (eruditio) acquiring knowledge and (pietas) acquiring personal attitudes toward living, are balanced tensions and characteristics of Jesuit education.[25]

For nearly four centuries, this summation of practices served as the foundational document until approximately thirty years ago when the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm was formalized and supported by a new treaties entitled, *The Characteristics of Jesuit Education and Ignatian Pedagogy Paradigm.* This document refined and reenergized core values of Jesuit education to respond to the needs of 20th century student and beyond. An important part of this renewal was the acknowledgment of the diversity of experiences and backgrounds of the students being taught. Specifically, it addressed the issue of religious and spirituality diversity. Fr. George Nedumattam, S.J., wrote, "We are called upon to engage in right actions toward a realization and experience of God toward

[22] Nedumattam, George S.J, *Jesuit Education: Forming Men and Women of Conscience*. Introduction
[23] Ibid. Introduction
[24] Letter to the Duke of Bavaria (St. Ignatius)
[25] Nedumattam, George S.J, *Jesuit Education: Forming Men and Women of Conscience*. p.2

which all persons move in their life. Every religion and spirituality comes across as inviting persons to move toward transcendence."[26]

The Jesuit methodology which focuses upon the whole person (including spiritual development and growth), faces a number of challenges from contemporary market-driven expectations of college. "We are in an economy driven world where almost everything is viewed in terms of economic returns and profit margins they provide. In such an environment, the outcomes of education are measured in terms of employability of the educated and such utilitarian influence structures academic profiles according to the market."[27] A second challenge which has gained momentum during the beginning of the 21st century is the global push for standardized educational practices. This has been accelerated by advances and access to technology. These advances tend to avoid any association with religion and spirituality, and discourage promoting any specific ideology or theological perspective.[28]

These secular influences of economic productivity and global connection stand in stark contrast to the original vision of Jesuit education. The Society of Jesus is "inspired by the Gospels and the Spiritual Exercises."[29] The foundation of the Spiritual Exercises states, "Man [sic] is created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save their soul."[30] The tension that exists between today's cultural norms and St. Ignatius' vision for the Jesuits is succinctly identified by Fr. Nedumattam when he said, "The Society has the responsibility to ensure that education is not merely viewed in

[26] Ibid. p.3
[27] Ibid. p.6
[28] Ibid. p.7
[29] St. Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises.*
[30] Ibid. p.9

utilitarian terms forming employable men and women in the world. The formation of conscience should continue to be one of the major components of Jesuit education, helping persons to find an answer to the quest for meaning and transcendence."[31]

Gonzaga University

Gonzaga University is named for St. Aloysius Gonzaga, an Italian Jesuit of the 16th century. Officially founded in 1887, the university began when Fr. Joseph Cataldo purchased property along the Spokane River in Washington State. Gonzaga is classified as a private non-profit liberal arts university affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church. The motto of the university is *Ad majorem Dei gloriam* – translated from Latin, meaning for the greater glory of God.

Gonzaga University is one of twenty-seven Jesuit universities in the United States. What does it mean to be a Jesuit university? In 2010, a non-binding document was ratified by all member schools which provided guidance concerning characteristics deemed appropriate for all Jesuit colleges and universities to promote and embody.[32] Central to this document was the following: "Our primary mission is the education and formation of students in such a way and in order that they may become men and women of faith and of service to their communities."[33] Fr. Kolvenbach S.J. commenting on this

[31] Ibid. p.13
[32] *Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-evaluation Instrument*.
[33] Ibid. p.2

mission further stated, "The real measures of our Jesuit universities lies in who our students become."[34]

Gonzaga University describes itself as a mission driven institution with stated goals of attendance consistent with its Catholic, Jesuit, and humanistic heritage.[xiv] The mission statement[xv] of Gonzaga University specifically includes language concerning the development of the whole person – physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual components.[35] Regardless of academic major, all students in attendance are required to complete three courses in religion and two courses in philosophy. These requirements may be met through a variety of classes, some of which are broad in their definition of religion and philosophy – but all include components of self-reflection and values clarification.[36]

The effectiveness of these requirements in deepening religious and spiritual development within the undergraduate ranks is difficult to measure. In a learning environment with hyper-competitive, academically gifted students, these requirements pose a challenge. As a staff person in the office of Mission and Ministry put it, "These (class requirements) are either seen as unnecessary by students in rigorous majors such as Engineering, or they are approached with a similar lack of self-discovery as other non-major courses."[37]

Data on Gonzaga University Student Spirituality

[34] Quote from Fr. Kolvenbach. SJ. ***The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American Jesuit Higher Education*, Santa Clara University, October 6, 2000.**
[35] The Mission Statement of Gonzaga University
[36] Academic requirements (website)
[37] Quote provided without permission to identify speaker. Conversation with Mission and Ministry staff, January 20, 2017. Gonzaga University.

Admissions Data

As part of my examination of the spiritual context of our students, I was curious about what data might exist for students enrolling as freshmen – knowing that religious affiliation or spiritual identity were part of the application process. The information that follows provides five-year of admissions data presented in four categories: Roman Catholic, Christian/Protestant, No-Affiliation/Nones, and other (*where "other" is indicated, this includes Eastern Religions, Islam, and Judaism).[38]

Admission Data (Five-year) Freshmen Enrolled Self-reported Affiliation

ACADEMIC YEAR	FALL 12	FALL 13	FALL 14	FALL 15	FALL 16
ENROLLMENT (1ST YEAR)	N =1095	N=1228	N=1048	N=1349	N=1271
CATHOLIC	54% (591)	51% (626)	56% (587)	45% (607)	48% (610)
PROTESTANT/CHRISTIAN	21% (230)	23% (282)	23% (241)	26% (351)	24% (305)
NO-AFFILIATION/NONE	23% (252)	24% (295)	20% (210)	26% (351)	26% (330)
OTHER*	2% (22)	1% (12)	1% (11)	2% (27)	2% (25)

The information provided in this chart is derived from (**Table 1: Admissions Data**) which subcategorizes Protestant and Christian denominations into more detail. Visually, this chart seems to suggest that the percentage of Catholic students is trending downward, students with no religious affiliation (Nones) are trending upward, and other categories (including Protestant/Christian) are remaining generally flat. These numbers, (religious affiliation verses no religious affiliation), mirror the percentages found by the Pew Research Center for the same period of time.[39]

[38] Data provided from the Common Application for Admission or Gonzaga University's Application. Submitted by: Nathan Mannetter, Assistant Director of Admissions, Gonzaga University.
[39] Pew Research Center: Fact Tank, Few Americans Identify with More Than One Religion (2016)

These observations are based upon total percentage of any entering class, not on the net number of students who enrolled. It is important to note that all students who complete an application to Gonzaga University are required to complete all fields of the application form. That does not mean this information is accurate. In this case, students may be reporting the information their parents/families provide for them. It is not unimaginable to hear, "Hey mom, what religion are we?" Additionally, because Gonzaga is a religiously affiliated university, there may be a fear on the part of the applicant, that failure to provide a religious affiliation will negatively impact the admissions decision. While informative, this data alone does not provide a complete picture of our students' spiritual experience.

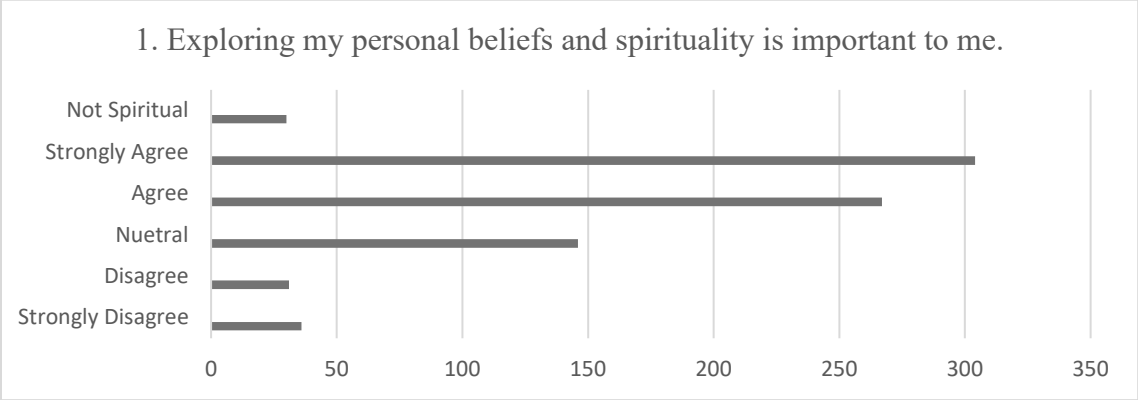
ACHA-NCHA Data

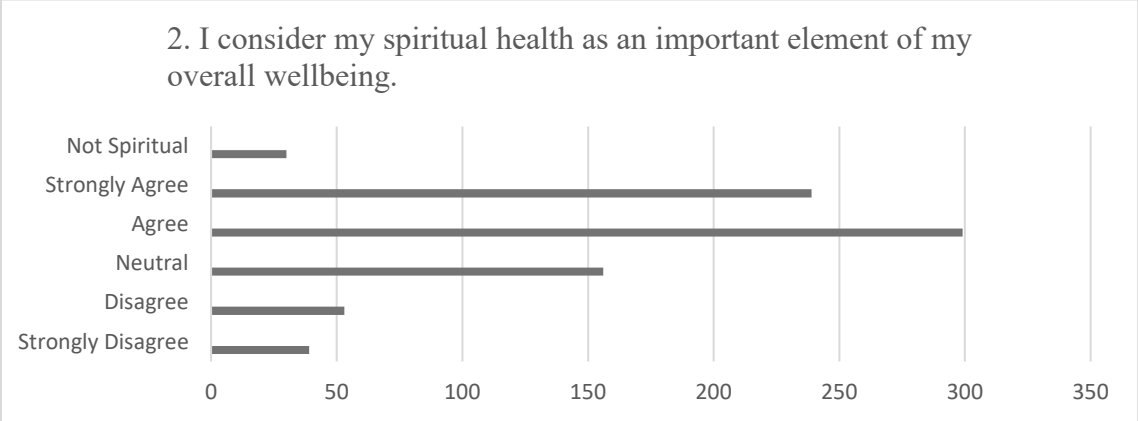
In 2015, I was given the opportunity to ask a series of questions as part of Gonzaga's ACHA-NCHA survey.[xvi] Institutions may elect to be a member of the yearly collection of data by paying an enrollment fee – it was Gonzaga's practice to enroll and participate on a two-year cycle.

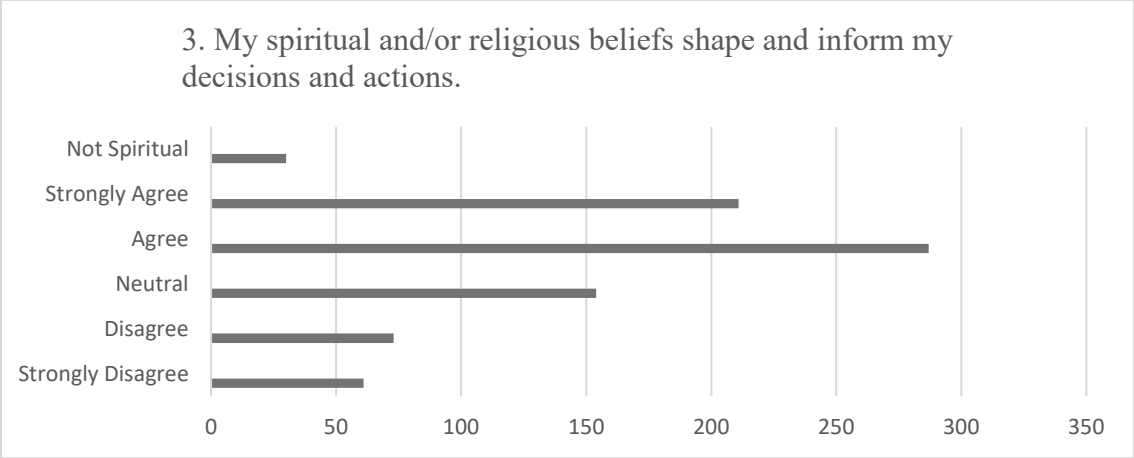
Students of institutions taking part in the survey are not required to complete the survey, participation is purely voluntary and anonymous. One of the values of this survey is allowing institutions to compare its students with national benchmarked data on health and wellness criteria against other schools of similar size and demographics. For an additional charge, a school may include up to 15 specialized questions – in 2015, four of our questions focused on spirituality. As such, any special questions do not result in comparative date with other universities but serve as a gauge to measure current attitudes and behaviors. The 2015 survey instrument was open to all students (undergraduate,

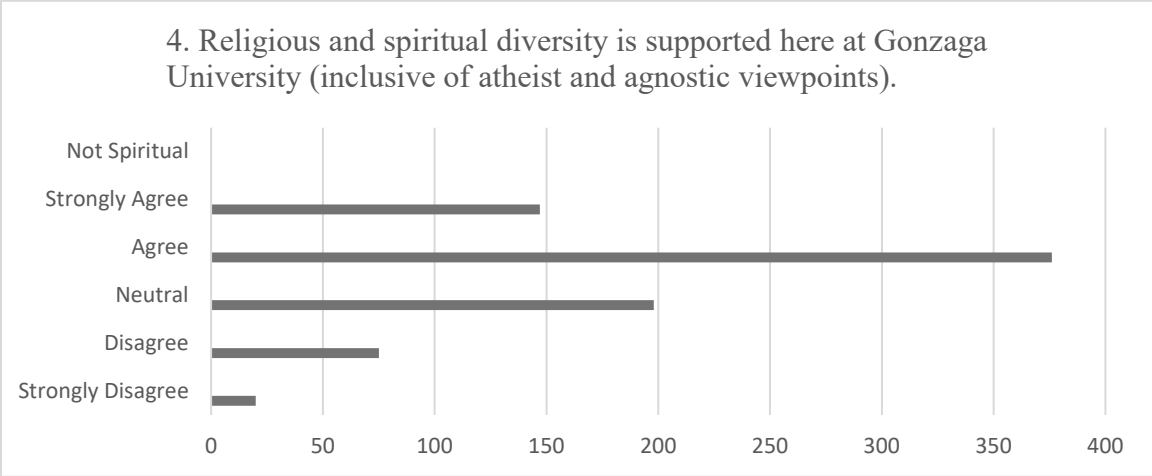
graduate, professional, distance). The survey sample in 2015 was 1097 (816-undergraduate, 213-graduate, 57-professional, and 11-online students).

The four specialized questions presented to students were designed to assess the level of importance spirituality and religious beliefs played in their lives, how religion and spirituality were connected to their senses of wellbeing and self-perception, and how supportive they perceive Gonzaga's environment in terms of diversity of belief traditions. For purposes of this thesis project, responses were limited to undergraduate students only. The questions and responses following:









With a total number of 4700 undergraduate students, the survey sample of 816 does not allow for any statistical significance to be drawn in these responses. However, the results do allow for some strong generalizations to be made. In the first question, responses suggest that there is interest in exploring spiritual development, (70% responded strongly agree or agree). The next two questions measure how important and influential spirituality is in the respondent's sense of overall wellbeing and decision-making. Again, there seems to be a strong connection (66% and 61% respectively responding that they strongly agreed or agree). In the final question the degree to which Gonzaga was seen as a safe/welcoming environment for spiritual exploration was

assessed. Once again, respondents seemed to say campus is an accepting place for spiritual difference (64% strongly agreed or agreed with that assessment).

Two interesting pieces of information now existed – who the students are (religiously speaking) prior to coming to Gonzaga, and how they feel about spirituality once they have gotten here. A third question must be asked to help determine context, however, "what happens to them over their four-year experience?'

CIRP Data and Senior Year Experience

Designed and first administered by Alexander Astin in 1966, the Cooperative Institute Research Program (CIRP) survey is offered to first-year college students through the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) housed at the University of California – Los Angeles (UCLA). This national data collection measures things such as high school experience, attitudes, behaviors, and expectations for college. For universities that enroll in the study, it provided insight on entering classes and how these cohorts might influence the greater campus culture. For purposes of this thesis project, I selected three years of data with corresponding information on spiritual behaviors and levels of religious interest. The freshman survey responses for years 2011 – 2013 suggest students are coming to Gonzaga with similar religious and spiritual experiences and identities year over year. Some of the information also suggests high levels of religious participation – which is encouraging! The primary set of data I want to focus on is the freshman class entering Fall 2012. When I pulled these data, I also requested the class prior and the class immediately after to see if any significant difference existed.

2011 – 2013 CIRP Freshman Survey - Spirituality/Religiosity
Current Religious Preference and Parental Influence
(Student Respondents)

	ACADEMIC YEAR	FR – 2011	FR – 2012	FR – 2013
STUDENT	Catholic	51%	51%	49%
FATHER		48%	49%	46%
MOTHER		54%	54%	52%
STUDENT	Protestant	29%	28%	29%
FATHER		33%	30%	30%
MOTHER		33%	31%	35%
STUDENT	No-Affiliation	17%	18%	20%
FATHER		16%	18%	21%
MOTHER		11%	12%	11%
STUDENT	Other*	3%	3%	2%
FATHER		4%	3%	3%
MOTHER		2%	3%	3%

2011 – 2013 CIRP Freshman Survey - Spirituality/Religiosity
Measures of Spirituality
(Student Respondents)

YEAR		
FR – 2011	1 - Attended a religious service (in the last year)?	87%
	2 - Discussed religion (in the last year)?	47%
	3 - Rate yourself on the following trait (spirituality) as compared with the average person your age.	43% - Top 10%/Above Average
	4 - How important was the religious affiliation/orientation of the college on your decision to attend?	25% - Very Important
	5 - Indicate the importance to you personally in developing a meaningful philosophy of life.	58% - Essential/Very Important
FR – 2012	1 - Attended a religious service (in the last year)?	86%
	2 - Discussed religion (in the last year)?	50%
	3 - Rate yourself on the following trait (spirituality) as compared with the average person your age.	44% - Top 10%/Above Average
	4- How important was the religious affiliation/orientation of the college on your decision to attend?	25% - Very Important
	5 - Indicate the importance to you personally in developing a meaningful philosophy of life.	50% - Essential/Very Important
FR – 2013	1 - Attended a religious service (in the last year)?	82%
	2 - Discussed religion (in the last year)?	46%
	3 - Rate yourself on the following trait (spirituality) as compared with the average person your age.	46% - Top 10%/Above Average
	4 - How important was the religious affiliation/orientation of the college on your decision to attend?	25% - Very Important
	5 - Indicate the importance to you personally in developing a meaningful philosophy of life.	51% - Essential/Very Important

Finding no significant difference in those entering classes, I turned my attention to the graduating class of 2016. Similar to the data collected on entering freshman, graduating seniors are also given the opportunity to provide feedback through the Senior Year Experience survey (also administered through HERI). This instrument is designed to evaluate students' experience of college, how it has affected them, and (when possible) how they have changed from their first year.

The two tables below focus on the graduating class of 2016. In the first table, I provide the measures of spirituality and religious identity of the seniors who took part in the survey instrument. The second table provides a snapshot of how these graduates answered the same questions their freshman year.[40]

2016 College Senior Survey
Measures of Spirituality

		n=592
Performed community service as part of a class?	Frequently Occasionally Not at all	20.1% 47.0% 32.9%
Praying/Meditation during typical week?	6 to 10 hours 3 to 5 hours 1 to 2 hours Less than 1 hour None	2.7% 6.4% 18.5% 29.6% 41.3%
Attended a religious service in the last year?	Frequently Occasionally Not at all	21.6% 43.7% 34.7%
Performed voluntary community service in the last year?	Frequently Occasionally Not at all	23.5% 58.3% 18.3%
Discussed religion in the last year?	Frequently Occasionally Not at all	15.9% 61.8% 22.3%
Indicate the importance: Developing a meaning philosophy of life	Essential Very important Somewhat important	28.9% 30.5% 28.0%

[40] The longitudinal study includes only responses from students who took both survey instruments (Fall semester 2012, and Spring semester 2016).

	Not important	12.6% --

		n=592
Rate yourself on the following attribute based on an average person your age - Spirituality	Highest 10% Above average Average Below Average Lowest 10%	9.5% 22.8% 36.7% 21.6% 9.4%
Indicate the importance to you personally to integrate spirituality into your life	Essential Very important Somewhat important Not important	22.9% 28.5% 30.7% 17.9% --
Plan to perform volunteer work following graduation?	Yes No	57.9% 42.1%
How effective was college in developing your ability to reflect on faith, vocation and appropriate decisions about my spiritual journey	Highly effective Moderately effective Somewhat effective Minimally effective Not effective	27.1% 42.1% 22.5% 6.4% 1.9%
How effective was your college experience in developing a commitment to a just society and to be a person for and with others?	Highly effective Moderately effective Somewhat effective Minimally effective Not effective	42.0% 38.6% 16.4% 2.7% 0.3%
Degree to which spiritual development/faith component was strengthened and integrated in your education?	Highly effective Moderately effective Somewhat effective Minimally effective Not effective	18.8% 32.1% 28.1% 12.7% 8.3%

2012 CIRP Freshman Survey/2016 College Senior Survey
Longitudinal Profile
Change in Frequency of Religious Preference/Spirituality

RELIGIOUS IDENTITY	Religious Affiliation	Freshman Survey	Senior Survey	Change
	Catholic	53%	51%	-2%
	Protestant	28%	23%	-5%
	No-Affiliation	15%	23%	8%
	Other*	4%	3%	-1%
ATTENDED A RELIGIOUS SERVICE	Frequently	47%	23%	-24%
	Occasionally	41%	46%	5%
	Not at all	12%	32%	20%
DISCUSSED RELIGION	Frequently	49%	16%	-35%
	Occasionally	45%	61%	14%

	Not at all	6%	23%	17%
RATE ATTRIBUTE SPIRITUALITY	Highest 10%	12%	9%	-3%
	Above Average	32%	23%	-9%
	Average	40%	38%	-2%
	Below Average	13%	22%	9%
	Lowest 10%	3%	9%	6%
DEVELOPING A MEANINGFUL LIFE	Essential	12%	16%	4%
	Very Important	28%	31%	3%
	Somewhat Imp.	43%	40%	-3%
	Not Important	18%	14%	-4%

Looking at just the senior year experience, nothing too troubling jumps out. As a snapshot, the information these students provide may even be called predictable. It is only when you are able to compare what has changed over the four years of college that one begins to see potential for intervention. When comparing the side-by-side responses of this cohort (the entering class of 2012 is the graduating class of 2016), there seems to be a weakening in both religious identity and spiritual practices.

This made me wonder, if these tables measured a different set of questions, for instance reading comprehension, reasoning skills, or communication skills, one would assume deeper institutional questions would be asked and a plan of action to positively impact students would be deployed. After all, it is generally the goal for students to grow and advance during their four years at college. In this instance there seems to be a reversal in course, why has the "warning bell" not been sounded? Is whole person education truly valued and supported if these instruments are being interpreted correctly? When I brought this concern to academic and ministry colleagues, they admitted a side-by-side comparison on spirituality had never been looked at before. To be fair, however, there are multiple topic areas outside academics and employment statistics not being reviewed on a regular basis.

What's Going On? – Contemporary Research[41]

Since 1990, a growing body of work has been compiled focused on college students and their spiritual development. The research suggests a general decline in importance of religion in the lives of college students over their four-year experience. Not unlike what the data above suggests about Gonzaga students. Additionally, it also suggests, "Development of religious identity during college…may be subtler and more complex than previously thought."[42] These studies indicate, "College students may not reject religious identities or values but rather refine and reinterpret previously held beliefs into more complex, personalized, and internalized concepts (from the following research: Anderson, 1995; Bryant, Choi, & Yasuno, 2003; Bussema, 1999; Cherry, DeBerg & Porterfield, 2001; Lee, 2002).[43]

Kendra Dean describes it this way, "Teenagers tend to approach religious participation, like music and sports, as an extracurricular activity: a good well-rounded thing to do, but unnecessary for an integrated life."[44] If this is true, what behaviors might be predicted? This suggests a trivialization of spirituality – something perhaps devoid of deeper meaning and disassociated from issues of faith and belief. On a college campus are words like "faith" and "belief "interpreted negatively? In our current social environment, an argument could be made to support that assumption. Sharon Parks, who has written extensively on the topic of spiritual development says this, "Among some

---

[41] Osmer, *Practical Theology, An Introduction*.
[42] Pascarella and Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*. Kindle edition, Loc. 3570.
[43] Ibid. Loc. 3575
[44] Dean, *Almost Christian, What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American.* Kindle edition, Loc. 139.

people…faith is a charged word, best avoided in any case. For others, it is a strong and positive word with a venerable history that dwells at the core of human life. For yet others, faith has simply become a matter of indifference."[45]

One of the more interesting items from the Gonzaga specific data (admissions and the Senior-Year experience) was an increased identification with no religious tradition – "nones." Is this something different from agnostic or atheist beliefs? Elizabeth Drescher explains, "To claim "None" as the label for one's spiritual identity is to refuse to participate in the normative system of religious identification, where labels suggest general agreement with beliefs, values, and practices that distinguish one religious institution from another."[46] "In the end, the None-ing of America is not a turning away from religion, but rather the emergence of multiple, sometimes overlapping, sometimes diverging narratives of religion and spiritual experiences that move through more diverse conception of what it means to be human and to be a citizen of the nations of the world."[47] In the introduction, I mentioned the turning away from binary definitions when it comes to this generations' search for identity. Parks assessment seems to support this further, making religion and spiritual development less of a "yes or no" proposition and more of a "yes, and" proposition.

Younger adults seem to be more comfortable living within the broader definition of spirituality, than the confined belief systems of a specific religious tradition. For example, does it make a difference if you claim to adhere to the tenets of the Catholic

[45] Parks, *Big Questions. Worthy Dreams, Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith.* Kindle edition, Loc. 733.
[46]Drescher, *Choosing Our Religion, The Spiritual Lives of America's Nones*. Choosing Our Religion: Kindle edition, p. 30.
[47] Ibid. p. 251.

faith, yet use reproductive services to prevent unwanted pregnancy? Sexuality and intimate relationships have already been mentioned as a typical issue of concern for college-aged students. How do students navigate these potential conflicts? Is it just easier to leave the idea of religion by the roadside? Astin's research (including decades of data from the CIRP instrument) leads to this observation: "Essentially, we find that while students' degree of religious engagement declines somewhat during college, their spirituality shows substantial growth. Students become more caring, more tolerant, more connected with other, and more actively engaged in a spiritual quest."[48] This strongly suggests students find personal value and acceptance through the nuanced label of being spiritual rather than religious. Astin further states, "Spirituality has also been described as an animating, creative, energizing, and meaning-making force; a source of inner strength; an inner moral orientation; a source of connection that brings faith, hope, peace, and empowerment; and a dynamic expression of ourselves that gives shape to, and is shaped by, who we really are."[49]

For most of us, this can become a confusing landscape of terms – religion, religious, spiritual, and spirituality. These are further complicated by ideas of faith and church. Chickering observes, "Although religion has most frequently been defined in terms of established institutional beliefs and practices, the experience of religion and spirituality is ultimately personal and varies in relation to an individual's cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics, as well as his or her personal narrative."[50] "A

[48] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*. Kindle edition, Loc. 342.
[49] Ibid. Loc. 247.
[50] Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition. Loc. 601.

growing majority of Americans today, 'piece together their faith like a patchwork quilt;…spirituality has become a vastly complex quest in which each person seeks his or her own way' (Wuthnow, 1998, p.2)."[51] It is this last thought that motivates my thesis. Do our students have to find their way alone?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have laid out the importance of context as it relates to the place of Gonzaga University and the students who attend there. I have shown that "context" is more than just understanding, it is the foundation for care and concern. As Gonzaga is a Jesuit institution, and by history and mission, established to educate the whole person – including their spiritual development – a renewed focus on providing resources and opportunities for spiritual development is within its purpose. Through Gonzaga specific data, I have shown there is expressed interest by the student body in this area, and there is evidence to suggest spiritual development decreases over the four-year period rather than flourishes. Likewise, through brief reviews of relevant national research, I have shown this trend is not unique to Gonzaga, but rather an observational norm for this generation. It is confusing landscape of terms and expectations. Because of this, I contend an opportunity exists to approach our students in a different way – one perhaps that allows them to journey with others rather than questing alone.

[51] Ibid. Loc 987.

Thesis

Students at Gonzaga University express a desire to engage more deeply in areas of personal development that include; spirituality, morals, character, and values, but the opportunities to do so are generally limited to programs offered through University Ministry or similar offices. By meeting students where they are and in a setting that represents a safe space (their living environment), and by offering support through a credible recognized mechanism (a peer), students will be allowed to question and struggle with the process of making meaning not only of their own lives but also developing a more mature articulation of what values animate their decision in the context of community.

ENDNOTES:

[x] Cura Personalis. Latin phrase meaning "care for the whole person" – having concern and care for the personal development of the whole person. This implies a dedication to promoting human dignity and care for the mind, body, and spirit of the person. (Definition from Regis University).

[xi] *Accompaniment*: Jesuits often use this term to describe being present with the poor and marginalized in spiritual as well as in physical ways. *Accompaniment* used in educational settings denotes being present in the learning process with students when they struggle with the discomfort of growth. This is related to the theory of "Challenge and Support" developed by Nevitt Sanford and illustrates that with proper support in the face of challenge, growth will occur.

[xii] Introduced in 1993, the paradigm was developed as a result of several years of study by the International Commission on Apostolate of Jesuit Education. The five domains of the paradigm – context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation – are not distinctly Jesuit, but the application of these in the educational setting of Jesuit schools take on particularly meaning Ignatian values, particularly the value and care of the whole person. (University of Loyola Chicago).

[xiii] Value being place on prior experiences is unique in experiential learning. The idea that it is important to consider where the learner has been and what has shaped their ideas, sets up an expectation of an individualized process – in this thesis, it will be applied to a community of learners.

[xiv] Catholic refers to the Roman Catholic Church, Jesuit refers to the order of the Society of Jesus founded by Ignatius of Loyola, and humanistic refers to humanism which emphasizes human dignity and agency.

[xv] (Appendix X of Gonzaga University Mission). "Ideally the mission is infused throughout the student experience (academic and co-curricular). The successful outcomes of which are exhibited through outward concerns for social justice, recognition of the dignity of others, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and an appreciation of diversity and cultural fluency."

[xvi] The American College Health Association's National College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA), is a nationally recognized research survey that assists campuses in collecting precise data about students' health habits, behaviors, and perceptions. (ACHA website).

Chapter Two - Experience
Today's College Student

> *"Ignatian pedagogy never occurs in a vacuum, we must know as much as we can about the actual context within which teaching and learning take place. As (educators) therefore, we need to understand the world of the student…What are the forces at work in them? How do they experience those forces influencing their attitudes, values and beliefs, and shaping their perceptions, judgments, and choices?"*[xvii]

Traditional aged college students, (18-22 years old) are part of a cohort of post-millennials often referred to as Generation-Z.[xviii] Like generations before them, these students are influenced by events and cultural forces over which they have no control. For Generation-Z, these include the influences of technology, the advent of social media, and the changing environments of education, religion, and politics. No single event or influence defines a generation. Rather, generations are impacted by a multitude of stimuli. It is the interplay of these that produce the unique character of each generational group. In the first chapter, I explored the context of place (Gonzaga University) and the shared characteristic of these students. In this chapter, "Experience" – I will dive deeper into the generational influences. The information in this chapter will highlight the importance of approaching spiritual development with this cohort of students in different ways from past generations.

Generation -Z

Why is generational definition important? As one researcher put it, "One thing is clear: today's generation, will likely be shaped by very different influences and forces than the generation(s) that preceded it."[52] Acknowledgement of these differences

[52] Pew Research Center. *The Whys and Hows of Generational Research*.

increases the chance of influencing positive change and developing support for the generation being studied. "No generation can fairly be described as better, or worse, than any other. They simply have different locations in history, and thus have different needs, desires, obsessions, blind spots, and opportunities…Each generation does what it must, within the context of the history and generational constellation into which it is born.[53]"

Alex Williams described Generation-Z this way: "Theirs is a story of innocence lost." This characterization is reinforced by research completed by Arthur Levine and Diane Dean. They portray Gen-Z as a generation influenced by constant upheaval and fear. This cohort is "growing up at a time of profound, swift, continuing, and disruptive economic, demographic, technological and global change.[54] They capture the tension of Gen-Z perfectly in their book's title, *Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today's College Student*.[55] Danger seems to loom in all directions! While their research did not specifically address issues of religion and spirituality, their findings have important implication for those topics.

Being on a "tightrope," Generation-Z is trying to balance dreams with the realities of the world, "looking for security in an environment of constant change."[56] Levine and Dean see the current student population as a generation of paradoxes. According to their research, Gen-Zs are the most diverse student population in history. They have a consumer mentality but are not materialistic. They expect convenience, service, quality,

[53] Howe and Strauss, *Millennials Rising, The Next Great Generation*. Kindle edition, Loc. 1631.
[54] Levine and Dean, *Generation on a Tightrope, A Portrait of Today's College Student*. Kindle edition, Loc. 447.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid. Loc. 99

and low prices.[57] They wrestle with many of the same college issues reported over the last forty years – academic integrity, alcohol and other substance use, sex and intimacy issues, and developing healthy relationships with others.[58] Levine and Dean depict Gen-Z as a generation that has endured and will continue to endure constant change at a rapid-fire pace. They are a generation with endless potential but face the real threat of not obtaining any of their dreams because of external threats and concerns of security.

Personal safety is not the only insecurity existing for this generation. Another realm of concern is employment. It is estimated that most of today's college students will occupy jobs which have yet to be invented or imagined.[xix] Their world will be "flatter" and more interconnected than any other generation – this offers opportunities as well as a need to be cautious. Unlike the generations before them who grew up in industrial economies, "these students are growing up in information-based economies which are still in flux."[59] The environment of technology is where this generation's world is being played-out, and it is the platform of social media where we find some of the strongest influences on their personal development and worldview.

The Influence of Social Media and Technology on Generation-Z

Members of Generation-Z are "digital natives,"[xx] a term first used by Marc Prensky in his article *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants.*[60] Prensky asserts that this generation is radically different from other generations, and he attributes this difference

[57] Ibid. Loc. 425.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid, Loc. 493.
[60] Prensky, M. *Digital natives, digital immigrants.*

to "the arrival and rapid dissemination of digital technology." Students attending college today have never experienced their lives without technology being present. They are "native speakers of the digital language."[61]

Levine and Dean's study underscores the generational influence of technology. "The parents of (Generation-Z) are products of an analog world (but) their children grew up in the digital age…which is cheaper, faster, more reliable, more accurate, and more productive."[62] Generation-Z processes information differently and experiences the world differently! In the educational setting (college), it is important to note that educators are closer contemporaries with Generation-Z's parental group than they are with the students they teach. This presents an issue which must be reckoned with. It is not the students who are struggling to "keep-up" with technology – it is the older generation that struggles. Students are now, "24/7, operating around the clock, any time, any place."[63] How has this dynamic been considered when we speak about spiritual development?

The technological gulf that exists between generations is further illustrated by social media.[xxi] As one observer of Generation-Z put it, "social media, is not merely second nature to them (Gen-Z); it is their primary nature."[64] Generation-Z has had social media and technology at their fingertips from the very beginning. To understand Gen-Z, it will be necessary to "break into their world" and to analyze how they are being affected by instant information and living out their lives in electronic communities.[65]

---

[61] Ibid.
[62] Levine & Dean. Loc. 461
[63] Ibid. Loc. 616
[64] White, *Meet Generation Z, Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World*.
[65] Seemiller and Grace, *Generation Z Goes to College*. Kindle edition, Loc. 1871.

The lament that students are "always on their phones" is not just a saying. Multiple studies show Generation-Z is "connected all the time." Nearly 41% of their time "outside of the classroom is spent on a computer, smart-phone, or mobile device."[66] This statistic is noteworthy considering that their on-line presence is primarily focused on instantaneous gratification, viewing images and videos, and 140-character messages.[xxii] [67]

Studies on the effects of technology are showing measurable physical, emotional, social, and neurological impacts on Generation-Z. One area of concerns from these studies is how being connected to screens influences students' "social lives and emotional health."[68] Research suggests that constant exposure to screens is "physically changing the natural circuitry of the developing brain, leading to shorter attention spans, stunted social skills, and an unhealthy heightened abilities to multitask."[69] For college students this becomes more concerning as it may have long-term effects (which are yet unknown), on decision-making and social development.[xxiii]

Generation-Z's development of personal identity and how identity development intertwines with social media's perceived rules of engagement is also being followed. An example of how these "rules" impact decision-making can be seen in the simple act of posting thoughts or opinions on-line. Posting has the potential for immediate repercussions, and can quickly become a defining moment for the individual who posts. Words, images, and videos all have the potential to become digital definitions of who you are, what you believe, and ultimately what type of person others see you as being. The

---

[66] Ibid. Loc. 1871.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid
[69] Washington Post, *Generation Z: What It's Like to Grow Up in the Age of Likes, LOLs, and Longing*. Kindle edition, Loc. 186.

perceived acceptance of others has always been an important issue during adolescence. In the digital age this desire for acceptance takes on new and potentially dangerous meanings. It is estimated that 8 out of 10 students share personal information about themselves with "total strangers" on various social media platforms. This free sharing has directly coincided with significant increases in cyber-stalking, cyber-bullying and cyber-harassment.[70] Even disagreeing with someone else's post presents the risk of being labeled a "hater"[xxiv] or being publicly humiliated and "trolled."[xxv]

Constant connection can have negative side-effects on self-perception as well. Most social media platforms provide a digital window into other people's lives. This access can promote the misperception that others are living more interesting lives "than me." It can promote a fear, "if I am not connected, what I am missing?"[71] According to social media researcher, Donna Freitas, these feelings can turn into behaviors that cause students to distance themselves from the deeper aspects of real-life (and sometimes real life can be painful). In an attempt to appear happy and popular, they may be inadvertently shutting off access to genuine joy. They filter out whatever flaws they may have, to create an ideal image of self."[72]

Seemiller and Grace, who lecture and consult on the topic of Generation-Z, have found that social media may negatively impact patterns of communication. Unlike face-to-face conversations, debates, or arguments, the world of social media is instantaneous rather than cumulative. There exists little room for give and take. Often there is no

[70] Pew Research. *Teens, Social Media, and Privacy*.
[71] Seemiller and Grace, *Generation Z Goes to College*. Kindle edition, Loc. 2023.
[72] White, *Meet Generation Z, Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World*. Kindle edition, p.44.

opportunity to clarify or expound upon an idea or comment before it is taken the wrong way. This dynamic can promote a herd mentality on issues (agreement to get along), and a wait and see strategy of "who can I trust?" In the development of relationships, Seemiller and Grace describe voyeuristic behaviors, (keen to see others' information first, but a hesitance to share openly and honestly about yourself). Students struggle to balance their privately held beliefs and their public profiles, which are often in conflict with one another.[73] The troubling realities of this were captured by a teen author Vivek Pandit when he wrote; "By shifting social communication and life skills to our digital devices, we are losing certain abilities that form the basis of who we are, what we think, what we perceive, how we make the decisions we make, and ultimately the actions we carry out."[74] In the environment of social media, the most frightening thing possible for a college student might be posting something that exposes how they really feel!

This is not to suggest all impacts of social media and technology are bad. According to a study completed by the University of Michigan, social media has also positively influenced personal choices for Generation-Z. For example, the rates of drug use, alcohol use, and tobacco use have all fallen for this generation in comparison to past generations. These results are in part attributed to messaging from social media.[75] Additionally, technology allows for easy exposure to different cultures and world events. Being connected (digitally) has allowed Generation-Z to be connected socially and

[73] Pandit, *We Are Generation Z: How Identity, Attitudes, and Perspectives Are Shaping Our Future*. Kindle edition, pp.11-13,
[74] Ibid., (p. 17
[75] Ibid., p. 48

globally. Global politics and awareness of social justice issues are influencing Gen-Z's attitudes and behaviors. Access to technology and social media has made this possible.[76]

The challenges and opportunities of technology again illustrate how this generation is walking a "tightrope." The Washington Post's E-Book focused on social media and Generation-Z, pointed out that, "Every generation experience advances in technology, while the broader society debates the consequences. That being said, researchers have classified the shifts being experienced by today's students as unprecedented. Every facet of their lives – education, friendship, beliefs, romance, and career – is being shaped by the technology they hold in their hands."[77] By extension, this all-encompassing access to social media and technology is impacting this generation's self-concept, their broader worldview, and their ability to discern meaning and purpose.

Ultimately the impact on today's college students depends greatly on the intent of the person using the tool. A recent study found that negative or positive results of exposure to social media were directly connected to individual activities. There were positive psychological measures associated with social engagement activities, such as "chatting" with friends and "networking," but negative measures associated with solitary activities such as "surfing the net," watching videos, and playing games. The activities consider to be solitary, all resulted in higher scores of loneliness, depression, and anxiety – although these activities seem innocent in nature. Interestingly, the study also found that college students who used social media to seek support for personal issues also

[76] Meehan, M., *The Next Generation: What Matters to Gen Z*.
[77] Washington Post, *Generation Z: What It's Like to Grow Up in the Age of Likes, LOLs, and Longing*. Kindle edition, Loc. 15.

scored higher on these same scales (loneliness, depression, and anxiety), and scored lower on scales measuring social skills, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.[78]

The potential impact on individuals is important, but so are the impacts on our sense of community – particularly on college campuses. In a recent interview with Joseph Mazer, a professor of communication at Clemson University, it was pointed out that social media clearly has impact on communities: "It has the ability to bring communities together or create divisive interpersonal and group conflict."[79] This potential becomes a critical issue in the traditional setting of higher education where face-to-face interaction and transparency are valued and encouraged, but all indications are that technology is pointing us in the opposite direction.

The Influence of Religion and Spirituality on Generation-Z

A recent Pew Research survey estimates the fastest growing self-identifier for Americans in terms of religion is "spiritual but not religious (SBNR)."[xxvi] Based upon the survey, 27% of respondents placed themselves in this category. There are two interesting facts about this finding. First, respondents who self-identify in this category are demographically similar across categories of gender, ethnicity, and age. Secondly, 71% of respondents who identified themselves as SBNR had attended some college or post-secondary education.[80] This suggests college students may be more likely to fall into this

[78]Mastrodicasa and Metellus, "The Impact of Social Media on College Students." The journal of college and character. February, 8, 2013. Vol 14, #1 pp 21-30 (Citation of: Henry, S.K. On social connection in university life. (2012) Jan/Feb pp 18-24.
[79] O'Shea, J. "*The Role of Social Media in Creating a 21st Century Educational Community: An interview with Joseph Mazer".* The journal of college and character. February 8, 2013. Vol. 14 #1 pp.39-46.
[80] Ibid

category and identification. For a growing number of college students SBNR is part of their identity formation. To illustrate how pervasive this religious identity has become, it is estimated that the number of those claiming to be SBNR between the ages of 18-19 is equal to the number who identify as Evangelical Protestants.[81] These statistics are important for educators to acknowledge, "Because college students' complex navigation of identity can be both individual and communal, (educators) need to provide resources and support."[82]

Another trend, mentioned in chapter one, influencing contemporary American religious expression is the phenomenon of the "Nones." These individuals, described as those "who do not" or "whom no longer affiliate" with a specific church or religion, are growing in numbers as well. Pew Research identified this, as "the most striking trend" in American religion of recent years.[83] "Nationwide surveys in the 1970s and '80s found fewer than one-in-ten U.S. adults said they had no religious affiliation. In 2015, fully 23% of respondents describe themselves as atheists, agnostics or nothing in particular."[84] Of those who no longer identified with a church or religion, 78% had previously been active. What influenced these individuals to distance themselves from recognized churches? For approximately half, their "leaving" was attributed to "a lack of belief." Only 20% became "Nones" because of a "dislike of organized religion." Almost equal to

[81] Alper, B.A., & Sandstorm, A. (2016, November 14). If the U.S. had 100 people: Charting Americans' religious affiliation. Retrieved from http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/11/14/if-the-u-s-had-100-people-charting-americans-religious-affilation/

[82] Mendizabal, J.C. (2018) Aligning demographics and resources: A call to support spiritual-but-not-religious college students, Journal of College and Character, 19:1, 79-85.

[83] "Why America's 'Nones' left religion behind, Michael Lipka. http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/08/24/why-americas-nones-left-religion-behind.

[84] "America's changing religious landscape." http://pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape.

that, at 18%, respondents left because they "were unsure about their faith."[85] Identifying as "Nones" or SBNR does not necessarily mean abandonment of the belief in God. It may, however, reinforce how complex spiritual development and religious identity has become. Perhaps because of other factors, this complexity is more keenly experienced by college-aged students.

Does this mean Generation-Z is less religious than previous generations? Surveying used to measure religious activities such as "attending church" and "praying" show that Gen-Z is less likely to take part in these recognized measures of religiosity than older adults, and they are less likely to identify religion as being "important in their lives."[86] According to Michael Hout, a professor of sociology at New York University, millennials and post-millennials (the generational bookends of Generation-Z), are the children of "Baby-boomers." "Boomers" (inclusive) are traditionally recognized as generations who value independent thinking. Considering this, it is not surprising that millennials and post-millennials might have been raised with a "find your own moral compass" mentality. He further suggests that since millennials and post-millennials are "still being raised in this cultural context (by their parents), they are more than likely to have a "do-it-yourself" attitude toward religion.[87] This suggests that the current generation of college students is more focused on "finding their way" than engaged in a wholesale rejection of beliefs or teachings.

---

[85] Ibid.
[86] Masci, D. *"Why Millennials are Less Religious Than Older Americans."* http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/01/08/qa-why-millennials-are-less-religious-than-older-americans.
[87] Ibid.

Generation-Z in an Environment of Spiritual Searching

In 2004, the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) published the now foundational text entitled, "*The Spiritual Lives of College Students: A National Study of College Students' Search for Meaning and Purpose*." The results of this comprehensive study have influenced additional research concerning religiosity and spirituality of college-aged students for more than a decade. Likewise, the findings have informed the attitudes and responses of faith communities and educational institutions alike. Collectively, these efforts continue to help educators understand the context of current college students:[xxvii] According to the study, when a student identified as "strongly religious" or "highly spiritual," they qualified these identities through various measures:

- 75% of the student respondents professed a "belief in God,"
- 40% considered it "essential" or "very important" to follow specific religious teachings on a daily basis
- Respondents ranked prayer as important practice, but it was not as important as performing volunteer work or engaging in activities that promote social justice

These examples pulled from the HERI study strongly suggest a cohort who are serious, engaged, and religiously/spiritually inclined. These possible conclusions, however, seem to be in conflict with reports of shrinking congregational numbers in most faith traditions, and the reported decline in religious behaviors by college students.[xxviii] How can this generation be both highly religious and disengaged at the same time?

Additional findings from the HERI study reveal possible answers to that question. This current generation of college students live with the tension of being both highly religious/spiritual as well as "expressing religious doubts and reservations."[88] Less than half of the respondents in the survey reported feeling "secure" about their ideas and beliefs. I particularly found the following to be informative for this thesis project:

> *More than half of the first-years students in the study reported, "Feeling distant from God and actively questioned their religious beliefs." At about the same percentage, they "disagreed with their families on religious matters" and to a slightly lesser degree had "felt angry at God." Only 42% present of respondents were "secure" in their beliefs, while the remaining respondents fell along a continuum of "doubting, seeking, conflicted, or not interested."*[89]

Questions concerning religion and spirituality are yet another example where dichotomy and paradox exist for Gen-Z. It is not surprising that expressions of religious and spiritual interests cohabitate with feelings of doubt. Whether or not colleges and universities see it as part of their job to assist students in sorting these issues out may be a moot question. Approximately 66% of the students who took part in the study reported their college/university should be focused on helping them gain deeper self-awareness (emotionally and spiritually). Specifically, 48% reported it was "essential" or "very important" for colleges to promote and "encourage personal expressions of spirituality." Respondents recognize the need to develop personal values as part of becoming

[88] Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) summary, 2006. p.6.
[89] Ibid., p.6.

"responsible citizens"[90] [xxix] The reality exists on college campus, however, that "a focus on spiritual interior has been replaced by a focus on material exterior."[91]

Reflecting on these topics (faith development and gainful employment), Jon Dalton and Pamela Crosby encourage educators to listen to their students, and pay attention to the stories they tell. They advise using students' narratives as a means to understand the challenges students face. They also caution against the urge to formulate strategies based solely on empirical data. The question of spirituality is as complex as any issue facing Generation-Z and it cannot be understood solely through quantitative data collection.

In Dalton and Crosby's introductory statements to the *2006 Institute Proceedings*,[92] they use two examples of student narrative to make a point. The first narrative is from an undergraduate thesis project[93] and the second is from research completed by Debbie Nelson[94]. In the first example, Daniel Perez assesses current students' spiritual development as being influenced by a mentality of "self-interest and consumer orientation" that results in an "inclination to create their own personal belief system."[95] This assertion is confirmed by the second example in which a student describes her own belief system stating, "My own religion – it's a cobbled-together, messed-up way of thinking that uses bits and pieces from every religion I know

---

[90] Ibid., p.6.
[91] Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition, loc. 38.
[92] The Institute Proceedings is the annual publication of The Institute of College Student Values. (2006)
[93] Geng, D. *Spirituality Finds Diverse Paths*.
[94] Nelson, D. *Student Spirituality*. http://calstaging.bemidjistate.edu/sities/Spirituality/profiles.html
[95] Dalton, J.C. & Crosby, P.C. *What students tell us about spirituality in college*. Journal of College and Character. July 1, 2003. Vol. 6 #7

something about."[96] In the first example we see the influence that place (college: where one supposedly is learning skills to make a living) potentially has on spiritual development. In the second, we see how access to information from social media, the internet, parental influence, and a lack of guidance can result in confusing belief systems. Are these examples of the "perfect storm" that exists for this generation? In both narratives faith and belief are being cobbled together. I contend this "patchwork" theology is not a result of rejecting, but rather a result of disconnection from support and guidance. Does the national increase of "Nones" provide evidence of how these singular narratives are played out on a large scale?

Over a seven-year period (2004 – 2011), three of the primary researchers involved with the HERI study, collaborated on a new project. This study – which resulted in the publication, *Cultivating the Spirit: How Colleges Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives* – explores the environmental influences of college on the areas of religiosity and spirituality, and how students change over time. The results of this study showed an overall decrease in students' expressions of religious connection (for example attending worship services), but an overall increase in their awareness of spirituality as well as an increased desire to grow in this area.[97] This project picked up where the HERI study left off. It illustrates how students are entering college and how they exit. It suggests that colleges are not responding to a "clearly communicated" desire of students of this generation to reflect on their inner-lives.

---

[96] Ibid.

[97] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*. Kindle edition.

Parental Relationships and Generation-Z

Relationships are complex! Perhaps one of the more complex examples of relationship exists between parent and child. The parent-child relationship for Generation-Z is characterized by J.J. Arnett as being "closer and different" than other generational relationships of this type. One of the reasons Arnett attributes for this dynamic is the parents of Generation-Z (Baby-boomers) have actively "sought to abolish the traditional hierarchy that exists between parents and children."[98] This has led to parents being seen less like authority figures and more like companions.

Research supports this idea of Gen-Z having "extraordinarily close ties with their parents." Technology allows students to connect with parents at all hours of the day and from virtually any location.[99] For many parents, having a close relationship with their child/children means remaining overly involved and controlling. In an unhealthy way, it means being a "helicopter parent" – a term used to describe the type of hovering presence and oversight to which many students have grown accustomed. This generational trend has led to further analysis of parental involvement with college students. One study found 37% more involvement from parents with Generation-Z than with past generations,[100] and 41% of students reported speaking, texting, or emailing parents on a daily basis.[101] This level of involvement and connection has bolstered the mentality of parents to protect

[98] Arnett, J.J. *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from Late Teens Through the Twenties*. Kindle edition, p 65.
[99] Levine and Dean, *Generation on a Tightrope, A Portrait of Today's College Student*. Kindle edition, Loc. 157.
[100] Ibid., Loc. 1427
[101] Ibid., Loc. 1469

their children from any hardship or mistake,[102] both of which are often elements of the learning process.

In contrast, various social scientists address the parent-child relationship in their developmental models. Two such models are Perry's and Kohlberg's. In both, it is natural to expect the parent-child relationship to change over time. The experience of "the terrible two's and teenaged angst" typically melt away to a relationship based more upon mutual respect and feelings of equality. For Generation-Z, this natural evolution seems to have occurred more by design than by the passage of time.[103] In *Big Questions – Worthy Dreams*, Sharon Parks mentions Perry's scheme of intellectual and ethical development (Perry, 1998), and its connection to parental (or other authority figures) roles in identity development. This model acknowledges that our sense of "who we are and what we stand for" is "authority-bound," meaning at certain stages it is attached to something beyond ourselves. For Gen-Z this authority is their parents.[104] Another educational theorist, Ernest Pascarella, refers to Kohlberg's theory of moral development (Kohlberg, 1958), in *How College Affects Students* to analyze parental relationships with their college-aged students. This model asserts it is developmentally appropriate for the relationship between parent and student to shift and grow – eventually developing into a shared positive understanding of one another. In Kohlberg's "good-boy stage," "behavior is guided by a need for approval, particularly from those closest to the individual, typically

[102] Ibid., Loc. 1543-1599
[103] Arnett, Emerging Adulthood - From Conflict to Companionship: A New Relationship with Parents. Kindle edition.
[104] Parks, *Big Questions. Worthy Dreams, Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*. Kindle edition, Loc. 1760.

the parent. For Generation-Z, the question exists if either of these developmental models are still applicable.[105]

The relationship Gen-Z has with their parents is more analogous to relationships typically formed with friends or advisors. Eighty-eight percent of currently college students report having an "extremely close" connection to their parents. Their parents are seen as role models and students hold their parents' "opinions in high regard." More than 50% report seeking their parents' feedback before making important decisions.[106]

For many students, being at college is the first time of being away from their parents for an extended length of time. The influence of technology has changed this experience of separation, compared to past generations' experiences. Traditionally, the transition from parental influence to peer influence will occur during periods of separation. However, because technology and social media makes staying connected much easier, this developmental phase may be delayed or even halted for Generation-Z. "In this age of Facebook, Skype, and Google-Chat…they (students) are never really away."[107] This dynamic was supported in the Clark University Poll (2013) where 55% of students reported having near daily contact with their parents. This degree of communication is influenced by technology, but it's also a result of the changing expectations and dynamics of today's parent-child relationship.[108]

---

[105] Pascarella and Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*. Kindle edition, Loc. 779.
[106] Seemiller and Grace, *Generation Z Goes to College*. Kindle edition, p. 89.
[107] DelBanco, *College: What It Was, Is, and Should Be*. Kindle edition, p. 14.
[108] Arnett, *Emerging Adulthood, The Winding Road from the Late Teens Through the Twenties*. Kindle edition, p. 50.

Culture, Politics, and Economics

In 2001, when planes crashed into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and in a field in Pennsylvania, Generation-Z was barely six-years old, and the majority of those who would eventually make up this cohort had not been born. The knowledge that they have of this event is mainly from television documentaries and history books. So, what have been the events that have shaped and formed this generation?

By 2007, more than half of the generation had been born and the Great Recession had begun. The resulting economic impact would be felt by the families of Generation-Z until the last year of their generational designation. In 2008, Barack Obama became president and this would be the first occupant of the White House this generation could remember. Social issues and technology dominate their history. In 2004, Facebook was launched and from that point an avalanche of social media and Internet access would result. In the same year, same-sex marriage was recognized as legal for the first time. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina ravaged the landscape and took lives. In 2007, a lone gunman killed 32 students and injured 17 more on the campus of Virginia Tech. In 2010, the WikiLeaks scandal unfolded, the BP oil spill occurred, and The Affordable Care Act was passed. This generation has never known the Middle East without American troops or a world without the threat of terror. These are just some of the most familiar events, and pointed out previously, because of technology, not much in the world goes unnoticed by Generation-Z. More recently, they have been affected by the 2016 elections and the ensuing national division as well as numerous incidents of gun violence in schools and at public events which have become all too common place.[xxx]

So, how have these things shaped Generation-Z's attitudes and behaviors? There are multiple ways to analyze that question. One of the professions with a keen interest in this generation is the marketing and branding sector of the business world. This industry routinely tracks generations to predict purchasing behaviors. This is a different and perhaps unsettling lens to evaluate generations, but it has proved effective and accurate over time. According to MSP-C, a national content marketing agency, Generation-Z is very different from Millennials. They are smaller in number – 65 million as compared to 80 million, yet they are much more diverse. Generation-Z are considered "savers" rather than "spenders" – they have less of a consumption mentality, but as consumers they demand fast, cheap, and personalized services and products. Their thrift is a direct result of experiencing the Great Recession. Their attitudes are characterized as being "realistic," "private," and "competitive," as compared to Millennials being "idealistic," "inclusive," and "a belief in everybody winning." This firm again uses the term "digital natives" to describe Generation-Z. This has led to a significant drop in measured attention span, with the average being just 8 seconds, compared to Millennials' 12 second attention span.[109]

Pew Research Center has also tracked this generation and assessed their attitudes and behaviors. Current political attitudes in their research is limited to Millennials but does suggest possible trends for Gen-Z. Looking at the past three generations – Generation X, Baby Boomers, and Millennials – all have similar attitudes concerning the country and its direction. All three had marked pessimism in their youth, and reported having "little confidence" in the future of the nation. This may be a result of being young

[109] What's next now – Generation-Z (quick guide) http://www.msp-c.com/whats-next-now-generation-z

and idealistic. In later surveying, Millennials became nearly split with 49% saying "our best days are ahead of us" and 45% saying "our best days have passed" as a country. Researchers predict this new attitude will meld into the attitudes espoused in the post-millennial cohort.[110]

One of the harbingers of this attitude is the level of activism to which Gen-Z has been engaged. Issues of social justice have moved them to action, and in their college years, Generation-Z has embodied the "reawakened protest movement" in American culture. According to Ruth Milkman, the level of involvement can be tracked to four specific movements; "young undocumented immigrants (Dreamers), the 2011 Occupy Wall Street uprising, the campus movement protesting sexual violence, and the Black Lives Matter movement."[111]

Generation-Z and Higher Education

The history of higher education in the United States mirrors the history of the country in many respects. While focused on the current student cohort and the current state of higher education, it is important to consider the progression of relationship between education and religion. Institutions of higher education have changed, grown, and responded to the changing needs of the populace and culture. These shifts have likewise followed religious and spiritual leanings as well. Immigrants who came to the New World seeking religious freedom established institutions of higher education that

[110] Smith, S. Millennials less confident about nation's future, but so were their parents, grandparents when young. http://pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/02/16/millennials-less-confident-about-nations-future-but-so-were-their-parents-grandparents-when-young/

[111] Milkman, R. A new political generation: millennials and post-2008 wave of protest. (2017) American Sociological Review, Vol. 81, #1 (p.1-31)

supported and furthered the theologies of their various denominations. Harvard College, at its founding for instance proclaimed the mission of, "raising up a literate and pious clergy."[112]

> *"Let every student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the main end of his life and studies is, to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life, John 17:3 and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and Learning."*[113]

Other institutions founded during the same period, expressed the same degree of piety. "In all of them (colleges), with the one exception of Pennsylvania, denominational religion was the strong motivating force."[114] This *force* continued from the Revolutionary War through the Civil War and Reconstruction. During this time period, various denominations and religions oversaw 175 of the 182 established colleges in America.[115]

Higher education in America began to change under Federal influence which often came in the form of court rulings and congressional acts. One of the most important examples was the Morrill Act of 1862. The Morrill Act provided states with the ability to establish colleges and universities (known as Land Grants), and to focus primarily on agriculture and engineering.[116] This decision reshaped the landscape of higher education and created greater access to colleges and universities for a wider range of people. In its wake; however, this change may have unintentionally started the de-emphasis of moral and spiritual development of the student. As Kohlbrenner (1960) assessed, "There are

---

[112] Lucus, *American Higher Education: A history*. p. 104.
[113] Morison, *The Founding of Harvard College*. p. 432.
[114] Kohlbrenner, B. J. (1961) Religion and Higher Education: An Historical Perspective. History of Education Quarterly, Vol. 1, (2), p.46.
[115] Ibid. p. 46.
[116] Noftsinger and Newbolt, *Historical Underpinnings of access to American higher education. New Directions for Higher Education*, No. 138.

more students enrolled in public than in private institutions of higher education. This is an irreversible trend, which will accelerate within the coming decades. American students will attend colleges and universities that by law are forbidden any religious commitment."[117]

Today, most colleges and universities still retain language (some explicit, some not so explicit) that speaks to the type of student they want to "produce" after graduation. In the case of religiously based institutions the *Mission* may be very clear in terms of spiritual or religious outcomes. For non-religiously based schools, spirituality may be hinted at with terms such as "involved, caring, socially aware," or "connecting to your passion and purpose." It is clear higher education in the U.S. has shifted its focus to respond to perceived needs. These *needs*, are often defined by economic pressures (both domestic and international), swayed by technology, demographics, issues of access, and demand. These influences are typically outwardly facing and seldom take into consideration the "inner-life" development of students that attend classes on campuses across the country.

We may be entering into a new period in higher education; however, one that is reenergized around the development of the whole student – mind, body, and spirit. This new movement is informed by *academics* as well as *students*. An example of this movement is the leadership of Arthur Chickering, one of the foundational theorists in student development and an engaged observer of students and of higher education as an institution. He has voiced his concern that "higher education's exclusive emphasis on

[117] Kohlbrenner, B. J. (1961) Religion and Higher Education: An Historical Perspective. History of Education Quarterly, Vol. 1, (2), p.53.

rational empiricism and its increased narrow focus on professional and occupational training, has led to a neglect of larger human and societal issues concerning purpose, values, meaning, and spirit."[118] Chickering is not a theologian, nor is he considered religious, so this indictment is not motivated by any particular faith tradition or philosophy. Rather, it seems Chickering is concerned with institutional incongruence and the impact that has on students and society. He argues that education (even secular education), is not "values free." All institutions express values by what they fund, what they promote and what they display. He points out, "a gap exists between our espoused values and our values in use, and this gap is often large, unrecognized and unarticulated."[119] Steven Glazer does articulate this gap and its dangers in his book, *The Heart of Learning,* when he wrote:

> *"A great irony is that while spiritual indoctrination, in particular, has been banned from our classroom, indoctrination and imposition continues unimpeded. Students aren't indoctrinated into religious liturgy but instead into dualism, scientism, and most especially consumerism. We have been indoctrinated into a severely limited, materialistically biased world view. Rather than learning to nurture and preserve spirit, we learn to manipulate the world: to earn, store, and protect wealth. Rather than learning to be sensitive – understand and attend to the needs of others – we learn to want, rationalize, and do for ourselves. With the rise of a kind of 'economic individualism' as our basic sense of identity has come the centralization of wealth and power, the loss of the commons, and the ravishing of the planet. The fact is, within our schools and culture, identity is being imposed: not spiritual identity but material identity,"* (Glazer, The Heart of Learning, pp. 79-80)

The study conducted by two other leaders in student development, Alexander and Helen Astin, supported the assertion that universities, over time, have noticeably changed

[118] Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition.
[119] Ibid.

their focus and have gradually moved away from overtly addressing issues of character development in favor of the transfer of skills and knowledge that enhance opportunities for employment of their graduates.

This shift does not suggest that character development and spirituality of students is not an important issue to institutions, rather, it points out the reality that colleges and universities (like other industries) have become market driven – meaning enrollment matters, and jobs are important to potential students. In addition, higher education as a sector is under pressure to justify the growing cost of attendance. The federal government as well as parents are demanding a "return on investment." According to the Astin's, student spirituality is still the least studied area of student lives. In short, the lack of focus on students' inner-lives may be more the result of missing data than lack of concern. Their study attempts to show that colleges and universities need to address areas such as self-understanding, empathy, caring, and social responsibility (which are directly connected to a student's concept of inner life) and their eventual success as alumni and graduates. Their study is a call to embrace the development of the whole person, not simply the potential career and paycheck they represent.[120]

Is the college campus of today a place for spiritual exploration? Can spiritual and religious questions be supported in the current context of higher education, or is this just another example of competing tensions? In *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education,* Chickering more clearly defines the issue highlighted by the students in the HERI study. To him, the issue is this – higher education has recently been more

[120] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*. Kindle edition.

focused on developing students' grasp of the natural and material world through science, technology, and medicine. It has paid considerably less attention to the development of students' inner-lives (values, beliefs, maturity, moral decision-making, spirituality, and self-understanding).[121]

Chapter Summery

In this chapter I have provided considerable evidence that our current students (Generation-Z) have been influenced by elements far beyond their control. Technology, new paradigms of parental relationships, global and national politics, social conflicts, and the effects of having immediate access to information have all shaped this cohort. These have in many ways shaped their ideas of religion and spirituality. The changes in higher education are once more highlighted, and multiple examples have been noted which point to at least two competing dynamics. First, higher education is market driven – there is an expected and justifiable need for return on investment. This does not preclude institutions from addressing the inner-lives of students. These are not mutually exclusive ideas. Second, this generation while less attached to formal religious traditions also are more diverse and concerned about social justice. College is a powerful environment to unleash these students' potential for making a difference in the world.

Going through the steps of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm, the context of Gonzaga University and the students who go there have been explored. In this chapter, generational influences (experience) of the cohort, which would have followed them wherever they attended college have been similarly evaluated. In the next chapter

[121]Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition.

(reflection), the question of spiritual development and the proposed act of ministry outlined in the thesis statement will be looked at through various theological and developmental lenses.

END NOTES:

[xvii] Excerpt from *Ignatian Pedagogy: A Practical Approach* (paragraph 35). Under the direction of Vincent J. Duminuco, S.J., Secretary of Education, Society of Jesus, the International Commission on the Apostolate of Jesuit Education created and published this document. 1993.

[xviii] There are numerous monikers for this particular generation. Generally, demographers and researchers assign birth years beginning in the mid-1990s through the mid-2000s to this cohort. Throughout the body of this thesis I have selected Generation-Z or Gen-Z as the identifying label.

[xix] In a report published by Dell Technologies and authored by the Institute for The Future (IFTF), it is estimated that 85% of the jobs which will exist by 2030 have not been invented yet. The panel of experts who developed this report represented technology, business, and academic fields. October 28, 2018.

[xx] The premise of Prensky's article was to show the existence of a communication gap between current students and educators. This gap is vastly different from others that have existed in the past. The cause? Technology has always been a part of current students' lives – they are "native speakers" while educators are "immigrant learners." Like most immigrants learning a "new language," some learn it more quickly and proficiently while other struggle with what Prensky calls "heavy accents." He asserts that students are not just better with technology, they also think and process information differently. He claims the current system of education is attempting to teach these students with a "heavily accented" approach. Prensky's premise raises questions about other systems that intersect with this generation such as religion, politics, and economics.

[xxi] Social media is a "catch-all" term associated with computer or digital applications designed to create communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content such as pictures and videos (Merriam-Webster).

[xxii] Current estimates of social media platforms include Facebook (2004) – 1.35 billion monthly users, Instagram (2010) – 300 million users, Twitter (2006) – 284 million users, YouTube (2005) – 1 billion monthly users viewing 600 billion hours of videos per month. These are the most popular platforms but other options include; Reddit, Pinterest, Spotify, and various "blogging" environments – all designed to create shared experiences based upon interests.

[xxiii] *At what age is the brain fully developed?* Mental Healthy Daily (2015). http://mentalhealthdaily.com/2015/02/18/at-what-age-is -the-brain-fully-developed/

[xxiv] This term goes beyond dislike of a person or statement and connotes a jealousy about another's success. In the social media arena, being a "hater" is often associated with "tearing another down" for no specific reason.

[xxv] This term refers to someone who "lurks" on various social media platforms and makes negative comments without provocation.

[xxvi] "More Americans now say they're spiritual but not religious," Michael Lipka and Claire Gecewicz. Although spiritual but not religious is the fastest growing identifier, far more Americans identified as both spiritual and religious (48%), and those who identified as neither spiritual nor religious were measured at (18%). http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/06/more-americans-now-say-theyre-spiritual-but-not-religious.

[xxvii] This summary is provided as a broad example of the findings reported in *The Spiritual Lives of College Students: A National Study of College Students' Search for Meaning and Purpose.* The numbers reported have been changed to percentages rather than the language used in the original report (for instance, four out of five has been changed to 80%). Additional statistical analysis was not completed from raw data to produce percentages, rather it is an approximation based on the summary report written and published by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and UCLA.

[xxviii] These concerns were documented in follow-up research by Astin, Astin, and Lindholm (2011). These were published after a seven-year study in *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Live* (Jossey-Bass Publishers). Reference the section on "The Academy" in this thesis, chapter one.

[xxix] This is an interesting finding. As noted in the section on higher education context, many of the original charters and missions of colleges and universities in America were connected to the idea of producing moral and responsible citizens. This current generation of college students would not have specific knowledge of this historical "footnote," but have concluded that educational institutions have some responsibility to address this need.

[xxx] This is a partial list of the most "news worthy" events during the years 2004-2016.

Chapter Three – Reflection

Review

In the first chapter of this thesis the context of Gonzaga University was explored. Through examination of various data sets, the mission statement, and Jesuit heritage, the argument was made that students attending Gonzaga have a desire for deeper spiritual exploration, and that the university has an equal interest in providing that opportunity. This project was never intended as an indictment of Gonzaga or to expose shortcomings. To the contrary, if the needs of students are not being met through the traditional offerings at Gonzaga, this serves simply as another example of how higher education has shifted over the last several decades.[122] Gonzaga is not immune to that trend, and despite being a religiously affiliated university (or perhaps because of that affiliation), spiritual development within the student ranks has declined. This statement is not meant to be provocative. From my experience, it is not uncommon for specialized offices on campus – such as campus ministry – to shoulder full responsibility for meeting the needs of students. The rationale goes something like this, "There is a ministry office, so students' spiritual needs are being met through their programs – since Gonzaga is a Catholic university, they have things under control."

In the second chapter, many of the generational influences felt by today's colleges students have been considered. The dynamics of technology, family structures, and the issues of diversity and globalization all have an impact on students' search for meaning and purpose. National trends toward non-affiliation with faith traditions, and the

[122] Small, *Making Meaning: Embracing Spirituality, Faith, Religion, and Life Purpose in Student Affairs*. (2015) Kindle edition, Loc 879.

"church's" hesitation to instruct on the deeper meanings of the gospels, have resulted in the "dumbing down" of religion and the adoption of "patchwork theologies" by many Americans.[123] All these factors taken together – the experience and context of today's college students – produce a confusing landscape for spiritual growth and identity integration of faith.[124]

In this chapter, titled *Reflection*, the task will be to examine developmental theories, theological points of view, sacred texts, and social commentary to determine what guidance these resources provide in determining a way forward in this project. Higher education (or at least institutions of higher education) were not designed or intended to be a replacement for churches or sacred places of worship. College and church are inherently different, and I do not suggest that one take on the responsibilities of the other. The realms of educational and developmental theories are familiar to me and necessary to my daily work. Despite this familiarity, the process of translating theory to practice is often difficult. The intersection of education and spiritual development present the potential for double-praxis peril. In this chapter I will explore three questions. Is higher education an appropriate environment to tackle the complexities of spiritual development? What do sacred and theological perspectives say about community? And, what do social development models say about faith development? This is a relational triad if not 3-dinimional chess! In this chapter, I will seek from each of these areas to support the residential ministry program and the assertions posed in my thesis.

---

[123] McFarland and Jimenez, *Abandoning Faith: Why Millennials Are Walking Away, and How You Can Lead Them Home*. (2017) Kindle edition, Loc. 230.
[124] Drescher, *Choosing Our Religion: The Spiritual Lives of America's Nones*. (2016) Kindle edition, Loc. 265.

Higher Education & Religion

The college setting, in a contemporary understanding, is not a place that instills faith or instructs on doctrine or dogma (unless in the seminary setting). College is, however, a place where faith and beliefs are challenged and lived out by actions, decisions, and relationships.[125] Attending college, (specifically for individuals in late-adolescence entering adulthood) is a time for discovery, growth, and movement toward interdependency.[126] In this section of the chapter, the focus will be on how higher education and spiritual formation intersect. Specifically, how the aspects of college have and could still influence spiritual development

Historically, higher education in America was tightly bound to the concept of faith. According to the Peabody Journal of Education, "Of the 182 colleges founded before 1861 (which are still in operations), 163 where church schools." Additionally, approximately two-thirds of all institutions of higher education in America were founded under religious or church charters. Many of these founding relationships are now historical in nature.[127] If one agrees that religion and spiritual development has significantly waned since our system of higher education began, what are the causes?

Like most complex questions, there is not a singular cause, but rather the cumulative effects of multiple influences. Douglas and Rhonda Jacobsen describe the arch of religion in higher education following a three-step progression of "protestant to

[125] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*. Kindle edition, Loc 1846.
[126] Komives et al., *The Handbook for Student Leadership Development*. (2011) Kindle edition, Loc. 4270.
[127] Gross, "The Church and Higher Education." Peabody Journal of Education (1955) p. 130-142.

privatized to pluriform."[128] The "protestant phase" refers to the founding of colleges and universities with religious affiliation up through the 1950's. During this period religion and topics of faith were generally infused throughout the institution, including statements of mission, purpose, and qualities of character expected in graduates. During this period, two significant things occurred – the growth in the number of institutions of higher learning, and the number of people attending. The <1% of the population who attended colleges in 1700s grew to over 15% by 1950s (this is an exponential increase when you consider the growth in population over that period rather than just the percentage of attendance). Likewise, the number of institutions grew from dozens to nearly 1500 colleges during the same period of time.[129]

The "privatization phase" characterized by "colleges and universities slowly withdrawing religion from more public domains of education and moving the topic to more personal matters for faculty and students to address on their own terms outside academic framework" began to accelerate in the 1960s and was firmly normalized by the 1980s and 1990s.[130] The Jacobsen's claim the current relationship between higher education and spirituality is influenced by changes in American's attitudes toward religion fueled by an increased awareness of the wide spectrum of faiths. This period has also been shaped by a "student-centered" approach to education ushered into higher education during the late 1970s. They have labeled the current phase "pluriformity." The concepts of pluriformity are further supported by Robert Wuthnow's observations on the

[128] Jacobsen and Jacobsen, *No Longer Invisible: Religion in University Education*. (2012) Kindle version, p. 16
[129] Ibid. pp. 24-25.
[130] Ibid. pp. 19-20.

shifting in American religious orientation, which he believes have been developing since the 1960s. He defined this spiritual shift as, "a spirituality of dwelling – the practice of religion within and through the doctrines of organized denominations, to a spirituality of seeking."[131] This "seeking" has resulted in "a spirituality of negotiation" where one seeks personal experiences that reinforce beliefs.[132] These observations ring true, but they also present an opportunity.

As mentioned above, the Jacobson's note a "student-centered" approach as an influencer toward pluralism. This educational method takes into consideration the student's needs and sees the student holistically. In the context of Jesuit education, the term *cura personalis* (care for the whole person) is used. They also believe "multiculturalism and the rejection of objective epistemology" and the emergence of "professional studies" have shaped where we currently are on college campuses in relation to religion and spiritual development.[133] I find these elements interesting. The Jacobsen's present a flowchart that chronicles higher education as being profoundly connected to faith, moving away from spirituality (relegating it to a private/personal matter), and eventually (accidentally perhaps) making spirituality a relevant topic again by centering the student experience, being open to diversity, and rejecting discrimination and bias. It is my estimation, that the student-centered approach and constant access to information and diversity of thought through technology, (pointed out in chapter two),

[131] Wuthnow, *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s*. (2000) Kindle edition, Loc.
[132] Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition, Loc. 745.
[133] Jacobsen and Jacobsen, *No Longer Invisible: Religion in University Education*. Kindle version, p. 18.

have created an opportunity to re-establish a meaningful relationship between spirituality and the college milieu. Others have identified this opening as well.

In the introduction to *College and University Chaplaincy in the 21st Century*, the editor, Lucy Foster-Smith specifically acknowledges the role of diversity on campuses as a justification for renewed focus on spiritual development. She writes, "Universities welcome unprecedented diversity of identities, beliefs, and cultures, creating a rare – and urgent – opportunity to engage differences in conversations of compassion."[134] She continues, "Our work (in meeting students' spiritual needs), places us at the intersection of tradition and innovation, secularity and the sacred, and in some ways, hope and despair."[135] Adding to the importance of seeing students holistically, Chickering connects a student-centered approach, religion, and the university setting. "When exploring the connection between spirituality and higher education, a good way to start is to look at the interior lives of today's students."[136] By saying this, he is firmly identifying the importance of listening to students and responding to their needs. The two issues of diversity and students' experience inside and outside the classroom is refined further by the research completed by the Astin's and Lindholm. Their study showed that spiritual growth was enhanced on college campuses when students were provided the opportunity to experience "multiple perspectives" (not just through campus ministry) where they engaged with diverse people and cultures. Additionally, they found spiritual exploration and growth were directly related and a result of "interdisciplinary studies, service

[134] Foster-Smith, *College and University Chaplaincy in the 21st Century: A Multifaith Look at the Practice of Ministry on Campuses Across America*. (2016) Kindle edition, Loc. 82.
[135] Ibid. Loc. 182.
[136] Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kendal edition, Loc. 33.

learning, interracial interaction, clubs and student organizations, and a student-centered approach."[137]

One of the challenges in answering the question on the appropriateness of spiritual development in the college environment is the history of learning in the classroom environment. Elizabeth Tisdell captures this traditional educational view when she wrote, "Typically, higher education has focused on knowing through rationality. But learning and constructing knowledge is also embedded in people's growth, development and new experiences."[138] Arthur Chickering supports this idea by stating, "Our (colleges and universities) almost exclusive emphasis on rational empiricalism needs balanced by similar concerns for other ways of knowing, being, and doing."[139] He goes further still, suggesting that by incorporating the idea of spiritual development "back" into the fabric of higher education, we would be "recapturing our collective calling, the sense of values and purpose" currently missing in higher education, and by doing so infuse joy, satisfaction, and rewarding experiences to students, faculty and staff.[140] This is significant because Chickering throughout much of his career avoided the topics of values and character development approached through a spiritual lens.[xxxi] Parker Palmer blends the prevenient ideas of learning that Tisdell and Chickering mention and builds upon "the why?" "Our colleges and universities need to encourage, foster, and assist our students, faculty, and administrators in finding their own authentic way to an undivided

---

[137] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*. Kindle edition, Loc. 2430.
[138] Tisdell, *Exploring Spirituality and Culture in Adult and Higher Education.* (2003), p.ix (Introduction)
[139] Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition, Loc. 33.
[140] Ibid. Kindle Edition, Loc. 89.

life where meaning and purpose are tightly interwoven with intellect and action, where compassion and care are infused with insight and knowledge.[141]

Tisdell points out another challenge. She admits that there are numerous definitions of spirituality which can lead to confusion and disagreement from the outset of any conversation or strategy on assisting students in their development. Unlike economics, biology, or mathematics for instance, there are not agreed upon principles or foundations [in spiritual development]. She does address this dynamic and the question of spiritual exploration in the college environment by stating, "Spirituality does not push specific religious viewpoints or agendas. Because of this openness, spirituality is not only appropriate to explore in the context of colleges and universities, but probably the setting is uniquely suited for this type of exploration."[142] She lists seven specific reasons for including spiritual development in college as a focus. Of those, I felt three were of relevance for my project. She believes the pursuit of spiritual development is fundamentally about finding meaning and purpose. Additionally, she argues that spirituality is always present in the learning environment even though it is not often acknowledged by faculty. And lastly, spiritual development leads to deeper self-awareness and authenticity[143].

Theology, the Sacred and Community

It appears that in both Hebrew Scripture and in the New Testament, there exists a preference for faith lived out in community rather than in isolation. In Proverbs for

[141] Palmer and Zajonc, *The Heart of Higher Education, A Call for Renewal*. Kindle edition, Loc. 1084.
[142] Tisdell, *Exploring Spirituality and Culture in Adult and Higher Education.* p. xi (introduction)
[143] Ibid. p. xi (introduction)

instance, “The one who lives alone is self-indulgent, showing contempt for all who have sound judgement” (Prov 18:1 NRSV). As opposed to, “Iron sharpens iron, and another person sharpens the wits of another (Prov 27:17 NRSV). In the New Testament, perhaps a finer point is made, “Let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Heb 10: 24-25 NRSV), or “Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal 6:2 NSRV).

The Old Testament

Broadly and liberally interpreted, the entirety of the Hebrew Bible is the chronicle of God’s people, how they are instructed, guided, and often disparaged by the prophets to become *Israel* – a community of faith. The Jewish nation and their identity are woven together by this sense of community and belonging. This awareness of belonging serves as both a theological foundation and as a mooring to the singular identity as God’s chosen people. Ironically, in Kendra Dean’s book, *Almost Christian,* she captures how this alignment of faith and identity answered many of the questions of meaning and purpose for ancient Jews through the sense of community. “[For] youth like Jacob and Esau growing up at a time when questions like ‘Who are my people? Why am I here? What gives life meaning and coherence?’ were answered, literally, by the faith of their fathers, not by theories of ego development.”[144] She points out that while the need for meaning and purpose are a core need of the human experience, one that we have

[144] Dean, *Almost Christian, What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church*. (2010). Kindle edition, p. 8.

contemporarily turned to "psychology and human development" to address, historically these questions have been the responsibility of "religion to answer, through rituals, traditions, and practices of faith communities."[145]

The New Testament

Consider the example of Jesus's ministry on earth. Essential to starting his ministry, Jesus begins to gather his followers. In the Gospel of Mark, (1:16-20 NSRV), we are told that Jesus sees Simon and Andrew, he instructs them, "Follow me!" and they obey. Through the gospels we learn of twelve individuals who would made up Jesus's earthly companions. This a significant example and pattern of how belief and faith must be experienced – in community with others. This pattern is set not only for times of comfort, but perhaps specifically for times of questioning. Interestingly, the disciples struggled and wrestled with questions of faith/belief even after the crucifixion, but journeyed through the process together.

Today, we experience much the same strife. Whether it is encountering Jesus through a Christian context, or grappling with questions of spirituality in more universal terms, our experiences are not that far removed from the disciples. While Jesus did not expressly say, "band together with others" as an instruction, he does emphasis how others will be recognized as followers. "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 35:13 NSRV). Again, Jesus seems to be setting the pattern, and this pattern is chronicled through the experiences of the disciples.[146]

---

[145] Ibid, Kindle edition, p.9
[146] Burridge, *Four Gospels, One Jesus?* Kindle edition, Loc 645

Today, it is difficult to imagine the early beginnings of what we call the Christian church. The idea of no buildings, no prayers or liturgy, and no weekly announcements is a foreign concept to the contemporary Western mind. The movement inspired by Jesus and animated through the Holy Spirit in the most rudimentary concept, (before the stained glass and cathedrals), was an undertaking of community. The "early church" gathered in private homes, they were friends, families, and companions all struggling together to figure out what faith and spiritual gifts meant. Much of the writings attributed to Paul are rooted in commentary about community and living together in faith. It can be argued that the concept of community is so central to Paul, that it represented Christ's real presence in the world. "For Paul, the community gathered in Christ makes visible Christ's work on the cross."[147]

This claim is further supported by S.C. Mott's commentary on Paul's letters, "In salvation people are called into a new community, which is a new realm of social existence which God is calling forth, a believing and obedient human community founded in God's love and grace."[148] The degree that community becomes central to faith, is perhaps illustrated by (1 Cor. 3:12-13), "Do you not know that you [plural: the community] are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple."[149] This passage suggests that community is "holy" and necessary for God's presence in the world. This idea of community, however, is new! It is not based upon a

[147] McKnight and Modica, *The Apostle Paul and the Christian Life: Ethical and Missional Implications of the New Perspective*. (2016). Kindle edition, p. 28.
[148] Hawthorne, Martin, and Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. (1993). Kindle edition, p. 271.
[149] Sanders, *Paul: The Apostle's Life, Letters, and Thought*. (2015). Kindle edition, Loc. 3896.

dominate culture or power held by a national identity, rather it is community based in shared faith. In commenting on Bruce Hansen's, *All of You Are One: The Social Vision of Galatians 3:28, 1 Corinthians 12:13, and Colossians 3:11* (Library of New Testament Studies 409), Taylor captures the essence of how Paul's influence changed the concept of community and faith. "A new community is envisioned, rather than 'assimilation by the dominate culture' (A+B=A), Paul suggests an amalgamation model where (A+B=C); a new community of faith."[150]

Holy Friendship

The desire and need for community and relationship with others is born not from a human weakness but from our alignment with creation. We are in a sense *called* to be in relationship with others as part of natural order – isolation is where darkness and despair reside, which is antithetical to a creation motivated by a loving God. "The message is clear: what God did for creatures, creatures must now do for each other. No longer is new life attributed to the direct intervention of a hovering God acting in isolation. God's way of bringing forth new life is to enable creatures to bring it forth among themselves."[151]

The concept of community and relationship from a spiritual perspective often gets translated into the term *friendship*. Both St. Ignatius and St. Francis de Sales reference the importance of companionship while journeying along the path of spiritual development. St. Francis de Sales extolls the virtues of friendship as a manifestation of God's love. *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in Unity!* (Psalm 133), and of all the definitions of friendship he identifies in his writings, it

[150] Taylor, *Paul: Apostle to the Nations*. (2012). Kindle edition, Loc. 3881.
[151] Ferder, *Words Made Flesh, Scripture, Psychology, and Human Communication*. p. 21.

is friendship bound in spiritual support and mutual growth that rises above all others.[152]

Likewise, St Ignatius established the Jesuit order (Society of Jesus) around the experience of spiritual companionship and community. "The benefits of walking along the path of belief are clear: faith gives meaning to both the joys and struggles of life. Faith in God means that you know that you are never alone. You know and you are known. Life within a worshipping community provides companionship."[153] St. Ignatius viewed the entirety of creation as an opportunity to encounter the Divine. Rather than religion being isolated behind the walls of monasteries, Ignatian Spirituality asserts that all our human experiences are important – described by Andre de Jaer as "a spiritual realism, ever mindful of the concrete and practical."[154]

In their book, *Companions on the Journey: The Gift of Spiritual Friendship*, Kathleen Brown and David Orr describe the theological significance of being in relationship with others. To them, friendship is both a necessity and a gift. But like St. Francis de Sales, Brown and Orr reinforce the notion that not all friendship lead to deeper self-awareness. Relationships based on love and guided by a mutual hunger for truth and freedom – these are the ones given to us as gifts and these are the ones defined as ministry. It is through these types of ministry that we grow closer to God because we experience deeper connections to God's creation. It is through our shared stories, being present with another, or in what Ignatian Spirituality defines as *accompaniment*, that we

[152] Ross, *Introduction to the Devout Life, St. Francis de Sales*. p. 161
[153] Martin, *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life*. p. 31
[154] Ibid. p. 22

encounter God and Christ in others. "Spiritual friendships help bring people into, back into, or more deeply into the human family, the people of God, the Body of Christ.[155]

One could argue Christianity is a religion uniquely experienced in the context of community – sometimes defined broadly as a denomination, sometimes specifically as a church or worship space, and sometimes by fellowship affiliation such as a youth group or bible study. Seldom does one think about contemporary Christianity as an experience of isolation (not many spiritual hermits or wandering prophets about these days), rather expressions of spirituality and religion are typically with others or for the benefit of others. While the vast majority of faith traditions depend upon people gathering to practice the particulars of their faith, Christianity, I would argue, is dependent upon faith formed in community, grown in community, and practiced in community.

Practical Theology

Practical theology is an academic discipline that examines and reflects upon religious practices in order to understand the theology that is enacted in those practices and in order to consider how theological theory and theological practices can be more fully aligned, changed, or improved. Richard Osmer explains that the four key questions and tasks in practical theology are: "What is going on? Why is this going on? What ought to be going on? And, how might we respond?[156] As described by Osmer, I believe this theological approach is applicable to this project because it: (1) will allowing students to

[155] Brown and Orr, *Companions on the Journey: The Gift of Spiritual Friendship*. p. 4
[156] Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. (2008) p.4.

express their needs for spiritual development in a safe environment, (2) be accompanied on their spiritual development by a peer who understands the perspectives and challenges of being a student, (3) be presented with opportunity to integrate developing values with outward behaviors, and (4) to live in community with others who acknowledge going through the same challenges.

While practical theology is often criticized as over-simplified, it is this approachability that makes it so valuable for the RM project. Practical Theology is intended to made useful and applicable. "Another way of saying it is that it is the study of theology so that it can be used and is relevant to everyday concerns." This program is a joint project with multiple offices on campus. Most of the professional (as well as the students) have a limited awareness of theologies, let alone the ability to apply them or evaluate them in the context of a residence hall. The four question Osmer poses are applicable to any setting. James Fowler (who's faith development model will be discussed below) explains Practical Theology as, "theological reflection and construction arising out of and giving guidance to a community of faith in the praxis of mission."[157]

Social Development and Faith

The setting of a university campus is a perfect "laboratory" for most developmental and social theorists. The more structured environment of the classroom, and the less structured environment of everything else a student experiences, captures the messiness of life in a myriad of ways. In this section I will present a number of social and

[157] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*. Kindle edition, Loc. 96.

development models which have been used in the educational setting. Some of these will not have intersectionality with religious beliefs and practices, while others minimally reference them. There are many influences that contribute to a person's development and identity formation. In this section, I am most interested in focusing on how one commits to their various identities, and specifically for this thesis, how does one begin to develop the identity of being a spiritual or religious person outside of the rubrics of a faith tradition?

To begin, the question must be asked, how is human development and spirituality possibly connected? "Human development can be briefly defined as the physical, mental, and relational changes that occur as human beings are born, mature, age, and die. This definition includes those aspects of the human experience that can be objectified by another. But human beings also have inner-lives."[158] This is the connection! Spiritually and meaning-making are clearly seen as "inner-life" work. It has been described as a core need for human beings, a need that transcends, transforms, and makes whole.

Fowler and Parks

When one thinks of faith development in the purest form, there are two "giants" in the field of faith who are referenced whenever the topic is discussed, these two theorists are James Fowler (1981, 2000) and Sharon Parks (1986, 2000). I would be remised not to spend considerable time exploring how their theories influence the project of residential ministers. Besides subject matter, Fowler and Parks share common academic inspirations and approaches. Some of the names of developmental physiologists who influenced their

[158] Kelcourse, *Human Development and Faith: Life-Cycle, Stages of Body, Mind, and Soul*. (2015) Kindle edition, Loc. 401.

work are; Piaget (1950); Erickson (1968); Kohlberg (1968); Selman (1976); Gilligan (1982); Perry (1970); and Kegan (1982). Both formulated their theories of faith development based upon observation of human subjects and fashioned multi-staged models defined by growth – moving from stage to stage as one matures. Generally, their commonalities diverge these points.

It is important to note that Fowler does not equate faith with the concepts of religion. To him, faith is much broader and more personal. In this respect, his model is appropriate for the college setting, where I have already documented a marked decline in religious affiliation. Additionally, multiple studies related to college students note a shift toward spirituality and the process of "questing" as well as the focus on meaning and purpose.[159] In 1981, Fowler published his foundation work, *Stages of Faith* which outlined his model. For purposes of this thesis, I will include two of the six, based upon anticipated age of obtainment.

In Stage 3, defined as *Synthetic Conventional Faith*, Fowler believes individuals begin to "integrate" their ideas of faith with various outside sources. These sources may include peers, which connects this stage clearly with the RM program and suggests the appropriateness of such an option for exploring spirituality in the college environment. While issues of faith are important for the individual in this stage, it is also important to understand there is a need for external validation. This perhaps is at odds, or at least in competition with the assumptions made by this thesis. Students with defined faith (recall this is not necessarily religious or spiritual faith), will look for external systems that

[159] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*.

validate but not necessarily challenge growth in this stage. Think of the concept of "echo-chambers" – individuals will associate with those external sources that agreed rather than challenge. Fowler believes this stage is reached during early adolescence but individuals may "get stuck" here through adulthood.[160] In stage 4, defined as *Individual-Reflective Faith,* Fowler believes individuals have moved into "self-definition" – meaning they no longer exhibit the need for external validation. In this stage, personal beliefs, values, and commitments are clear. The individual acts upon these commitments in a "public manner" – meaning they are not hidden, but integrated into relationships, affiliations, and work. This stage represents a move toward "meaning making and authenticity."

Obviously, there are observable difference between these stages. Stage four appears relevant to the college setting, but perhaps represents a more advanced stage of development than possible for individuals who are still exploring. In Fowlers earlier work, this stage was plausible for late-adolescents and early adulthood, but in later work he admitted that most adults fail to realize completion of this stage.[161]

In 2000, Fowler published *Becoming Adult: Adult Development &Christian Faith,* in which he expanded his theories on faith development. Relevant to this thesis, he expanded his thoughts to community influence and the ideas of vocation. He stated that it is the "obligation" of faith communities to encourage faith development. This seems to challenge some of the precepts of *Stage 3.* His challenge, however, is based upon his belief that faith is important and is an "organizer" in one's life. As such, individuals should seek out opportunities to explore and discuss ideas of faith. He took these ideas

[160] Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. (1981). pp. 151-173.
[161] Ibid. pp. 174-182.

further by linking his model to concepts of vocation, which for him, meant more than work or career. Fowler places vocation centrally in "every aspect of a person's life." These expanded viewpoints clearly make Fowler's theories applicable to the RM project.[162]

Parks was influenced by many of the same social psychologist as Fowler as noted above, but a primary difference is she was heavily influenced by Fowler himself. Parks took the theories and model that Fowler presented in 1981 and built upon them. Her model and observations are dedicated to young adulthood, specifically when individuals begin to become "self-conscious, and reflect on life's meaning."[163] To Parks, faith development is the active pursuit of "seeking and discovering meaning" in all areas of our lives. The process of growth for her is the process of experience. Here the two philosophies seem to diverge, Fowler's model suggests affiliation based upon inner awareness and need. Parks on the other hand seems to suggest growth occurs through experiences and perhaps challenges. This interpretation is supported when Parks writes, "Faith is validated through lived experience, made public in everyday acts of decisions, obedience and courage"[164]

Because Parks is focused on young adults, her model places higher education in a central role to encourage faith development. She believes that college-aged students "are consumed with questions regarding purpose, vocation, and belonging." Additionally, because of the influence of social media, they are aware of the world around them and

[162] Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian: Adult Development and Christian Faith*. (2000).
[163] Parks, *The Critical Years: Young Adults and The Search for Meaning, Faith, and Commitment*. (1986).
[164] Parks, *Big Questions. Worthy Dreams, Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*. Kindle edition, p. 29.

that are concerned. Parks' model of faith development is multi-phased, and multi-dimensional. She designed the model in a 3-dimensional-like scheme that includes; "forms of knowing, forms of dependence, and forms of community." While her model is not a response to Fowler, she does argue that his premise seems to have a stage missing. She believes that a critical awareness is when individuals begin to take responsibility for themselves (their actions, decisions, and beliefs). This, in her opinion, rarely occurs before the age of 17. For purposes of this chapter, I want to focus on two types of community stages presented in Parks model. Why the importance of community influence? Parks explains that "individuals need familiar and dependable networks of people, places, communities in which to explore their values."[165] Recall the importance of experience and actively seeking challenge and growth attached to her theories.

The first community stage that I believe is directly applicable to the RM project is similar to *Stage 3* in Fowler's model. Parks call this stage *Conventional Communities*, and she argues that adolescents are dependent on others to define themselves and their faith. Individuals will adhere to the values and the cultural norms of the significant people and groups in their lives. This is certainly relevant, and it is easy to see how Parks identifies one of the markers of spiritual development being attached to decision-making and examples of independence. The second example of community is *Mentoring Communities*. This stage represents a portion of the missing stage in Fowler's developmental phases. According to Parks, these types of communities recognize and encourage the potential of the individual. This type of support is typically needed as young adults break away from the influences (values, beliefs, behaviors) of their past. For

[165] Ibid. p. 205.

anyone who has ever gone to college or worked in the college environment, this should hit a nerve. College, as mentioned above, is a perfect environment for this type of growth to be observed.

Kohlberg and Dykstra

Like Fowler and Parks, one name always emerges when the subject or moral development is explored -- Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development is the foundation of multiple complimentary as well as competing theories. Because of the familiarity of Kohlberg to most people exploring models of moral and ethical behavior, a brief exploration is necessary for this thesis. It is my opinion that his theories are informative for the RM project, but not necessarily applicable. Primarily, Kohlberg's model is aligned with judicial ethics. His research is based upon observational data developed from asking individuals of differing ages to respond to a moral dilemma scenario. From these "interviews" he developed a three-stage model of moral development with two-substages attached to each.

For many religious individuals, the topic of morals and moral decision-making is intimately connected to their religious and spiritual beliefs. Kohlberg's model, however, does not align smoothly with theological viewpoints – at least not in its purest form. Because of this, I would rather use Kohlberg's theory as a backdrop. For purposes of this thesis and the RM project, it is my belief that a more relevant expanded approach to moral development is found in Craig Dykstra's *Vision and Character: A Christian Educator's Alternative to Kohlberg*.

I am most interested in Dykstra's expansion of Kohlberg's ideas from a "judicial ethic" to a "visional ethic" that recognizes two important facts: people are sacred mysteries to be engaged not problems to be solved, and life is not a series of huge moral problems. Rather, Dykstra sees life as a series of opportunities to make decisions that encourage and re-enforce moral development.[166] This application of Kohlberg's ideas creates a dynamic of revelation rather than limited growth attached to intellectual ability. "Moral growth takes place when our capacities are brought to bear in particular experiences and patterns of experience." The implications of this are directly connected to how living in community creates these experiences and patterns.[167] This is directly related to the thesis and the anticipates impact of students living in community with a peer equipped to guide and influence decision-making and behaviors.

Bronfenbrenner

The ecological model of human development is perhaps most different from other models in that emphasis is placed on the how the individual experiences their context and the interrelated influences and interconnection of "what is perceived, desired, feared, thought about, or acquired as knowledge."[168] Development is an outcome of the individual's relationship with environment. In chapters one and two of this thesis, the elements of *context* and *experience* were explored as influential determinates for this generation of college student. Bronfenbrenner's development theory supports the notion that growth (in this case spiritual growth) can occur in the residential setting. "The environmental events that are the most immediate and potent in affecting a person's

[166] Dykstra, *Vision and Character, A Christian Educator's Alternative to Kohlberg*. (2008) p. 21
[167] Ibid. p.67.
[168] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development, Experiments by Nature and Design*. p. 9

development are activities that are engaged in by others with that person or in their presence.

Bronfenbrenner would argue that active engagement in, or even mere exposure to, what others are doing often inspires the person to undertake similar activities on their own."[169] This would suggest that engagement in positive activities, behaviors, or relationships with peers would encourage similar behaviors and outlooks to be adopted in the future. Spiritual growth and self-awareness are but one possibility in this dynamic. It could be argued that the same environmental influence exists for more negative behaviors and activities as well. Regardless, the ecological developmental model is directly applicable to the RM program and can be used to justify the projected impacts of peer influence.

Chapter Summary

For over 30 years I have worked in higher education. The topics of educational and developmental theories are familiar to me and necessary to my daily work. Despite familiarity, the process of translating theory to practice is often difficult. The prospect of combining education and spiritual development together present the potential for a double-praxis peril. Nevertheless, the social development theories sited above, and the contents of chapters one and two of this thesis, clearly suggest that college is a period of a person's life that presents a rich opportunity to effect change and growth. I would further state, research suggests students know this, at least internally, and that this knowledge is

[169] Ibid. p. 6

expressed through their incongruent behaviors and beliefs, and by their questing to find meaning.

In the higher education section and the theological section, I contend the argument has been made that spiritual development is more naturally experienced in community with others, and the environment of the college campus is not only appropriate, but needed. In most examples presented in the theological and social development sections of this chapter, an element of action is required or inferred. Growth occurs when ideas become action. Paulo Freire refers to this as true dialogue where truth is spoken to change the world. This change only occurs when people are moved to action past evaluation of ideas. "Human existence cannot be silent, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world."[170] This is what this project is about, motivating a change and moving students from transaction to transformational experiences.

The first three chapters of this thesis project have now laid out evidence and justification for moving forward with the proposed act of ministry. In the chapters that follow, the project will be developed and analyzed. Chapter four will provided the logistical elements, including the job description, hiring process, and expectations placed on the residential minster. Chapter five and six will present the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the predicted impacts and the changes that occur in the communities and with those involved in this project.

[170] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. p. 89

ENDNOTES:

[xxxi] Arthur Chickering is most widely known for his early works concerning student development theories. His Seven-Vectors of Student Development was published in 1969 and included the following tasks: developing competence, mature emotions, movement toward interdependency from autonomy, mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity. Unique to Chickering's theory was the idea that students could "work" in all these vectors simultaneously rather than working through stages of development.

Chapter Four – Action
An Act of Ministry – Residential Ministers

> "*I ask them to stand and close their eyes, and imagine that they are at the center of a busy intersection with traffic coming from all directions. I ask them to imagine there are no stoplights or traffic cops – just oncoming traffic. I ask them to imagine the sounds of the intersection: running motors, screeching brakes, screams and shouts from people on the sidewalk and in cafes. I ask them to visualize the intersection: people moving back and forth with the pulsating rhythm of urban life…the rushing traffic coming toward them from the front, the rear, the left, the right. Then I ask them, 'how do you feel?' Nobody gets out of the intersection alone."*[171]

Action – An Act of Ministry

Recall that this thesis paper follows the five steps of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm. *Context*, the first step (chapter one) provided an overview of the environment of Gonzaga University, a snapshot of the students, and various data that illuminated the spiritual development needs and desires of undergraduates on campus. *Experience*, the second step (chapter two) provided a broad spectrum of external influences on the current student generation. The third step, *Reflection*, (chapter three) offers various lenses from which to view the issue being considered. In this case, the question/problem is student spiritual development, and the programs and support being offered by the institution. This was described as a "gap" that exists between need and response previously in the Introduction to this thesis. This chapter represents the fourth step in the Paradigm and moves me from information gathering to "*Action.*"

[171] Fluker, *Ethical Leadership: The Quest for Character, Civility, and Community*. Kindle edition, Loc. 204-206

One of the benefits of this method is the requirement to think and assess before action is taken. Often, when a problem is identified, the urge is to generate ideas and produce solutions. By following the Ignatian Pedagogy, action (possible solutions) are triggered only after deeper consideration of the issue is completed. The Pedagogy, similar to Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model, recognizes various levels of influence, and reveals how the central focus (in this case students), are affected by micro-systems, culture, time, and events – many of which are unseen or beyond the control of the individual.

In this chapter, action in the form of residential ministers is placed in motion. The content below describes the mechanics, procedures, and details of launching this act of ministry. Ahead, in chapter five (*Evaluation*), quantitative analysis will be provided from data collected from the pre-test and post-tests given to the residents in the RM communities, which represents the final step in the Paradigm. The final chapter of this thesis (*Conclusion and Reflection*), while not a part of the Ignatian Paradigm, will provide deeper evaluation of impact, beyond statistical measures. In the final chapter, the question of how lives were changes, what lessons were learned, and how to proceed will be answered.

Discerning an Act of Ministry

As an administrator, in student affairs, I focus mostly on students' lives outside the classroom. Student affairs professionals experience students in a very different way than our faculty colleagues. In the classroom (which faculty control), there exists a power dynamic; there is a knowledge holder and knowledge seekers; there are evaluations in the

form of grades; and the environment is dictated by the contents of the syllabus. In classrooms, one typically knows what to expect. Certainly, the academic setting allows for creativity and spirited debate – but it is still a controlled setting.

Outside the classroom, a student's experience is more organic. Students control how they spend their time and how they make their decisions. I argue that it is in this environment where students are most challenged to define themselves, clarify what they believe, and determine how they will engage with the world around them. It is in this less controlled setting where worlds collide. "Outside the classroom, learning has the most direct effect on intrapersonal, interpersonal, and existential intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence is concerned with self-knowledge including self-awareness, self-motivation, introspection, and appreciating the conditions of others (Gardner, 1999).[172] In this unpredictable world outside the classroom, anything can happen and it's that unpredictability that causes crisis.

Being present with students during crisis is a sacred space. John Tarrant spoke of it this way, "The journey into a life of awareness begins for most of us in a moment of helplessness…This is a gift that's not to be refused."[173] When you are allowed to witness these moments, or accompany students through them, you realize how true Tarrant's statement can be. Additionally, it is import to acknowledge, "crisis is not (necessarily) a time of panic; it is a decision point – the moment when one reaches an intersection and

[172] Blimling, *Student Learning in College Residence Hall, What Works, What Doesn't, and Why*. Kindle edition, p.65
[173] Tarrant, The Light Inside the Darkness: Zen, Soul, and the Spiritual Life. Kindle edition, p. 27

must turn one way or the other."[174] These types of intersections can be scary places to be, and it's natural to look for help.

The focus of this thesis is how to help students as they journey through questions of spiritual development. In this thesis paper, a clearer picture has been painted of students at Gonzaga University (chapter one), and of the generational cohort to which they belong (chapter two). Additionally, in the last chapter, evidence was provided through both theological and human development lenses that suggest growth is accomplished best with companionship and guidance rather than attempted alone. In this chapter the development of a new ministry will be explored taking all of this information into consideration.

Exploring A New Way Forward

When a student finds themselves in the type of intersection described in the quote at the beginning of this chapter, it is natural to want to assist them. These metaphorical intersections often appear when they have to face the consequences of a decision they have made. In those moments, one of my favorite questions to ask them is, "Tell me how this (decision, choice, incident) relates to who you see yourself being? How does this compare to the image you have of yourself?" This question is typically followed by an extended period of silence as they examine the crossroads – the image of who they are, and the image of who they want to be. Sometimes the gap between these two images

[174] Jones & Abes, *Identity Development of College Students: Advancing Frameworks for Multiple Dimensions of Identity.* Kindle edition, Loc. 1062

seems small, and can be bridged rather easily, and at other times, the gap seems insurmountable. When this is the case, students need help, but where can they turn?

Regardless of where students find themselves in moments like this, it is an invitation for authenticity and a journey toward finding meaning and purpose. As Arthur Chickering put it, "Striving for integrity – for a life where word and deed, word and word, deed and deed are consistent with a personally owned values structure, over time and across contexts – (this) is critical for spiritual integrity and growth.[175] It is an important growth opportunity, prompting students to think about "who they wanted to be," and to evaluate their decisions, their actions, and their relationships. They must ask themselves, "Are these behaviors and decisions moving me closer to the vision I have of myself, or further from that vision?"

As my interest grew to better understanding students' spiritual development, I started speaking more frequently with colleagues about the subject and reviewing relevant research and current articles. One of the most interesting things I found when I began my research, was the different terms being used to describe this area of personal development. I was using terms such as; self-awareness, values alignment, and personal congruency. The larger field of study in spiritual development was using terms such as; meaning, purpose, inner-life, and questing. I was categorizing spiritual development in terms of accomplishment. Researchers were placing spiritual development on continuums.

[175] Chickering, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition, loc. 234-239

What I saw on a weekly basis with my students is what Sharon Parks describes as a hunger – something deep, like a yearning, and less like a philosophical guide for living. She wrote, "Emerging adults' hunger for images of self that promise authenticity along with a mix of competence, excellence, and the finest quality of life."[176] I began to realize I was mistakenly looking at spiritual development through a traditional academic binary – you have a deficit, you learn the skill or knowledge to compensate for that shortcoming and you master the "skill." This awareness made it clearer to me, a time of "re-imagining" how to meet students' spiritual development needs was necessary. It occurred to me that this type of support does not have to occur only in the "crisis of the intersection." Spiritual development support should be available at any time, and a good way of doing that might be by having a peer alongside students – someone who could relate to their life, someone with the same hunger for authenticity, just a bit further along in the journey.

Proposing an Act of Ministry

In January 2015, I met with Michelle Wheatley (Director of University Ministry), and Esther Gaines (Associate Director of Residence Life) to discuss an idea of a joint project between the offices University Ministry and Housing and Residence Life. I described some of my thoughts and concerns about increasing spiritual development opportunities for undergraduate students, and shared my initial vision of establishing a program of "student ministers" or chaplains in residence[xxxii]. I described my observations of students struggling with finding authenticity and briefly spoke about the research I was

[176] Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith.* Kindle edition, loc. 4245.

familiar with. I believed this idea represented a real opportunity to assist students with their spiritual development in a unique way. Ideally, resident ministers (RMs) would be undergraduate student (junior or senior status), who had experience with ministry and spiritual development programing in the past. As Gonzaga has a two-year residency requirement, the vast majority of residential students are freshmen and sophomores. Having upper-classmen serve in this role represented "wisdom-holders" within the community, students who had experienced similar struggles and gotten through to the other side of those struggles.

We agreed during this first meeting that students need additional support and resources – particularly in decision-making and finding purpose. The role of resident ministers could represent a different type of presence to residential students – someone to accompany them during times of struggle, but also someone present on a daily basis simply as a peer. Because RM needed to been seen as equals (peers), it was important that they not be viewed as an authority figure monitoring student behavior. Additionally, we discussed that these positions be more than a "presenters of programs and providers of resources," they needed to be available and skilled at relationship building. This change in approach could represent the beginning of bridging the gap between student needs and institution response. It was our collective hope going into this project, that residential ministers could provide a presence that would positively shape student culture, encourage values clarification, and create a safe environment for students to discuss spiritual development concerns – in whatever form those took.

An exciting aspect of this proposal was the potential to impact students in a different way, in a setting not typically associated with spiritual exploration – the dorms.

From my early years as a professional working in residence life, I knew the residence hall setting is a rich environment to witness the turbulence caused between "espoused values and values at play."[177] In residence halls, students live in an "organic milieu" of change where a different type of learning occurs than in the classroom. Gregory Blimling characterizes it this way, "Student learning in residence halls can be understood as a dynamic process through which psychosocial, neurobiological, and cognitive development occur within the context of an adolescent peer culture defined by the unique characteristic of interpersonal dynamics of the residence hall and the college campus."[178] Thus, Blimling describes another *intersection* – one that is noisy and full of action – full of the potential for students to find meaning and purpose.

The Act of Ministry

As the spring semester began, I started meeting regularly with a team of administrators from both offices – University Ministry and Housing & Residence Life – as final plans were made for these student positions. Various roles and responsibilities were assigned to leaders within the offices, but since I did not work in either of these departments, and this project was outside the scope of my duties, I had no official authority. As a result, I suggested developing a cross-functional "support team" which I would co-chair with the Director of Ministry. This team would meet weekly during the development phase of the project and continue to meet regularly with the resident

[177] Argyris, *Organizational Traps: Leadership, Culture, Organizational Design.* (2010).
[178] Gregory S. Blimling. *Student Learning in College Residence Halls: What Works, What Doesn't, and Why* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2015), Kindle edition, p.84.

ministers during the first year of service. It was also agreed that I would meet individually with the resident ministers for debrief and processing sessions throughout the first year.

Additionally, because of my personal and academic interest in the project, I was given permission to design a "community observation form" and administer a pre-test and post-test to measure impact of residential ministers on the communities in which they lived. These were evaluated and approved by the Institutional Research Board (IRB). Approval of this project is found in the thesis appendices as **(Appendix A)**.

The Resident Minister

In late March 2015, a final residential minister job description was approved **(Attachment 1)**. Supporting documents which outlined specific responsibilities of the RM were also development and approved. These documents are labeled Resident Minister Responsibility Tracker and On-line Tracker Form **(Attachment 2 & 3)**. Additionally, it was decided that resident minister positions would be placed in a dual-reporting structure. Primary responsibility for daily supervision was given to the Office of Housing and Residence Life. RMs were also categorized as part of a larger team of student leaders within UMin, specifically as an extension of the *SALT* Program for Student Assistants.[xxxiii] Because of the affiliation with *SALT*, the applicant pool was limited to students with prior significant experience in Mission and Ministry programming. Interested students were asked to submit applications and were invited to a multi-stage interview process. The application and candidate evaluation forms used for

evaluation during the interview process are found as attachments to this chapter. **(Attachment 4 & 5)**. Logistically, RMs were embedded within the residence hall staff alongside resident advisors (RA), and supervised by live-in Hall Directors.

Both the RA and the RM roles had complimentary programming and community development responsibilities on their hallways. The most significant difference between responsibilities was RMs were not held accountable for policy enforcement or conduct documentation.[xxxiv] It was hoped this would influence students' perception of RMs – perhaps making students feel safer disclosing information about behaviors and decisions they had made. For instance, underage drinking is always a concern, and a predictable experience for college-aged students. The RM would not be required to document a student for underage possession or consumption, unlike the expectations of an RA.

It was proposed by Housing & Residence Life to pilot the RM program in a limited number of communities, and several residential placement options were selected. The goal for the first year was to hire and place three RMs. Compensation was aligned with what RAs were paid during this time period. Students would receive a private room and a full meal-plan for the term of their employment. This represented approximately $12,500 per RM. The cost for room and board was represented by a credit to RM's student accounts covering full costs, rather than a transfer of funds. In addition, a small stipend of $500 per semester was provided for total yearly compensation of $14,000.[xxxv] The stipend was paid in $250 increments at mid-term and at the end of the semester. RMs were required to returned to campus in mid-August along with other student leaders and began intensive training to prepare for residence halls to open for the general

undergraduate population. This training schedule check-list is found as attachments at the end of this chapter. **(Attachment 6 & 7)**.

On August 28th, first-year students checked into their residence halls. Two days later, upperclassmen were allowed to move back to campus. For the first time in residential experience, two communities welcomed residential ministers. Over the next nine months these RMs worked alongside their colleagues in Residence Life and the Office of Ministry. They presented programs, attended meetings, and provide an alternative experience of accompaniment and spiritual exploration to the students in their charge.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the justification for residential ministers has been outlined. The decision to establish the RM program was based upon a combination of four elements (1) Gonzaga student context, (2) generational influences, (3) theological and developmental guidance, and (4) my new awareness of spiritual development being more of a "questing" than a "skill deficit."[179] The contents of this chapter describe the offices involved in the development of the residential minister position – the job description, responsibilities, interview process, and training schedule. In chapter five, "Evaluation," the impact of the RMs is assessed by statistical analysis to determine how the RM program affected change within their communities. A deeper qualitative assessment of the program is presented in the concluding chapter. The conclusion also contains "lessons learned" during the various stages of the project – planning, implementation, and the consideration of continuing the

[179] Parks, *Big Questions. Worthy Dreams, Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*. (2011).

program. Unanticipated influences that effected the program will be discussed as well as reflections on how individuals, teams, and the writer of this document were changed over the 17 months of the first year of this act of ministry.

Attachment 1:

2015-16 Residential Minister (RM) Job Description

2015-2016 Residential Minister
Purpose and Goals

- To integrate mission, ministry and the Residence Hall experience
- To increase access to spiritual and faith resources, especially for students who identify as "spiritual" and/or "seeker" more than "religious"
- To create physical space for spiritual and faith nourishment
- To "demystify" spiritual development and make it easier to integrate spiritual practices into the student lifestyle
- To create a culture in which students aspire to "ministry" as leadership in the Gonzaga community

Position Roles and Expectations

The Residential Minister (RM) position is a partnership between the Office of University Ministry and the Office of Housing and Residence Life. The position is designed to give students a formational experience in spiritual leadership through campus and residential ministry. This position is considered part of University Ministry's *SALT* (Student Assistant Leadership Team) but also includes special duties associated with the residential community in which they live. The general duties of this position include:

1. Actively participate in all University Ministry *SALT* and Residence Life events and trainings.
2. Help to connect residents with spiritual resources and support.
3. Creating spaces and opportunities within the residential community for spiritual conversation, education, prayer and faith community.
4. Make a commitment to live within a residential community on campus.
5. Communicate regularly with University Ministry and Housing and Residence Life regarding the environment and needs of the residential community.
6. Minister to and mentor student peers.
7. Demonstrate maturity and strive to model an integrated and holistic life

Attachment 2:

RM Responsibility Tracker 2015-16

The specific responsibilities of Residential Ministers are:

1. **"Take-To" (3-5) per Semester:** RMs bring residents to a campus or community event that is already planned. Events should be advertised and sponsored through recognized university groups or organizations. Off-campus events must be reviewed by supervisor to determine whether attendance qualifies as a "take-to" and count toward requirement.

2. **Events (3) per Semester:** RMs plan, implement and assess events in their respective community.

3. **Open House (1) per Semester:** RMs provides an opportunity for residents to meet them, locate their rooms/apartments, and touch base.

4. **Theme Builders (3-4) per Semester:** Theme builders reinforce community and a sense of place. They contribute to the ambience of the community and create a sense of home without requiring much from residents. Examples include ongoing passive events ("Secret Santa," letters to self, random acts of kindness, March Madness brackets), interactive bulletin boards, words of encouragement, and hall apparel and decorations.

5. **Small Groups/Relational Ministry/Retreat Follow-Up:** RMs develop strategies to better know their residents and explore how they can be of service to both individuals and the community. When it makes sense, RMs will lead one or more small group discussion in their hall. RMs will engage in one-on-one ministry when appropriate, and will follow up whenever possible with residents who have participated in an on- or off-campus ministry.

6. **Promoting University Ministry/Spirituality Programming:** RMs assist in communicating with residents about on- and off-campus opportunities for spiritual growth.

7. ***SALT* Formation Meetings:** The goal of *SALT* Formation meetings is to facilitate meaningful reflection and conversation around a pillar of University Ministry's mission and vision. The content and sharing contribute to the formation and empowerment of the student ministers. These gatherings also provide insight into what additional resources may be necessary to equip the students to be more effective leaders.

8. **Weekly Reflection Meeting with UMin, RDs and/or Student Development:** The purpose of these meetings is to reflect on the experience of serving as an RM, to discuss matters of business associated with the role, to check in about the spiritual well-being of the RMs, and to build community among those invested in this ministry.

9. **Monthly Written Reflection:** RMs write monthly reflections on their work and experiences, including ministry joys and challenges, and feedback about the position and training.

10. **Weekly Residence Life Staff Meeting:** RMs determine with their RD how they will participate regularly in Block meetings in order to build community with Residence Life staff members and discuss life in the halls.

11. **On-Call Assistance:** RMs will be notified of particular student needs and concerns (as determined with their RD) so that they may provide additional pastoral support.

    Dates/Specific Commitments:

    Some of the ***SALT*** specific time commitments for this position include:

    - Pre-Orientation First Retreat Crew Meeting: April TBD
    - Orientation: April TBD
    - New *SALT* Dinner: April TBD
    - "Passing of the Torch" *SALT* End-of-Year Celebration: April/May TBD
    - Office Training/Ministry Orientation/Pre-Orientation First Retreat: August TBD
    - Orientation Weekend and Welcome Masses: August TBD
    - *SALT* Formation Nights: October, November, February and March TBD
    - *SALT* Christmas Event: December TBD
    - *SALT* Retreat: January TBD
    - "Passing of the Torch" *SALT* End-of-Year Celebration: April/May TBD

    Some of the ***Residence Life*** specific time commitments for this position include:

- Summer Training Week #1: August TBD
- Winter Training: January TBD
- Weekly Staff Meetings (TBD)

Compensation/Support: All RMs are required to live on campus in the residence hall community to which they are assigned. RMs receive a waiver for housing and meal plan costs.

Evaluation/Assessment/Accountability: RMs report to Office University Ministry but will also collaborate with the Housing and Residence Life department. In this relationship, the UMIN team provides supervision, training and support to all RMs, while the Residence Life team provides access to the residential students, space, and hall communities. Although RMs report directly to University Ministry, they will also go through a review process with their local Residence Director and should maintain positive, collaborative and professional relationships with all Housing and Residence Life staff.

Attachment 3:

RM Responsibility Tracker (electronic form)

Resident Minister Responsibility Tracker **(***As an electronic form, you may fill-out on each requirement and another will appear)*.

Name:

3-5 "Take-To"
RMs bring residents to a campus or community event that is already planned or being presented by another office/resource. Off-campus events should be evaluated to determine whether attendance qualifies as a "take-to" requirement.

1. Date: Title:
   Notes:

3 Events per Semester
RMs plan and implement event. Must state events purpose and assess its success.

1. Date: Title:
   Notes:

1 Open House per Semester
RMs provide opportunities for residents to meet them, locate their room/apartment, and touch base.

1. Date: Title:
   Notes:

3-4 Theme Builders per Semester
Theme builders reinforce community and a sense of place. They contribute to the ambience of the community and create a sense of home without requiring much from residents. Examples on-going passive events (secret Santa, letters to residents, random acts of kindness, March Madness brackets), interactive bulletin boards, words of encouragement, hall apparel and decorations.

1. Date: Title:
   Notes:

Small Group/Relational Ministry/Retreat Follow-up
RMs develop strategies to better know their residents and explore how they can be of service to both individuals and the community. When it makes sense, RMs will lead small group discussions in their hall. RMs will engage in one-on-one ministry when appropriate, and will follow up whenever possible with residents who have recently participated in an on-or-off campus ministry event.

Notes:

Promoting University Ministry/Spirituality Programming

RMs assist in communicating with residents about on-or-off campus opportunities for spiritual growth.

Notes:

Friday Reflection Meetings with UMin, RDs, and/or Student Development.

The purpose of this meeting is to reflect on the experience of serving as an RM, to discuss matters of business associated with the role, to check in about the spiritual well-being of the RMs, and to build community among those invested in this ministry.

Notes:

Monthly Written Reflections

RMs write monthly summaries of their work and experience, including ministry joys and challenges, and feedback about the position and training.

Notes:

Weekly Residence Life Staff Meeting

RMs participate regularly in Block meetings in order to build community with Residence Life staff members and discuss life in the hall.

Notes:

ATTACHEMNT 4:

SALT APPLICANT INTERVIEW 2015/2016
RESIDENTIAL MINISTER

INTRODUCTIONS:

JOB PERCEPTION AND EXPECTATIONS:

1. Why do you want to work in University Ministry? What makes you nervous or hesitant about being an RM?

2. Other than helping with specific programs, what do you think Residential Ministers contribute to the mission of the University?

PERSONAL CHARACTER:

1. If a student came up to you during a ministry retreat or one of our programs and asked, "What do you believe in?" how would you answer them?

2. Over the past year or so, what do you think has been the greatest area of personal growth in your life? Where would you like to see more personal growth and development?

MISSION AND UNIVERSITY MINISTRY

1. Can you describe for us how your own personal life fits in with the overall mission of University Ministry? Would working with University Ministry mean making any changes in your lifestyle?

2. If you had to describe to a friend why University Ministry is important to the Gonzaga community, what would you say?

3. Could you talk about which UMin programs you've been involved with and how you've benefited from them?

LEADING OTHERS IN FAITH

1. What strengths do you feel you have that would help you to promote the spiritual formation and faith development of Gonzaga students?

2. Could you talk a little about what it means to you to be a spiritual leader? What personal qualities do you think are most important for a spiritual leader?

3. How comfortable are you in leading others in group conversations? Have you had experience leading others in prayer? How comfortable are you with that?

4. In observing our campus community, can you identify factors that you think detract from a culture of physical and spiritual health and well-being on campus, and what can we do in University Ministry to improve such a culture?

A SCENARIO

- You have scheduled and organized a campus-wide conversation about the faith life on our campus in the Globe Room at 7 pm. Dr. McCulloh said he would be there at the beginning to open the conversation with a prayer. But his assistant has just called you to say the President will be delayed at least 30 minutes. What are you going to do?

TEAM FIT

- All of our RMs will be expected to be contributing members of our University Ministry team. What strengths do you feel you would bring to the team? What challenges do you experience working on a team?

- The *SALT* members are considered interns and are supervised by various staff members. Can you describe something you learned from working with a supervisor? How do you like to be supervised? How do you like to communicate with a supervisor?

FOLLOW UP/APPLICANT-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

CLOSING QUESTIONS

1. We have a list of dates when we will need *SALT* members to be ready to participate in scheduled events. (Show the list of dates.) Do you foresee any conflicts with these?

2. Do you have any other significant time commitments planned for the coming academic year?

3. Do you have anything you would like to ask us about *SALT*, Residential Ministers, or University Ministry?

Attachment 5:

Student Minister Interview Evaluation Sheet

Student Minister Interview Rating Guide

Applicant: _____

Interviewer: _____

Candidate's Preferred Placement: C/M - Coughlin - DeSmet - Madonna - Welch

Overall Impression: _____Candidate does not seem suitable at this time.

_____ Candidate has the qualities and capabilities for this position.

On a scale of 1(low) to 5 (high): please rate this candidate's overall standing _____.

I would recommend placement in: C/M - Coughlin - DeSmet - Madonna - Welch

Ability Being Evaluated	Candidate Rating:	Comments:
Understands and appreciates what it means to be a resident minister and the responsibilities that go with it.	___ High ___ Moderate ___ Low	
Possesses the spiritual maturity and personal integrity to serve as a resident minister.	___ High ___ Moderate ___ Low	
Would represent the mission of UMin and GU accurately and appropriately.	___ High ___ Moderate ___ Low	

Seems capable of being recognized as a leader and spiritual companion by other students.	___ High ___ Moderate ___ Low	
Displays a willing and generous spirit to serve and be present to others.	___ High ___ Moderate ___ Low	
Shows creativity and enthusiasm for both programming and relational ministry	___ High ___ Moderate ___ Low	
Would serve as an active, participating member of *SALT*	___ High ___ Moderate ___ Low	

Attachment 6:

Resident Minister Orientation/Training Planner 2015/2016

Aug 16th: Check-in and Move into residence halls
5pm – Dinner with Residence Hall Staff

Aug 17th: **Theme: Contemplative**

7am – Breakfast
8am – Welcome and Prayer (Icebreakers)
9am – Preparing for silence (Praxis of Prayer)
10am-12pm – Listening and Paying Attention
12noon – Lunch
1pm – Begin Silence (Silence to be kept until Lunch tomorrow)
6pm – Dinner in silence
7pm – Loneliness and Shalom

Aug 18th: **Theme: Contemplative**

7am – Breakfast
8am – Morning Prayer
9am-Noon (Continued silence kept)
12noon – Lunch and break silence
1pm – What is Ministry
2pm-5pm – Telling your story (written during silence)
5pm – Dinner

Aug 19th: **Theme: Transition**

7am – Breakfast
8am – Morning Prayer and Stories
9am-12pm – 2X2 Scripture activity
12noon – Lunch
1pm – Alcohol training & education with RA Staff
2pm – Staff orientation with Hall Staff
3pm-5pm – Workshop: Student's Experiences in Dorm Living
6pm – Praying over the "Stories"
7pm – Dinner with Hall Staff

Aug 20th **Theme: Action**

7am – Breakfast
8am – Morning Prayer
9am – CAR Orientation
10am – Student Minister Journals
11am – Individual Expectations

Aug 20th	12noon – Lunch 1pm-3pm – Group Expectations 3pm-5pm – Group Activities (Putting yourself out there) 5pm – Hopes and Goals 6pm – Dinner (on own)
Aug 21st	(ALL DAY) Community of Leaders Retreat
Aug 22nd	11am – Sexual Misconduct & Title IX training 12noon – Lunch 1pm-7pm – SALT Retreat at Bozarth Mansion
Aug 23rd	(ALL DAY Prep-time)
Aug 24th	(Half-Day Prep-time) 3pm-6pm – Training Closing and Banquet (all staff)
Aug 25th	(ALL DAY) Residence Halls Open – Check-in

Attachment 7:

Checklist of items to cover with Residential Ministers

1. Introduction to Eric Baldwin and his role in the process
2. A confirmation of the logistical details of move-ins – Housing & Residence Life
3. Some selected readings – TBD
4. Some categories to consider for their ministry:

    a. Introductions/Building Rapport
        - Orientation Weekend
    b. Visuals
        - Door Decorations/Welcome
        - Interactive Prayer Wall
        - Marketing Materials
        - Advertising/Getting Students Connected
        - UMin (University Ministry)
        - List of Community Partners
    c. Conversation Group(s) Ministry
    d. 1-on-1 Ministry
    e. Office Hours
    f. Worship Spaces
        - Campus Opportunities
        - Carpools for Off-Campus
    g. Crisis Ministry
    h. Celebration Ministry
    i. Mission Retreat Follow-up
    j. Educational Programming
    k. Collaboration with Jesuit-in Residence/Partners in Ministry

ENDNOTES:

[xxxii] As the structure of these positions became more fleshed out, it was agreed to call them Resident Ministers (RM). In planning sessions with students, we were given feedback that there was initial confused about what these positions were for. Because we have Jesuits in residence as well, students asked if these RMs were in training to become priests? Since one of the first RMs was planned to be a female student, even more confusion arose (in context for a Catholic Jesuit University). It was agreed to keep "minister" as part of the job title to emphasize the capacity of anyone to minister to another person in need.

[xxxiii] From the Gonzaga University Mission & Ministry Website, (SALT) - SAs (Student Assistants): Students are involved in helping with all aspects of Mission and Ministry, including retreats, liturgies, office management, hospitality, and group prayer and sharing (CLC) - Christian Leader Community. These SAs form a close-knit community, supported by the Mission and Ministry staff and two chaplains who meet with them monthly for fellowship and meals. Before the school year begins they gather at the Bozarth Center for a retreat together and then help direct the Pre-Orientation First Year Retreat. Before second semester begins, SALT has a second overnight retreat in Wallace, Idaho. Members of SALT receive a bi-semester stipend, based upon the nature of their ministry. https://www.gonzaga.edu/-/media/Website/Documents/About/Our-Mission-and-Jesuit-Values/SALT-job-description-2018.

[xxxiv] RMs not being involved with conduct/policy enforcement was an intention decision. It was agreed that students needed to be able to speak candidly with the RM about their behaviors and decision-making without fear of reprisal. Only in the most serious circumstances were RMs required to document behaviors. These fell into "harm to others," property damage, or instances of sexual misconduct covered under Federal Title IX requirements. (Resident Ministers are not recognized under Title IX as confidential resources).

[xxxv] Three RMs were originally hired in the process. Prior to returning for training, one individual resigned their position, wishing to live off-campus with friend their senior year.

Chapter 5 – Evaluation

Project Scope

The purpose of this thesis project is to examine a new opportunity for students to explore spiritual development beyond programs offered through the office of university ministry. Central to this project is the idea of how peers influence spiritual development in residence hall environments.

This chapter will focus on the data collected from corresponding pre-test and post-test given to the residents in communities where residential ministers (RMs) were placed for the academic year 2015-2016. Communities with resident ministers had approximately 24 students in their immediate charge. RMs also worked with the staff of resident directors and resident assistants to provide programming and support for the entire building. A control community without an RM included approximately 36 students, this community was also provided with a pre-test and post-test.

Pre-tests were administered in the three communities (resident minister-A, resident minister-B, and the control community-C) during the first 14 days of the Fall semester (2015). The test consisted of 30 questions to establish a baseline from which to judge any eventual relative change in six pre-determined criteria focused on spiritual and inner live development. These six areas were: (1) decision-making - parental/peer influence, (2) values clarification, (3) behaviors of spirituality, (4) sense of meaning and purpose, (5) time and community, and (6) awareness of personal change.

Prior to final exams, Spring semester (2016), an identical 30 question post-test was administered to provide data to assess the of influence of the residential ministers. In

addition to the original questions in the pre-test, 10 questions were added to the post-test to allow respondents to provide feedback on their year and on the RM if respondents were members of community A or B.

While the pre-and post-tests were confidential and voluntary, the instruments were numerically identified. This assured the same student completed both the pre-and post-test. If post-tests were not completed, the corresponding pre-test was not used in the assessment of this project. Likewise, students who moved out of the community or into the community during the assessment period were not included. As a result, fully completed sample sizes for each community were 20 (community-A N=20, community-B N=20, and community-C N=20)—a total of 60 of the 84 residential students with complete survey data.

In this chapter, I evaluate the impact of the residential ministers on their communities through the lens of data from these surveys. This evaluation provides one perspective by which to consider the original hypothesis posed in the thesis statement regarding student change. I address further qualitative areas of evaluation (the experience of the RMs and the process of planning and implementing this project) in the final chapter.

Impact of the Residential Minister – The Survey

In this evaluation, the pre- and post-test serve as the primary sources of information. I will consider statistically supported change as well as experiential and observational impact. I designed the survey used in the pre-and-post-test to measure topic

areas similar to those used by Astin, Astin, and Lindholm[180] and identified in past research as relevant influences on spiritual growth.[xxxvi] The pre-test survey instrument included a total of 30 questions. The post-test included additional questions (10 for communities with RMs and 7 for the comparative community).[xxxvii]

The instrument evaluated six specific *areas of measure*: (1) decision-making/parental and peer influence, (2) values clarification, (3) behaviors of spirituality, (4) sense of meaning and purpose, (5) connection to community, and (6) awareness of personal change. The instrument was broken out in the following way:

Area of Measure	Number of Questions
1 – Decision Making and Influence	5
2 – Values Clarification	10
3 – Behaviors of Spirituality	6
4 – Sense of Purpose and Meaning	5
5 – Connection to Community	5
6 – Awareness of Change	6
* Relationship with RM	3

For complete pre-test and post-test, refer to: (Attachments: Pre-test Residential Survey and Post-test Additional Questions).

[180] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*.

We coordinated approval and evaluation of the instrument through the Office of Institutional Research (Attachment: IRB Approval), and trained resident assistants (RAs) and residential ministers (RMs) on presenting and collecting the surveys.[xxxviii] RAs/RMs presented pre-tests during a "community meeting" where students were offered the opportunity to complete the survey while in attendance or to take them back to their rooms. Pre-test surveys were administered and collected during the first two weeks of the Fall semester. Post-tests were similarly presented to the sample communities and collected during the two-week period prior to final exams in the Spring semester.

Tests were numbered and RAs/RMs kept track of who received which test. Corresponding post-tests were similarly managed. Particular attention was paid to incomplete or missing pre-tests, those students were removed from post-test distribution in the Spring. Likewise, incomplete or missing post-test instruments in the Spring were removed from the analyzed data-set.

Statistical Analysis

In this section are the statistical findings from the pre-and post-tests. The information following is the summary of findings for each of the six areas of measure. I completed all statistical calculations using the Excel add-in, *MegaStat*.

A two-factor (2 x 3) Analysis of Variance was conducted for five of the measures (decision making and influence (DMI), values clarification (VC), sense of meaning and purpose (SOMP), behaviors of spirituality (BOS), and time and community (T+C)) to evaluate the effects of living in a particular community on the mean scores of each measure of pre-tests and post-tests. The two independent variables for each measure are

the community in which the participants resided (Community A, Community B, and Community C) and the timing of the assessments (pre-tests = beginning of the academic year and post-tests = end of the academic year).

The means of the scores of each measure as a function of the two factors are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Mean Scores of Decision Making and Influence

	Community A	Community B	Community C	Total
Pre-test	2.2	2.7	2.7	2.5
Post-test	2.5	2.5	2.9	2.6
Average	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.6

Mean Scores of Values Clarification

	Community A	Community B	Community C	Total
Pre-test	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.5
Post-test	2.5	2.6	2.9	2.7
Average	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.6

Mean Scores of Sense of Meaning and Purpose

	Community A	Community B	Community C	Total
Pre-test	2.7	3.0	3.5	3.1
Post-test	2.9	3.0	3.7	3.2
Average	2.8	3.0	3.6	3.1

Mean Scores of Behaviors of Spirituality

	Community A	Community B	Community C	Total
Pre-test	3.2	3.1	2.8	3.0
Post-test	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1
Average	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.1

Mean Scores of Time and Community

	Community A	Community B	Community C	Total
Pre-test	1.9	2.2	2.5	2.2
Post-test	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Average	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.1

A test for normality, examining skewness, indicated that most of the data were statistically normal. Because the sample sizes within each measure were identical, homogeneity of variance was assumed. Consequently, the appropriateness of the two-way ANOVA was confirmed. We used an alpha level of 0.05 for analysis.

Area of Measure 1 – Decision Making and Influence Results

Based upon the overarching thesis of this project, we predicted that students living in communities with a residential minister would become more independent and confident decision-makers as compared to those students living in the community without the residential minister. The following four Likert-scale questions were included in the DMI area of the questionnaire:

Question	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Q1. When making decisions, I rely on my friends…	Never	Infrequently	Depends	Frequently	Always
Q3. How influential are your beliefs, values, and morals when making decisions?	Very influential	Influential	Less influential	Not influential	Depends
Q7. I value my friends' opinions.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q9. My actions and opinions should not	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ depends	Agree	Strongly agree

be anyone else's concern.					

The results for the two-way ANOVA of the DMI measure indicated a significant main effect for community, $F(2, 474) = 4.73$, p=.009 but not a significant main effect for timing of assessment nor for the interaction between community and timing of assessment (see Table 2).

Table 2

Two-way Analysis of Variance for Mean Scores of Decision Making and Influence

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p-value*
Timing	2.27	1	2.269	1.78	.1830
Community	12.08	2	6.040	4.73	.0092
Timing x Community	4.06	2	2.031	1.59	.2046
Error	604.74	474	1.276		
Total	623.15	479			

Because the main effect of community was significant, we completed post hoc analysis for the community variable (see Table 3).

Table 3

DMI p-values for pairwise t-tests for Community

		Community A 2.4	Community B 2.6	Community C 2.8
Community A	2.4			
Community B	2.6	.0839		
Community C	2.8	.0023	.1821	

The only significant difference was found between communities A and C.

We further examined the differences among the three communities and the timing of the assessments separately. Among the mean pre-test scores, the only significant difference was found between communities A and B, p=.021 and communities A and C, p=.018. Furthermore, a paired observations t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in the mean pre- and post-test scores in community A, p=.021.

The following forced-ranking question was included in the DMI area of the questionnaire:

> Q2. Rank the following items in importance, from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important). When I make important decisions, I rely on the following to guide/help me:
> ___ My parents/family
> ___ Peers and friends
> ___ Beliefs and Values
> ___ Myself
> ___ Data for Research/reading

To analyze the ranking results, we calculated the mean pre- and post-test rankings for each area of influence for the three communities (see Table 4).

Table 4

Q2. Comparison of pre- and post-test mean influence ranking by community

	Parents	Peers	Beliefs	Myself	Data
Community A					
Pre-test	2.95	3.10	2.50	2.20	4.15
Post-test	2.50	2.95	3.30	1.55	4.70
Community B					
Pre-test	2.10	3.20	2.45	2.70	4.60
Post-test	2.45	3.45	3.00	2.20	3.90
Community C					
Pre-test	2.60	3.35	2.85	2.15	4.05
Post-test	2.65	3.05	3.00	2.00	4.40

All three communities identified “myself” as the greatest influence when making decisions (i.e., lowest mean ranking). This option grew in strength over the academic year for all communities, with the largest increase being recorded in Community A. Parental influence was listed as the 2nd strongest influence in each community by year end. Interestingly, “beliefs and values” lost influence for all communities over the course of the academic year.

Area of Measure 2 – Values Clarification Results

Based upon the overarching hypothesis of this project, we predicted that students living in communities with a residential minister would exhibit commitment and clarity to their values at a greater level as compared to those students living in the community without the residential minister. The following eight Likert-scale questions were included in the VC area of the questionnaire:

Question	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Q5. It is impossible to be a “good person” without some idea of values and morals.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q6. I do not care about what other people do, as long as it does not affect me.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q8. I do or say things that I later regret.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ depends	Agree	Strongly agree
Q10. My actions and behaviors are always in alignment with my beliefs and values	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Q11. If asked, I can describe what I believe and what my values are.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q12. What I say I believe and value publicly is exactly the same as what I believe and value privately.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q13. I have strong ideas of what is right and just, and I make all of my decisions based upon that knowledge.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q14. Truth is relative – what is right for one person may not be right for another person.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ depends	Agree	Strongly agree

The results for the two-way ANOVA of the VC measure indicated a significant main effect for timing of assessment, $F(1,954) = 4.55$, $p = .033$ and for community, $F(2, 954) = 6.97$, $p = .001$ but not a significant main effect for the interaction between community and timing of assessment (see Table 5).

Table 5

Two-way Analysis of Variance for Mean Scores of Values Clarification

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p-value*
Timing	5.40	1	5.400	4.55	.0333
Community	16.56	2	8.282	6.97	.0010
Timing x Community	3.61	2	1.803	1.52	.2197
Error	1,133.43	954	1.188		
Total	1,159.00	959			

Because the main effect of community was significant, we completed post hoc analysis for the community variable (see Table 6).

Table 6

VC p-values for pairwise t-tests for Community

		Community A 2.5	Community B 2.5	Community C 2.8
Community A	2.5			
Community B	2.5	.3648		
Community C	2.8	.0003	.0074	

We further examined the differences among the three communities and the timing of the assessments separately. Among the mean post-test scores, the only significant difference was found between communities A and C, p=.001 and communities B and C, p=.002. Furthermore, a paired observations t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in the mean pre- and post-test scores in community C, p=.001.

The following two forced-ranking questions were included in the DMI area of the questionnaire:

Q4. To what level have the following influenced your belief system, from 1 (most influential) to 5 (least influential):

___ My parents/family

___ Peers and friends

___ Your religious beliefs/opinions

___ Classes you have taken

___ Cultural norms/societal expectations

Q28. When I think about my values, the following is important: (please rank)

___ What others will think

___ Being true to self

___ Being true to principles/religious beliefs

___ What feels good at the time

___ How it affects others

To analyze the ranking results, we calculated the mean pre- and post-test rankings for each area of influence for the three communities (see Tables 7-8).

Table 7

Q4. Comparison of pre- and post-test mean influence ranking by community

	Parents	Peers	Beliefs	Classes	Social
Community A					
Pre-test	1.50	2.65	3.25	3.90	3.65
Post-test	1.80	1.60	4.30	4.15	3.15
Community B					
Pre-test	2.15	2.65	2.65	3.75	3.70
Post-test	1.85	3.30	2.30	4.10	3.45
Community C					
Pre-test	1.60	2.35	3.15	4.55	3.40
Post-test	1.70	2.25	3.10	4.50	3.45

Parents/family was clearly identified as the strongest influence on belief systems for all three communities (i.e., lowest mean ranking). Community A ranked "friends" as slightly more important during the post-test. "Religion/beliefs" was listed as the 3rd most influential across the three communities in both the pre and post-test.

Table 8

Q28. Comparison of pre- and post-test mean influence ranking by community

	Others Think	Self	Beliefs	Feels Good	Affects Others
Community A					
Pre-test	3.40	2.05	3.35	3.10	3.10
Post-test	3.65	1.35	4.15	3.20	2.65
Community B					
Pre-test	3.80	1.40	2.90	4.05	2.85
Post-test	4.00	1.50	3.05	3.65	2.80

Community C					
Pre-test	3.35	1.80	3.40	4.10	2.35
Post-test	3.25	1.85	2.75	4.70	2.45

The idea of being "true to self" was clearly identified by all communities as being most important (i.e., lowest mean ranking). Significant strengthening of this selection was exhibited by Community A during the post-test period.

Area of Measure 3 – Behaviors of Spirituality Results

Based upon the overarching hypothesis of this project, we predicted that students living in communities with a residential minster would report higher participation rates in attending church, volunteering, and active prayer practices as compared to those students living in the community without the residential minster. The following six Likert-scale questions were included in the BOS area of the questionnaire:

Question	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Q15. Spiritual growth and development is important to me.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q18. I am a spiritual person.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q19. It is important to be involved with charity and care for others.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q20. Social justice is important to me.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q23. I make time to worship and pray.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q24. I make time to take part in charity work or volunteer to help others.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The results for the two-way ANOVA of the BOS measure did not indicate a significant main effect for timing, for community, or the interaction between community and timing of assessment. However, a paired observations t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in the mean pre- and post-test scores in Community C, $p<.000$.

Area of Measure 4 – Sense of Meaning and Purpose Results

Based upon the overarching hypothesis of this project, we predicted that students living in communities with a residential minister would have a clearer sense of meaning and purpose in their life as compared to those students living in the community without the residential minister. The following four Likert-scale questions were included in the BOS area of the questionnaire:

Question	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Q16. I make time to reflect and think about my life and what is important to me.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q17. I have a strong sense of meaning in my life (i.e., knowing what my life is about, potential, direction).	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q21. Living in community with others is difficult	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ depends	Agree	Strongly agree
Q25. I have a strong sense of integrity.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The results for the two-way ANOVA of the SOMP measure indicated a significant main effect for community, $F(2, 474) = 16.41$, $p<.000$ but not a significant main effect for timing nor for the interaction between community and timing of assessment (see Table 9).

Table 9

Two-way Analysis of Variance for Mean Scores of Sense of Meaning and Purpose

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p-value*
Timing	1.52	1	1.519	1.05	.3057
Community	47.40	2	23.700	16.41	.0000
Timing x Community	1.05	2	0.525	0.36	.6955
Error	684.76	474	1.445		
Total	734.73	479			

Because the main effect of community was significant, we completed post hoc analysis for the community variable (see Table 10).

Table 10

SOMP p-values for pairwise t-tests for Community

		Community A 2.8	Community B 3.0	Community C 3.6
Community A	2.8			
Community B	3.0	.0947		
Community C	3.6	.0000	.0001	

We further examined the differences among the three communities and the timing of the assessments separately. Among the mean pre-test scores, the only significant difference was found between communities A and C, $p<.000$ and communities B and C, $p=.040$.

Area of Measure 5 – Time and Community Results

Based upon the overarching hypothesis of this project, we predicted that students living in communities with a residential minister would have a more positive experience of community as compared to those students living in the community without the

residential minister. The following Likert-scale question was included in the T+C area of the questionnaire:

Question	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Q22. It's more important to have a small group of friends than to try to get along with everyone.	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/ depends	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The results for the two-way ANOVA of the T+C measure did not indicate a significant main effect for timing, for community, or the interaction between community and timing of assessment.

The following four forced-ranking questions were included in the T+C area of the questionnaire:

Q26. Living in community is important because it teaches: (please rank)

___ Getting along with others

___ Finding shared values

___ Greater self-awareness

___ Integrity

___ Appreciation of diversity

Q27. When I have free time I like to: (please rank)

___ Hangout with friends

___ Play video games

___ Volunteer my time

___ Be alone

___ Other (describe)

_____

Q29. Living with a large number of people in a residence hall is difficult because of: (please rank)

___ The drama of community

___ The rules

___ I prefer to be alone

___ I can't be myself and do what I'm comfortable with

___ Others seem to value things that I don't

Q30. Living with a large number of people in a residence hall is good because: (please rank)

___ I've been challenged to re-think some of my values/decisions

___ I like community

___ It's never boring

___ I've made new friends

___ It has influenced me in a positive way

To analyze the ranking results, we calculated the mean pre- and post-test scores for each area of influence for the three communities (see Tables 11-14).

Table 11

Q26. Comparison of pre- and post-test mean importance ranking by community

	Getting Along	Shared Values	Self-Awareness	Integrity	Diversity
Community A					
Pre-test	1.85	2.70	2.80	3.15	4.45
Post-test	1.70	3.60	2.40	3.10	4.20
Community B					
Pre-test	2.50	3.45	2.45	3.65	2.95
Post-test	2.65	3.15	1.90	3.50	3.80
Community C					
Pre-test	1.95	2.80	2.90	3.30	4.05
Post-test	2.05	3.70	1.40	3.20	4.75

Communities A and B remained consistent with their pre and post rankings. Interestingly, Community C selected "greater self-awareness" at a stronger level of importance than either of the two other communities.

Table 12

Q27. Comparison of pre- and post-test mean importance ranking by community

	Time w/ Friends	Videos/ Social Media	Volunteer	Alone Time	Other
Community A					
Pre-test	1.40	3.15	4.60	3.30	2.55
Post-test	1.50	2.60	3.65	3.35	3.90
Community B					
Pre-test	1.35	4.45	3.20	2.35	3.65
Post-test	1.20	3.60	2.95	2.95	4.30
Community C					
Pre-test	1.20	3.85	3.05	3.60	3.30
Post-test	1.05	3.35	3.60	4.40	2.60

Not surprisingly, all three communities selected time spent with friends as most important (i.e., lowest mean ranking).

Table 13

Q29. Comparison of pre- and post-test mean importance ranking by community

	Drama	Rules	Like Being Alone	Conforming/ Not Self	Different Values
Community A					
Pre-test	3.00	2.40	3.75	2.85	3.00
Post-test	2.20	1.95	4.00	3.45	3.40
Community B					
Pre-test	1.75	2.85	3.55	3.75	3.10
Post-test	2.40	2.35	3.65	4.00	2.60
Community C					

Pre-test	2.50	1.65	4.00	3.35	3.50
Post-test	2.80	1.50	3.55	3.60	3.55

All three communities remained consistent over the academic year with their selection of what makes living in community difficult. Additionally, all three communities grew in their strength of selection.

Table 14

Q30. Comparison of pre- and post-test mean importance ranking by community

	Rethink Values	**Like Community**	**Never Boring**	**New Friends**	**Positive Influence**
Community A					
Pre-test	3.90	3.05	3.00	2.05	3.00
Post-test	4.45	2.30	2.75	2.00	3.50
Community B					
Pre-test	3.75	1.95	3.10	2.80	3.40
Post-test	3.10	2.40	3.20	2.35	3.95
Community C					
Pre-test	3.85	2.30	3.50	1.75	3.55
Post-test	4.45	2.20	2.80	1.40	4.15

All three communities indicated that "making new friends" is one of the best things about living in community (i.e., lowest mean ranking). The degree of strength varied across the communities with the strongest commitment to this being identified by Community C.

Area of Measure 6 – Awareness of Change Results

Based upon the overarching hypothesis of this project, we predicted that students living in communities with a residential minister would have a keener awareness of growth during the year as compared to those students living in the community without the

residential minister. The following three Likert-scale questions were included in the AOC area of the questionnaire (post-test only):

Question	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
Q34. I experienced something this year that has helped me to become a better person.	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Q37. I have personally experienced a positive change this year (feel better about who you are).	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Q38. I have experienced personal change this year that as made me feel uncomfortable or too challenged (made decisions that were against you previously held values).	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

A one-way Analysis of Variance was conducted for one measure (awareness of change (AOC)) to evaluate the effects of living in a particular community on the mean scores of that measure. The independent variable for the measure is the community in which the participants resided (Community A, Community B, and Community C).

The mean scores and standard deviations of the AOC measures for each community are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Awareness of Change

Mean	*n*	*Std. Dev*	*Community*
3.6	60	1.13	A
1.6	60	0.78	B

2.6	60	0.96	C
2.6	180	1.24	Total

The results for the one-way ANOVA of the AOC measure indicated statistically significant differences in the mean scores across the communities, $F(2, 179) = 58.92$, $p<.000$ (see Table 16).

Table 16

One-way Analysis of Variance for Mean Scores of Awareness of Change

Source	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p-value*
Treatment	110.28	2	55.139	58.92	.000
Error	165.63	177	0.936		
Total	275.91	179			

Because the differences among communities was significant, we completed post hoc analysis (see Table 17).

Table 17

AOC p-values for pairwise t-tests

		Community B 1.6	Community C 2.6	Community A 3.6
Community B	1.6			
Community C	2.6	.000		
Community A	3.6	.000	.000	

This analysis revealed that there were statistically significant differences in the mean scores between communities B and C, p<.000 and between communities B and A, p<.000 and between communities C and A, p<.000. Community B reported the lowest

awareness of change, μ=1.6 while Community A reported the highest awareness of change, μ=3.6 and Community C fell in the middle, μ=2.6.

The following four forced-ranking questions were included in the AOC area of the questionnaire (post-test only):

Q31. Living in community has positively affected my decision-making in the following ways: (please rank)

___ A – It has made me question my decisions more deeply

___ B – I am more confident in my decisions

___ C – I purposely integrate my values into decisions

___ D – I've changed the way I make decisions

___ E – I feel more independent in making decisions

Q32. Living in community has affected my ideas of morals and values in the following ways: (please rank)

___ A – I strongly believe in the tenet, "Who am I to judge others."

___ B – Morals and values guide my decision-making

___ C – It is all relative – morals and values depend on the circumstance

___ D – I think more about the type of person I want to be

___ E – My ideas about morals and values haven't changed

Q33. Living in community has affected my interest in spiritual development in the following ways: (please rank)

___ A – It hasn't changed for better or worse – my interest level is the same

___ B – I am more interested in my own spiritual development now

___ C – I am less interested in my spiritual development now – it is not a priority

___ D – I have become more active in my spiritual development and seek opportunities to grow

___ E – Others have helped me question and explore issues of faith

Q40. Rank the responses from 1 through 5 (with 1 being most important and 5 being least important), when considering possible outcomes of attending college in importance to you. (Attending College helps me…)

___ A – To become prepared for a good job that pays well

___ B – To become prepared and equipped for positive lasting relationships with others

___ C – To learn more about myself and what type of person I want to become

___ D – To find balance in my life between what I value and who I am

___ E – To be prepared to make a difference in other's lives.

To analyze the ranking results, we calculated the mean rankings for each question for the three communities (see Tables 18-21).

Table 18

Q31. Mean ranking by community

	Question Deeper	**Confident In**	**Value/ Decisions**	**Changed Way**	**Independent**
Community A	3.90	2.25	4.00	2.65	2.20
Community B	3.50	2.75	3.55	3.20	2.00
Community C	4.30	1.85	2.75	4.50	1.60

While all three communities chose the same top two responses ("confident in" and "independent"), Community C selected these at a higher ranking of importance (i.e., lower mean ranking) than the other communities. Interestingly, Community C chose "integration of values" in their decision-making as a close 3rd choice – this intentional inclusion of values was much lower in ranking by either Community A or B.

Table 19

Q32. Mean ranking by community

	Who am I to judge	Values Guide	All Relative	Type of Person	No Change
Community A	3.85	2.65	2.50	2.00	4.05
Community B	2.40	3.45	3.10	1.75	4.30
Community C	1.85	4.15	1.60	3.60	3.80

This question was asked only in the post-test survey, as such, there is no pre-test comparison. Communities A and B selected the same response as most significant – related to the person. Community C conversely, selected the option aligned with situational considerations.

Table 20

Q33. Mean ranking by community

	No Change	More Interested	Less Interested	More Active	Help from Others
Community A	1.80	2.45	3.85	3.95	2.95
Community B	2.75	2.20	4.15	2.85	3.05
Community C	2.85	3.10	2.75	3.50	2.60

This question was asked only in the post-test survey, as such, there is no comparison to a pre-test measure. Community A, showed no increase in interest, while Community B reported more interest. Interestingly, Community C identified that "others have helped me question and explore issues of faith" at a much higher rate, although no residential minister was assigned to that community

Table 21

Q40. Mean ranking by community

	Good Job	Relationships	Self-Awareness	Balance	Make a Difference
Community A	2.15	2.75	2.45	3.35	4.30
Community B	3.55	3.45	3.10	2.60	2.30
Community C	1.90	2.95	2.35	3.45	4.35

Communities A and C ranked "getting a job" as the most significant reason for attending college, while Community B selected "making a difference in others' lives." This suggests that Community B was influenced by the presence of a residential minister within their community.

Relationship with RM Results

While not an indicator of spiritual development, it was anticipated that students living in communities with a residential minster would report the experience as positive and given the opportunity to live in a similar community, would use that resource more next time. Three questions were. The following three Likert-scale questions were presented to assess the student experience with the residential minister resource:

Question	5	4	3	2	1
Q35. I personally met and got to know my resident student chaplain.	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Q36. The resident student chaplain helped me this year when I needed someone to talk with.	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Q39. If I had a resident student chaplain in my residential community in the future, I would seek	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

them out for guidance and support more often that I did this year.					

This measure was intended to highlight the satisfaction each member of the communities had with their respective RM (see Table 22).

Table 22

RWRM Means and Standard Deviations

Community A	Community B	
3.63	3.75	mean
1.16	1.14	std. dev.
60	60	n

To see if there was a difference in the mean scores of the RWRM measure between Communities A and B, we completed an independent groups t-test. This test did not reveal a statistically significant difference in the mean scores between communities, p=.581.

Evaluation Summary

The original thesis stated for this project is partially supported by the statistical analysis performed on data supplied through the pre-and post-test surveys. There are mixed results that indicate growth in communities with residential ministers, as well as in the community used as a control. Going through the areas of measure individually, the following results were observed:

Decision-Making & Influence (DMI): Community A's mean pre-test score was lower than both Community B and C. At the end of the year, Community A's has a statistically significant increase on its mean score, indicating growth in this area.

Values Clarification (VC): Community C's mean post-test score was higher than both Community A and B. At the end of the year, Community C had a statistically significant increase in its mean score, indicating growth in this area. Community C did not have a residential minister assigned to the community.

Behaviors of Spirituality (BOS): There were no differences observed between community's (A, B, or C) pre-test or post-test scores. There were no indications of growth in this area. All measures were statistically equal.

Sense of Meaning & Purpose (SOMP): Community C rated its pre-test meaning and purpose higher/more positively than both Community A or B. Community C continued to rate is meaning and purpose higher in post-test scoring. However, there was no statistically significant measure observed indicating no growth in this area.

Time & Community (TC): Similar to the observations in behaviors of spirituality, there were no differences and scores amongst the communities and no indication of growth in this area.

Awareness Change (AOC): This area of measure was included only in the post-test instrument; thus, a one-way ANOVA was used to analyze the data. Community A indicated the highest awareness of change, Community B indicated the lowest level of change, and Community C fell in the middle of that range.

Relationship w/ Residential Minister (RWRM): This area of measure was also only provided in the post-test instrument. Additionally, these questions were provided

only to participants with Residential Ministers assigned to their communities. Both Community A and B rated their relationship and experience of the RM positively.

The mixed results of the statistical tests, make one wonder to what degree the presence of an RM influenced change? The extent to which both communities experience of their RM was similar is difficult to assess from a pre-test/post-test dynamic. In the end, we are evaluating two different residential settings, made up of more than 50 students, involved with two individual residential ministers. These three communities shared multiple variables, none of which were really "fixed" in the true sense.

The human element and unexpected influences seem to have had significant sway over this project. In the final chapter, many of these will be assessed, and additional question will be posed in an attempt to make sense of the results from this yearn and prepare for improvements where potential exists. The value of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (which has provided the directional flow of this project), is that it repeats upon itself. The findings will provide the foundation of context; context will influence the understanding of experience; together these require reflection to inform possible next actions, and so it repeats.

[xxxvi] The items identified in areas of measure are constant with questions presented in the CIRP Survey of Freshmen Year experience and the Senior Survey – both administered through UCLA.

[xxxvii] RM communities were asked to evaluate their interaction and connection to the RM in the additional 10 questions of the post-test. The comparative community was not provided with these – thus the difference in total questions (40 vs. 37).

[xxxviii] As a requirement through Institutional Research, any resident given the survey would be informed of the study, how the information would be used, and how their identities would be protected. Any student wishing to discuss the survey was provided with my name and contact information. No student requested additional information. All students were also informed that participation in the pre-test and post-test was strictly voluntary.

Thesis Conclusion and Reflections on The Residential Minister (RM) Program

Looking back with clarity that hindsight affords, gives me the opportunity to evaluate the Residential Minister (RM) program beyond technicalities (chapter four), and statistical measures (chapter five). Ultimately, this program was made possible through the efforts of many people, and to some degree everyone involved felt its effects. Afterall, that is what any "acts of ministry" is about – affecting positive change for those to whom the act is focused, as well as for those who acted as ministers.[181]

The focus of this thesis has been the spiritual development of college students, and how peers affect that growth. Personally, it has also been a journey motivated by my Christian beliefs about community. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ. No Christian community is more or less than this. Whether it be a brief, single encounter or the daily fellowship of years, Christian community is only this. We belong to one another only through and in Jesus Christ."[182] For me, this captures the crux of how I approach my profession. I am not an ordained minister, I am an educator. I believe my "ministry" is to develop communities where belonging, compassion, fellowship, and love exist. Timothy Sedgwick interpreting Paul's letters to the church in Corinthian connects one's work (outside the context of the ordained) to this mission, "It is through work we share in common life in which we come to know the love and care that we can only describe as the work of God's grace among us."[183] Whether or not my students or colleagues identify as Christian is unimportant, I

[181] Root, *Christopraxis: A Practical Theology of the Cross*. (2014). Kindle edition, Loc. 2087.
[182] Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*. (1949). Kindle edition, Loc. 94.
[183] Sedgwick, *The Christian Moral Life: Practices in Piety*. (2008). Kindle edition, Loc. 2401.

am not trying to convert them or evangelize. I accept that it is through Christ that my work is possible, and this project is a tangible instance of me living into that consciousness – an awareness that enables me to understand my work as ministry.

Thesis Statement Revisited

Early in this thesis (introduction), I posed the question, "Do college students have to journey alone?" The residential minister program was an attempt to respond to that question. My thesis statement reads:

> Students at Gonzaga University express a desire to engage more deeply in areas of personal development that include; spirituality, morals, character, and values, but the opportunities to do so are generally limited to programs offered through University Ministry or similar offices. By meeting students where they are and in a setting that represents a safe space (their living environment), and by offering support through a credible recognized mechanism (a peer), students will be allowed to question and struggle with the process of making meaning not only of their own lives but also developing a more mature articulation of what values animate their decision in the context of community.

The premise of the RM program was that a peer influence in the residential setting—one who could connect, support, and challenge residents from a spiritual, moral, and values perspective—would affect positive change in behaviors identified as markers of spiritual growth.[184] Specifically, these markers were identified as the following:

> (1) decision-making/parental and peer influence – increased awareness of interdependence, (2) values clarification – increased ability to identify motivation, (3) behaviors of spirituality – increased participation in worship, prayer, volunteerism (4) sense of meaning and purpose – ability to identify direction and impact (5) connection to community, and (6) awareness of personal change.[185]

---

[184] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*. Kindle edition.

[185] Parks, *Big Questions. Worthy Dreams, Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*. Kindle edition.

In the first half of this chapter, I devote considerable attention to the RM program beyond statistical findings and quantitative measures. This evaluation will emphasize qualitative data and personal narratives related to the planning and implementation phases, which informed the eventual program continuation. I discuss important lessons learned over the last year and identify opportunities for improvement.

The second half of this chapter takes a turn both more personal and more systemic, focusing on how the RM program impacted the working relationship of members on the support-team, the RMs, and me. An additional section will address unforeseen circumstances that effected this project, and another will identify topics for future learning. It is my belief that the contents of this chapter will present useful insights for any individual working toward ministerial goals and/or better teamwork. Beyond the particulars of the RM program and its results, this chapter is a reminder about the influences of leadership, shared vision, trust, and communication, and how these impact acts of ministry.

The End in Mind

To begin this synopsis, it is important to admit that despite planning and intentionality, this project was always a leap of faith, where "building the plane as we flew it" was more the norm than the exception. Now, as the academic year 2015-16 ended, the first year of residential ministers (RMs) at Gonzaga University also ends. This culmination does not mean stopping, however, work continues prior to next academic year. Similar to the liturgical seasons of the church, the academic calendars of universities are correspondingly predictable. As such, an epilogue-ish statement can be

made; the University has committed to continuing the RM program for the foreseeable future.

The decision to continue this program was made prior to final evaluations being completed – including the community port-tests. Through executive review, it was determined the RM program represents a sustainable alternative outreach program to address the spiritual development needs of our students. Additionally, the RM program was recognized as a "model of collaboration" that broke down silos between offices and provided an opportunity to share in "mission-centric" work.[xxxix] Estimates at this point anticipate doubling RMs (from two to four) for academic year 2016-17, and to eventually growing the RM team to eight positions. As this project is on-going, and as I am still involved, I will keep my comments and reflections in this portion of the thesis paper focused on the time period between January 2015 and August 2016.

Procedural Reflection

The Residential Minister (RM) project began months prior to it being officially launched in September 2015. From the beginning of this project through its completion (first year), there were multiple phases collectively lasting 17 months. In this section of the Conclusion, I will examine more closely the three distinct phases of: (1) planning, (2) implementation, and (3) program continuation. It is my belief that ministry (of any type) is more transformational than transactional. The lack of consistent spiritual growth (statistically speaking) within the communities with RMs does not minimize the impact this program had in other ways. I recognize that the RM program was just one possible stimulus within the multiple microsystems that influence students' spiritual development.

Transformation and growth can occur in multiple ways throughout the ecological system that places the student in the center.[186] In the sections below, I present the challenges and successes of the residential minister program, discuss the personal and systemic lessons learned, and, I hope, inspire an interest in future learning by others.

Reflections on the Planning Phase – Lessons Learned
February through August 2015

Recall, the roots of this project began organically, growing from discussions I had with students who were wrestling with the incongruency between "who I see myself being" and the actions/decisions that often brought them to my office. Based upon these conversations with students, and research on the topic of spiritual development in college students, I developed the concept of the residential minister (RM). In January of 2015, I spoke with a group of colleagues at Gonzaga University about the RM idea, and asked them to think about how a program like this could benefit our students. By February, a small group of administrators began working together to launch the residential minister program and the planning process began to take shape. Fast forward to April 20, 2016. On that day, three of the original members of the RM project leadership-team met for a half-day retreat to evaluate the RM program; how we had worked together; what mistakes were made; and how to improve the program moving forward.[xl]

The first topic on the agenda for discussion, were roles and responsibilities. From the start, there had been several issues related to this topic – some were challenging while others instances felt very collaborative. Concerns over leadership, ownership, community expectations, and the RMs themselves were identified as subjects that needed assessed.

[186] Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. (1979)

We began the debrief on this subject by disclosing our personal evaluation of how leadership was approached. In my judgment, because I had no official role within Housing or Ministry, I assumed my efforts would be to keep the focus of the RM project as an "act of ministry" rather than just another work task. I felt my participation would also ensure a formal evaluation of the program which would fulfill the academic requirements of my doctoral program, as well as benefit my colleagues and their offices. Basically, I did not see myself as the "leader." Others taking part in the debrief approached their roles similarly, meaning they made determinations on assumption, which included their assumption that I was "the leader." This was our first lesson learned: while we know one another and are familiar with each other's professional responsibilities, working together on a blended project required an open discussion on, as the director of ministry put it, "goals and roles."

We then discussed the difference between what we thought our roles were, and what they actually became. My colleagues shared with me that they perceived, my function had unintentionally become that of "bridge builder" between competing commitments and assumptions held by others in the work-group. An example of this was managing the difference in opinions that existed between Housing and Ministry about the "ownership" of the RMs. Housing and Residence Life saw the RM as an additional staff member in the residence hall – like a resident assistant (RA) without the policy enforcement responsibility[xli]. University Ministry conversely focused on the RM being a paid leadership position for students committed to the office of university ministry. To them, the RM represented a reward for students who had "worked their way through the ranks of faith formation."[xlii] I, on the other hand, maintained RMs were a response to the

lack of attention given to students' spiritual growth. We identified this as a second lesson: the need to clarify the RM role as a thing (an employee or reward), versus the RM representing a programmatic strategy. These differing perspectives did not cause hard feelings, but they did expose territorial tensions. From the onset of this project, we needed to developing a shared vision, but in retrospect, we failed to dedicate enough attention to this critical part of the planning process.

This assessment of leadership (or lack thereof) during the planning phase made sense to me. Instinctively I knew I needed other offices' knowledge and resources to make this project successful. Because of this understanding, I attempted to promoted a shared-project environment – one that honored the specific expertise that each area brought to the table – rather than defining the outcomes and goals. I was operating from a "shared ownership" perspective while others were operating from a "direction and expectation" model. How could we have been approaching this project from such opposite angles? Chris Argyris would argue that the examples of assumption and non-communication during the planning phase are predictable, "We deal with difficult situations by not dealing with them. We find ways to pretend to engage and in fact manage to avoid engaging."[187] These issues existed, but it was easier to play along rather than to make waves.

Reflecting on the "playing nice with each other"[xliii] dynamic we experienced, it was agreed that critical thinking and contextual understanding was constrained. This was the third lesson we identified: our organizational culture was not used to or ready for a collaborative approach. Being unprepared caused organizational disequilibrium which

[187] Argyris, *Organizational Traps: Leadership, Culture, Organizational Design.* (2010). Kindle edition, p. 22.

resulted in a loss of focus. With further reflection, we questioned what caused us lose sight of our University Mission? We agreed that we had failed to reflect on our "why" (as defined in the mission statement of the University) to informed our way of proceeding.[xliv]

This awareness brought us to reflect on how this project exposed potential weaknesses between "culture and mission." Universities like Gonzaga, create a sense of unity through their Mission Statement, but no matter how strong this feeling may be, divisional demarcations still exist. These differences are more than divisions of labor, they often represent differences of theory and practice. Appreciation of this reality is a key point to remember for anyone working in partnership across operational boundaries. The fact that Housing & Residence Life and University Ministry were interested in a shared project did not guarantee success. Simply put, we agreed that acknowledging differences in foundational beliefs would have benefited the team before beginning the work; this was our fourth lesson.

Attempting to understanding organizational culture(s) is also vitally important. Housing and Ministry are not necessarily separate cultures, but in some important ways they might be. We discussed how each team approaches their work from different assumptions. These "theologies and ministries" practiced within the context of two distinct offices were never fully explored before attempting to develop a shared approach to a "new ministry." This was a missed opportunity and had there been more conversation from the outset of this project, some misunderstandings and conflict could have been avoided.

Another example of missed cultural understanding arose while this topic was being processed. This cultural context moved us from organizational experiences to those

of a more personal nature. We talked about how the personal faith traditions of the leadership-team surreptitiously influenced the project and awakened internal bias for each of us. The associate director of housing comes from an evangelical (non-denominational) tradition, the director of ministry is of course Catholic, and my faith tradition is the Episcopal Church. Words and concepts like "faith," "ministry," and "spiritual development" have intrinsic meanings for each of us. These definitions, from our different perspective, are potentially powerful motivators. We agreed that by not exploring them, our personal beliefs remained internalized and we lost the opportunity to harness the potential of a shared "spiritual mission."

The fifth lesson identified was: leaving our different organizational and personal culture(s) unevaluated, unspoken, and unclaimed, stalled our ability to find common purpose and meaning. As we processed these new understandings, we agreed that by not speaking openly, "we had not honored our own faith, and we had not honored the foundational principles of our work, prior to jumping into the work."[xlv] As the instigator (if not leader) of this project, I recognized I could have approached the planning phase differently. This project required me to develop new outlooks and approaches. Robert Palestini, who writes extensively on issues of leadership, lists seven skills leaders need to be effective,[xlvi] particularly during periods of change. Adoption of the first three of these skills would have been extremely beneficial during the planning phase – the ability to adapt your style of leadership to the situation, awareness of organization and culture, and the ability to create an environment of trust.[188] The importance of awareness of culture is similarly highlighted in *Doing Local Theology: A Guide for Artisans of a New Humanity*.

[188] Palestini, *A Commonsense Approach to Educational Leadership*. (2012) Kindle edition, Loc. 106

Throughout chapter five, Clemens Sedmak addresses the importance of culture and social situations in the development of lived theologies; and in so doing, also speaks about "acts of ministry." From *Thesis 33* of this book, "Theologies are developed in response to and within a particular social situation. Understanding the social situation is a necessary condition for understanding the genesis and validity of particular theologies."[189] Understanding how these offices have developed their "lived theologies" demanded that attention be paid to not only on "how" they do their work, but more importantly "why" they do their work.

An important distinction of "how and why" work is done became manifest during creation of the RM job description and during the hiring process. As mentioned in chapter four, RM candidates were limited to students who had been involved with University Ministry throughout their time at Gonzaga. Previously in this chapter it was mentioned again as a "reward" for particularly dedicated students. The director of Ministry openly admitted during our debrief, that she saw the RM as a natural progression for engaged student-leaders within the context of Mission and Ministry (Catholic formation). The associate director of Housing disclosed she had concerns from the beginning with the limited pool of candidates – believing the job description was unnecessarily restrictive, and preferential toward Catholic students. She had also silently harbored the concern that because less than 50% of residential students identify as Catholic, students would not resonate with an exclusive Catholic perspective.[xlvii] This specific concern was not aired until the debrief meeting, but it was supported in part by focus-group feedback which occurred earlier the same week (April 18, 2016).[xlviii]

[189] Sedmak, Clemens, Doing Local Theology: A Guide for Artisans of a New Humanity (2002) p. 95.

Feedback from the focus groups will be presented in its own section of this chapter. The revelation of these mindsets illustrated once again how important pre-work and discernment are to ministry. Regardless of the setting (church or university), the removal of assumptions and the development of a shared commitment promote trust and clarity of purpose.

In *How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation,* Kegan and Lahey present a four-column approach to evaluating this dynamic. They ask that you identify a "commitment" as well as identify what you are doing (or not doing) to accomplish it. They also invite you to identify "competing commitments" – things equally important but potentially at odds with the first commitment. Lastly, they challenge you to name the "big assumptions" getting in the way.[190] The shared commitment to the RM program was naturally met by competing commitments. Some of these competing commitments were related to the project, but some were from our daily work outside the scope of this project. How these contributed to what we did (or did not do) to move the project forward could have easily be mitigated through work-flow, collaboration, and coordination of efforts. The truly limiting elements (of this and any project) are the unspoken assumptions like the multiple examples listed above.

In summation (of the planning phase), the collective analysis of the leadership-team retreat resulted in three primary thoughts. First, we did not successfully address the necessary pre-work that could have established a shared vision and mission. Similarly, we did not adhere to foundational principles of Ignatian Spirituality or University

[190] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation*. (2001).

Mission when building the infrastructure of the RM program. Procedurally the program was successfully launched, but the "heart and soul" of the ministry was potentially obscured by administrative and departmental boarder protection. Lastly, we agreed that unspoken assumptions and unclaimed "theologies" – from religious and professional perspectives – limited our ability to be open and transparent with one another. This was not the example we wanted to set for the RMs, our staffs, or our students.

Reflections on the Implementation Phase and the Success of the Support-Team: March 2015 through May 2016

By March, issues of structure and process dominated our conversations and focus. It became necessary to invite additional professionals into the work to further develop the RM job description, selection process, and training schedule (see attachments in chapter four). During the first week of April (2015), applications were made available, resulting in a candidate pool of seven applicants, all of whom were identified by the office of Ministry. Interview teams consisting of representatives from both Ministry and Housing reviewed the applicants and scheduled interviews over a single weekend. By the third week of April, three RM candidates were offered positions for the Fall Semester. I reviewed all applications, but did not take part in the formal interview process. I did, however, schedule individual 30-minute meetings with the individuals who accepted the offer for hire. The information shared in these meetings will be disclosed in the RM section of this chapter, as it established the foundation for my year-long one-on-ones with the RM staff and offers a topic for future exploration.

While the hiring process was being planned, I finalized my thesis proposal and began the "application for study" with Gonzaga's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The project was approved as an "exempt status" study, meaning participants identification would be kept confidential, individuals were able to opt-out of the pre-test and/or post-test, and the scope of the study was deemed non-invasive. The authorization for the study can be found as attachment(s) to this chapter (**Attachments A-C**). With assistance from the IRB's director and from the director of Ministry, I prepared to present the proposal for residential ministers during my final summer residency at Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS). The project was granted acceptance "without revision" during the proposal process. It is important to note, during my presentation at VTS, I informed my faculty that the RM program would proceed regardless of the thesis proposal decision. As the timeline shows, significant work had already been accomplished. Fortunately, the project was accepted as fulfillment of the thesis requirement.

Upon returning from residency with an approval in hand, I focused my work with the IRB to develop what would become the pre-test and post-test for the evaluation phase of the project (attachments found in chapter five). In retrospect, I wish I had included more perspectives in the development of these instruments – specifically student voices. As indicated in chapters two and four, my primary influence for the pre-tests and post-test was research completed by Astin (et.al); which is further based upon the CIRP Freshman and Graduating Senior Surveys housed at UCLA.[191] Additionally, the work of Sharon Parks and the observations she made on behaviors depicting meaning, purpose,

[191] Astin, Astin, and Lindholm, *Cultivating the Spirit: How College Can Enhance Students' Inner Lives*.

and faith formation influenced the six areas of study addressed in these tests.[192] A missed opportunity was not including student focus groups to inform me of their "lived experience." I suspect students' narratives would have been significantly different from the data collected in the community tests. This suspicion is supported throughout *Almost Christian*, in which Kendra Dean weaves the stories of young adults into a narrative of the relationship between the "church" and teenagers. She highlights the importance of story when she wrote, "Our most cherished convictions surface more naturally in stories than in propositional answers to questions."[193] It is further supported by the information I gathered from focus groups convened near the end of Spring semester. These were planned to give final feedback on the RM experience, but resulted in rich insight not provided by statistical analysis. A section of this chapter is dedicated to those focus groups.

Formal launch of the RM program (fall 2015 – spring 2016) began during Fall student leadership training and orientation. These training and orientation periods occur approximately two weeks prior to students checking-in to residence halls and Fall classes beginning. Unfortunately, the first set-back for the RM program occurred immediately "out of the box" when one of the three individuals hired resigned the day before training began. With only two RMs, the question arose, should one of the alternate applicants be contacted and offered the open position? It was decided that at this late stage we would simply move forward with two ministers and evaluate what had caused the late resignation when time allowed. Eventually it was revealed, the student who resigned felt

[192] Parks, *Big Questions. Worthy Dreams, Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*.
[193] Dean, *Almost Christian, What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church*. Kindle edition, p. 34.

overwhelmed with the task and did not want to give up "their senior-year experience" for this role. This will be further discussed later in the RM section of this chapter.

After training was completed, weekly meetings with the leadership-team overseeing this project commenced and a new identification for our work was agreed upon – we began referring to this group as the support-team. This newly appointed support-team included representatives from University Ministry (the director, a program coordinator, and an ordained Jesuit priest), from Residence Life (the associate director, and the two residence directors from the building with assigned RMs), the two RMs, and myself. During the end-of-year debrief, referenced in the first reflection section of this chapter, the transition from "work to support" was identified as a turning point for the program and for those working with the RMs. This change was characterized by "deeper discussions" that had been absent during the planning phase. Specifically, the support-team meetings were identified as a time for reflection and open conversation about issues of faith and spiritual development. These meetings were co-facilitated by the director of ministry and myself, with a standing agenda as follows:

1. Guided Examen.
2. RM Reports and Community Observations.
3. Support for RMs/Support for Students.
4. Reflection on ministry (Fr. Brad).
5. Benediction for the week ahead.

These support-team meetings became in the words of the director of ministry, "a holy time for work to be accomplished, a welcomed highlight for the week."

Besides the larger weekly meeting, individual "coaching" sessions were provided to the RMs twice a month with a member of the ministry staff, and I met individually with the RMs once per month. This level and frequency of support is one of the things the

leadership-team identified during the retreat as "well thought out." We had not underestimated the degree to which these students would need support and encouragement. This experience of support is consistent with concepts of Practical Theology mentioned in chapter three. James Fowler points out, "The vocation of the church, and the vocation of Christians, is to align our efforts as responsible selves, as much as we can, with the purposes and work of God." This requires, a "guiding framework of support" that "challenges persons toward being critically aware subjects before God and in partnership with God and neighbor."[194] The support-team meeting became such a framework, one that kept us mindful of the partnership needed to impact our students.

The most serious issue to arise during the implementation phase was another instance over confusion of scope and role, not dissimilar to the one described in the planning phase section. Besides topic parallels, what precipitated the confusion was caused by the same problems – failure to anticipate and unspoken assumptions.

Practically speaking, the RM position is just one of a number of para-professional resources within the residence hall setting. Each building has an assigned staff of resident advisors (RAs) as well as a resident director (RD). Groups of buildings are also supported by a professional Area Coordinators (AC). In our plan, the RM worked directly with these staffs in their respective buildings and attended staff meetings and regularly scheduled one-on-one meetings with the RD. In retrospect it was exactly this reporting structure that caused confusion during implementation. From the start, RAs began voicing concern that the RM position "encroached" on their own community building

[194] Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*. (1987). Kindle edition, Loc. 1389.

efforts, primarily because the RM was not expected to enforce university policies (typically one of the more stressful duties of RAs). In other words, RMs did not have to "write-up anyone." What we had originally thought would be a beneficial difference in roles, quickly became a point of contention. This perceived inequity produced a stressful team environment for one of the RMs which resulted in them temporarily disengaging from their job responsibilities. This absence resulting in programming requirements falling short of expectations and an environment of general strife in the building and on the floor. A coordinated effort from the entire support-team was required to unravel this complication. During the debrief retreat, two things were identified as important lessons: first, had the support-team not established a pattern of openness and trust, this conflict could have stalled the entire program. Approaching the problem from a "common good" prospective rather than protection of individual offices kept us focused on our shared investment. Secondly, we agreed the RA teams were not properly involved in planning, and thus were unprepared for RMs being placed in their building, on their floor, and on their staff – this represented a macro-example of system failure.

A related micro-example of this issue (understanding/prepared for scope of role), also affected the RMs. Professional staff had over-estimated the RMs "readiness," and when difficulties occurred, it caused the RMs varying degrees of stress and doubt. Recall that the students who were offered the opportunity to apply and interview for RM positions have been described (internally) as "overly involved and dedicated" to the programs offered through the office of university Ministry. Privately, (disclosed during debrief) these students were also referred to as members of the preverbal choir – as in "preaching to the choir." The director of Ministry admitted that the students selected for

RM positions might have had limited experiences with students with different interests and religious beliefs. Entering into residential communities with greater diversity of experiences and beliefs resulted in "culture shock" to some degree. Ministry saw the candidates as "ready by default," and Housing saw them as capable because they were "spiritually solid." The RMs, however, expressed different feelings during support-team meetings; "I'm not sure what I'm doing wrong." "I can't get anyone to engage with me." "My residents seem scared of me." This situation was another vivid reminder of how important preparing both the community and the RMs for their roles was. When looked at through the lens of "stage development" commonly used by both developmental theorists and faith formation models, it cannot be assumed that new influences will be openly accepted by individuals or in community. Unprepared, communities will often reject the change and individuals will draw back from the challenge of growth.[195]

On a positive note, this situation led to some rather significant discussions about what "ministry" means and subsequently unearthed another example of internalized assumptions that directly conflicted with lived experience. In processing ideas of ministry and the RM role, one RM admitted they had hopes of being "a shining example" for their community. They wanted to "bring more students into a deeper relationship with God." They felt impatient and frustrated that more was not happenings sooner. It was this discussion that firmly placed "Reflection on Ministry" as a weekly agenda item, and it took 4 or 5 weeks to get the RMs comfortable with the idea of "being present" is a form of ministry. This renewed the focus on establishing authentic relationship with their residents and decreasing the pressure to "perform ministry." This realization prompted

[195] Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm, *Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education*. Kindle edition, Loc. 914.

dialogue about the Jesuit principles of accompaniment and detachment. The term "to accompany" is freely used in Jesuit higher education. It means to "come alongside the other" and be present. It does not imply leading or guiding, rather, just as God is present, we need each other on our daily journey. This ultimately is an expression of love and service to one another.[196] Detachment in common parlance, has a negative connotation, but in Ignatian Spirituality it has a markedly different meaning. Jim Martin describes it this way, "Ignatian Spirituality is about freedom and detachment. Ignatius was keenly aware of what kept him, and others from leading a life of freedom and joy" (which is what God's love for us prescribes). To be detached from unimportant things and disordered passions, to be free from unnecessary worry, this leads to freedom.[197] The argument was made that RMs were preventing themselves from finding joy in the work because they were forcing the idea of what ministry meant (their assumptions), rather than letting The Spirit guide them, and simply being in relationship with their residents.

As the Fall semester progressed, it became obvious that other expectations and timelines needed to be adjusted. In my original thesis proposal, I had mapped-out the pre-test and post-test both be administered during the Fall semester – the first test given within the first 14 days of the semester, and the second test prior to Christmas Break. This timetable needed adjustments for the following reasons: (1) the RMs did not feel fully connected to their respective communities, (2) programming requirements had not been met, and (3) there was confusion by both offices (Ministry and Housing) on scope of the RM role – as mentioned above. During the debrief meeting, this "willingness to shift" was identified as another significant moment in the project. Rather than allowing

[196] Fleming, SJ, *What Is Ignatian Spirituality*. (2008). Kindle edition, Loc. 664.
[197] Martin, *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life*. (2012). Kindle edition, p.9.

this complication to derail the program, the support-team calmly looked at alternatives. This willingness to shift communicated three things: trust in the RM's feedback, acknowledgement that the program was outcome-driven, not time-driven, and planning and execution were dependent on variables out of our control. With guidance from the support-team, it was determined that the post-test would be most effective if postponed until the end of Spring semester.

In summation (of the implementation phase) numerous observations were made by the leadership-team during the debrief retreat as well as by the support-team members during weekly meetings. During this period of the project, we agreed the support-team exemplified behaviors congruent with servant leadership – vulnerable honesty, calm discerning, and awareness that there are many parts in motion. When problems arose, the support-team embraced problem-solving without assigning blaming. Examples of this were when the RM candidate resigned at the last moment, no one accused another of a failure. Likewise, with the confusion over scope of role and the turbulence that created, the driving focus was on mutual support rather than justification. As already shown, these examples of "crisis" redirected us to guidance from Ignatian Spiritual practices, and a renewed sympathy for what we were attempting to provide for the RMs and our general student population – support! In the planning section, I pointed out that the leadership-team was approaching the project from different directions. I assumed a "shared-investment" approach, while others assumed a "guide and direction" approach. At the end of implementation, there had been a clear shift toward a fully participative approach where collaborative work was practiced. The team understood more fully the "why" of

what we were doing, and a more equal footing devoid of titles and experience promoted open communication.[198]

> *Outside of the planning and implementation phases, and the debrief retreat, there were two significant sources of information to the overall program evaluation – these were my monthly one-on-ones with the RMs, and the focus groups held near the end of the Spring semester.*

Spring Semester Focus Groups

During the planning phase, I met numerous times with the director of the university's IRB. These meetings primarily focused on questions related to data collection (pre-test, and post-test instruments), but I also sought guidance on the question of more direct engagement with the residential communities. Together we determined to limit community interaction, and to allow the RMs to be the primary influence. We had a concern that too much interaction (in the form of focus groups for example) might lead to skewed data. The thesis predicted change in these communities because of the RM's presence, so we decided to limit the impact of gratuitous attention being directed toward these students. Near the end of the Spring semester, I brought up the idea of focus groups with the support-team. The re-visiting of this question was based largely on the information the RMs shared with me during our one-on-ones. The support-team agreed that holding a focus group discussion from each community prior to final exams and during the post-test collection period would be beneficial to better understanding how RM project was experienced by residents.

---

[198] Jick, *Managing Change and Transition: Seven Practical Strategies to Help You Lead During Turbulent Times*. (2003). Kindle edition, Loc 388.

On April 18th, my administrative assistant and I met with two groups of six students from communities with RMs. The students volunteered to take part in the focus groups and were told their responses during the hour-long conversation would remain anonymous (this condition was required by IRB's designation as exempt project status). Meetings were held in a neutral location (a confidential study-room in the library). Both meetings were held on the same evening, and were scheduled with enough time between so students would not cross paths. For purposes of continuity, the same four questions were posed to both focus groups. Little guidance was provided, other than instructing the group to talk to one another and not to direct their responses to me. The four questions were:

1. How well do you know the person serving as the RM on your hallway?
2. How do you think/feel the RM has impacted the community on your hallway?
3. In what way(s) has the RM reached out to you, and how has that affected your behaviors, decision-making, and level of participation in RM sponsored events/programs?
4. What feedback do you have for the RM program if it continues?

The following is a summation of each focus group with select quotations (some of which are unrelated to the questions, but were insightful and relevant).

Community A – Focus Group

Six male first-year students volunteered to take part in the focus group. For the first question, the group was able to name their RM, and gave details about who he lived near. They knew he was a senior and lived in Seattle. Two students gave specific examples of spending time in the RM's room, but none of the six had participated in "religious programs[xlix]" sponsored by the RM. All six reported attending "non-religious

programs[l]" with the RM during the school year. The second question fostered more discussion rather than just listing what individuals could recall. There was general agreement that the RM takes time to drop by rooms and say hello. They all agreed that he asks on a regular basis if they need his help on anything – including "praying for anything." This took the conversation in an interesting direction. One student admitted that it made him feel "uncomfortable" being asked about praying. He said it makes him feel "judged" and that it "can come across as holier than thou." The two students who had mentioned spending time in the RM's room, talked about dropping by to discuss personal issues, and they found the RM to be open and not judgmental at all. One spoke with him about "being homesick and not connecting with people" and the other talked about "dropping by and playing video games one Saturday night after going to parties off campus" He reported feeling a "little lost and confused about the party-culture" and needed someone to talk with "who wouldn't write me up for drinking underage." They all agreed the RM was a friendly person and he "probably made freshmen feel more comfortable" – this was the extent of their assessment on personal influence.

The third question seemed to confuse the group. They asked for clarification on how this question was different from the first and second. I asked them to focus more on the behaviors and decisions-making rather than the participation in programs. The group could not identify changes in their personal behaviors or decision-making, but they were able to talk about how the RM influenced their community response to a student death. (More details of this incident will be covered below.) In this instance, they spoke about how the RM made time to sit in the lobby and process the student's death. Specifically, they recalled his guidance on how to process the loss in positive ways. "He really kept

some of us from losing it! We didn't know what to do. Some people wanted to punch walls. It meant a lot that he sat with all of us at the memorial."

The final question about feedback was slow to motivate conversation. I interpreted this in two ways – having just relived a traumatic event, they were caught in those emotions and feeling, and they did not want to be critical of the RM. I assured the group that any feedback they gave would be used to improve the program and not reflect on their current RM. Most of the responses were general in nature, such as more programming around sports, or more food events. One participant, however, gave some rather specific and pointed feedback. "I know that [name removed] is Catholic, but most of the guys on the hall aren't. I don't know if he wants to become a priest or something, I was always confused by what a resident minister is." This stirred up some conversation with the group, and they asked for clarification from me about the RM role. After providing a brief overview, the same student responded, "If the RM is supposed to help us with our spiritual development, I think I would listen more to an older student (like a graduate student), who has some life experience and has made some mistakes. [Name removed], is pretty straight-laced, I don't think he's ever done anything bad." These comments were not intended to be insulting, but the student made a strong point.

Community B – Focus Group

Six female students volunteered to take part in the focus group to discuss the RM program and their experiences. Of the six students present, four were first-year students and two were sophomores. The first question concerning awareness of and engagement with the RM resulted in a robust conversation. All of the participants were able to speak about their RM with great familiarity. They talked about how their RM is always present

on the hall, and makes time to stop by rooms just to say hello. One student mentioned that because [name removed] is an upper-classman and knows how to register for classes, "she organized a class registration party at midnight when freshmen access was open – that one event really solidified her as a resource."

The responses to the second question flowed easily, and the group openly discussed how the RM made the hall feel more like home. They talked about how the RA for their floor partnered in programming with the RM. They hosted a weekly cookie bake from the floor's kitchen, and made "good luck" kits for students facing difficult exams. "I don't want to say (she) was our dorm-mom, but she really mothered us when we needed it." Unlike the first focus group, these participants were not confused by the third question. They focused on participation in events with the RM, and where able to give numerous examples besides the ones previously mentioned. Interestingly, when discussing programs with religious implications (church services, bible study, etc.), these students referred to them as spiritual events. Three specific examples were noted as impactful for the residence hall community.

The RM organized a volunteer-team to work with the Office of Community Outreach, to pack backpacks with food for elementary students who depended on school meals to meet their nutritional needs. These backpacks would supplement the students' needs over the weekend. "It was fun to work together, but I remember how [name removed] led a discussion as we worked on poverty in Spokane, and how many students have food insecurities." The other two noted programs were more passive in nature. The focus group talked about the "prayer bulletin board" and the "prayer messages" that the RM slipped under people's doors.

The bulletin board has a picture of a tree with the simple message, “How can I pray for you?” a small note pad and pen were attached to the board as well as a large envelop. “It felt nice knowing someone was praying for me,” one participant said. “It makes my day when I find the secret prayer message under my door, I’ve kept everyone, they are pinned to my tack board above my desk.” When pushed to reflect on how these events/interactions have influenced their own decision-making and behaviors, some of the responses were very revealing. One student volunteered, “I think I am more grateful. I know every time I walk by the bulletin board I think about what I need a prayer for and I wonder what other people are worried about.” Another said, “I try to be more aware. I think [name removed] has helped me feel more peaceful on the floor. Classes can be pretty stressful, and I think we have a good community. I don’t want this community to end after the year is over.” Lastly, another spoke directly to the question, she said, “I basically stopped praying in high school, I never really thought about it until [name removed] talked about praying for me. Since then, I’ve tried to be more focused on that.”

The last question concerning feedback for the RM program resulted in general suggestions for more programming, except for two comments. “I think people should know more about this program. I was surprised that my friends in other buildings didn’t have someone like [name removed].” And another student commented, “Some of my friends would have selected to live on this floor had they known about this option.”

Reflections on Program Continuance: April – July 2016

Perhaps the most critical contribution from the planning and implementation phases, was the opportunity to take notes and document features of the RM program to

change in the coming academic year. As mentioned in the sections above, many of those adjustments being considered were related to: job description, selection process, RM training, and timeline. All of these changes were being considered to promote deeper collaboration and to better preparing residential communities and candidates for the RM role.

After graduation and throughout the summer, the support-team was able to critically review the year and finalize plans for academic year 2016 - 2017. A new job description was produced and a refined training schedule was agreed upon, (See Attachment A, Job Description update), (See attachment B, Training update). The large round-table support-team meetings were abandoned in favor of a more targeted personal relationship support model, (See attachment C, RM Support). This was primarily decided upon for two reasons, first to give the RMs more access to one focused mentor rather than having to navigate multiple schedules, and secondly, to model the type of relationships we expected the RMs to cultivate with their residents.

Admittedly, this was a difficult decision to make. The support-team structure during the first year was seen as a positive experience and beneficial for everyone involved. Ultimately, the decision to downsize and simplify was based on time commitment concerns from the RMs themselves, who felt overwhelmed at times with all the meetings they juggled in their role. These commitments included: weekly support-team meetings, weekly building staff meetings, twice per month coaching meeting with ministry staff, and monthly meetings with me. Additionally, the professional staff involved with the support-team recognized the meetings came to be time for our own "spiritual processing," and while "life-giving" this was a misuse of the time. This

awareness perhaps unearthed unspoken needs of faculty and staff related to spiritual development.

As mentioned previously (based upon university budget request timelines), university funding was secured to allow four RMs to be employed for the coming year. Three of the most significant shifts in the program were: (1) reporting structure, (2) RM placement, and (3) pre-employment/August training requirements. Next year (2016-2017), RMs will report directly to the program coordinator in the office of university ministry, rather than to the hall director in the building where they are assigned. The RMs will still attend weekly staff meetings within the building, but they will be seen more as a resource to the students and staff than as an employee in the building. Related to this reporting change, the decision was made to assign two RMs to a building rather than one RM being placed in a singular hall. For the coming year, two buildings have been selected (all first-year students), and two RMs will assist in coordinating spiritual programming and support in those locations.

As previously mentioned, the goal is to grow the RM team to eight individuals. It is anticipated that these individuals will all be assigned to first-year student housing where there are not already established "Living-Learning Programs."[li] Lastly, RMs who have been selected for positions next year are required to begin preparation prior to employment in August (student leadership training and orientation). As such. the four students hired for Fall 2016, began meeting with the program coordinator in late April and will continue pre-training through the end of the semester. The female RM who took part in the inaugural program re-applied and was offered the opportunity to return with three new candidates. Her "title" has been changed to "Senior RM" in recognition of her

first year of service. Part of her new employment expectations included debrief meetings with the new RMs and for her to be more deeply involved with training for the Fall semester.

As noted, there was significant concern during the first year about the limited applicant pool, and the perceived control over the hiring process by university Ministry. Many of the changes suggested, related to these concerns, were not accepted. Specifically, the suggestion to open the application to students not involved in ministry programs, and the suggestion for graduate students being considered were declined. Both of these recommendations came from direct student feedback and consideration by the support-team. Concessions, however, were made to mitigate the risk of repeating mistakes. The most interesting of these concessions was the requirement of three "required readings" over the summer, with weekly open discussions prior to August training. These required books included:

1. *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life*, by James Martin, SJ.
2. *My Neighbor's Faith, Stories of Interreligious Encounters, Growth, and Transformation*, editors, Jennifer Howe Peace, Or N. Rose, and Gregory Mobley.
3. *Sex and the Soul: Juggling Sexuality, Romance, and Religion on America's College Campuses*, by Donna Freitas.

These books were selected jointly by the support-team. It was the belief of the team these books represented content relevant to the current student experience and remained consistent with University Mission and Jesuit tradition. The second selection (*My Neighbor's Faith*) was selected in direct response to the concern of RMs not being sympathetic or aware of other religious/spiritual experiences outside the Catholic experience. The third selection (*Sex and the Soul*) was recommend by the returning RM

who had attended a presentation by Donna Freitas. The director of ministry also approved this selection based upon the research Dr. Freitas had completed related to faith formation in college students.

Underestimated, Unforeseeable, Unexamined

In the sections above, considerable attention has been given to the process of putting together the RM program and the resulting lessons learned over the first year of operations. In this section, I will focus on matters that impacted the project but were underestimated or unanticipated. Additionally, I will briefly examine three occurrences that were unforeseeable, but had significant effects on both the project and the community of Gonzaga. Lastly, I will present several topics that represent opportunity for additional academic and practical exploration. These issues fell outside the scope of this project, but offered compelling twists in understanding the range of experiences related to spiritual development.

Underestimated Influences

The first issue which was underestimated was the "readiness" of our residential communities to have this type of presence (RMs). This topic has been referenced multiple times in the sections focused on planning and implementation, but deserves additional consideration. This reoccurrence of the "readiness" question offers the opportunity to explore the importance of pre-work when considering acts of ministry.

When reflexing on this, a member of the support-team said, "It doesn't matter how good the idea is or how needed the service is, if people aren't ready, you are going to hit bumps in the road." In a humorous reflection, another member of the support-team

mused, "If I'm driven to make sure people aren't on fire, that doesn't mean I should go around throwing buckets of water – I should make sure they are in fire first!" As we planned the RM program, our principle focus had been on the RM position. What if our focus had been more equally shared on the community? What would we have discovered about the communities and the ability of these communities to embrace these students? Blimling speaks to this dynamic of "readiness" that exists between communities in residence halls and the "would be student leaders" of these communities. "The microsystem of a particular residence hall living unit is defined by student relationships and changes as their experiences change." When communities are unprepared for significant change – when things are different from an expected experience – members of that community tend to disengage from the task of relationship building. In short, the challenge presented is too great.[199] Blimling also draws attention to Bronfenbrenner's (1989) theory[lii] to illustrate how unique each community is. Student's bring their own set of experiences and "collide" with the living setting presented in the building, the learning environment of the campus, and the obvious as well as implied expectations.[200]

Strayhorn, in his reflections on the importance of developing a sense of belonging, further illustrates how we may have unintentionally made these two communities more difficult to create. He contends, "A college student's need for belonging must be satisfied before any higher-order needs such as knowledge and self-actualization."[201] Students will naturally affiliate with others who have shared

[199] Blimling, Gregory S., Student Learning in College Residence Halls: What Works, What Doesn't, and Why (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2015) Kindle edition, p.86.
[200] Ibid, p.86
[201] Strayhorn, Terrell L., College Students' Sense of Belonging: A Key to Educational Success for All Students (2012) Kindle edition, p.18.

experience, (or even perceived common experiences) to begin forming this sense of belonging. Likewise, they will respond and react to those stimuli that reinforce those "shared experiences." If we accept that students are coming to college with challenges that prevent spiritual and inner life development, then the difficulty of the RMs connection to their communities could have been foreseen and prepared for.

It was agreed that this question had not been explored in any part of the process, and that it made sense to move forward with new support mechanisms for the positions, as well as development of support for the communities in which RM positions are embedded. "We want to create opportunities for our students to engage with [experiences] so they recognize and apply its relevance to their own live, to feel deeply and experience themselves within their education." Creating opportunity that supports students in their own agency means understanding where they are and meeting them there.[202]

The second issue that was underestimated was the potential of the senior year to have a negative effect on the RM. It had been generally assumed that only juniors and seniors would be eligible to apply for these roles. As mentioned, prior to beginning RM training, one of the three students hired for academic year 2015 - 2016 resigned citing amongst other reasons, the desire to have a "senior year experience" – by default this suggested (at least to this individual) that the two things were mutually exclusive. The director of ministry followed-up with this individual when time permitted to get additional feedback. What was relayed during this conversation may have been an individual perspective, but their concerns were noted. To them, a "senior-year

[202] Barbezat, Daniel P. and Mirabai Bush, Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: Powerful Methods to Transform Teaching and Learning (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2014) Kindle edition, p.3.

experience" included spending time off-campus, where most upper-classmen reside. The concern about being seen as a "role-model" – in their mind, meant not drinking, attending parties, or taking part in senior rituals (some of which are not sanctioned by the University).

Recall one of the RMs was a senior. During our one-on-ones, they increasingly became disillusioned by their experience. This individual shared feelings of regret and loss – regret that they had not spent more time with their graduating friends, and loss of a meaningful, personal spiritual reawakening. What the senior RM shared during their final debrief session potentially supported the implied assertion of the student who resigned prior to training. In their story, they reported an overall negative experience and that they were graduating with more questions than ever about their own spirituality.

For this individual, the role of RM represented an opportunity to "re-capture the faith [they] had in high school, and to be the mentor to others that [they] had during my freshmen and sophomore years." In the end, their assessment was too much time was spent trying to be something for others, that they either did not want, or were not ready for. In their opinion, not enough time was spent on seeking answers to personal questions. Based upon the feedback from one of the focus groups, and the concerns of the two senior RMs, an argument can be made that graduate students with more life experience, who are more settled in their own identities, and more academically focused may be better choices for RMs in the future. This recommendation has been rejected at present.

Lastly, the influence of emotion was underestimated on the overall project. This issue is directly connected to the planning stage of the project. In the most delicate way

possible this can only be described as a failure to manage expectations. In the rush to organize a programmatic approach to assist students in their own spiritual development, we forgot to engage a number of tools given to us by our Jesuit heritage. Additionally, there was little to no attachment to the university's mission statements. The result of this was a dynamic of frantic energy rather than launching the program from a place of peace.

Unforeseeable Influences

Sometimes "life happens" and you have to "roll with the punches" – these were statements from support-team members as we reflected on three significant unforeseeable events. While all three occurrences were different, they were commonly bound by negatively impacting the larger Gonzaga community, resulting in pulpable reductions in hope and civility. The first two events occurred on the national stage, and were completely outside of our control to manage – we could only respond. They both had significant and powerful influence on the collective psyche and emotional wellbeing of our students.

The first occurrence was the impact of perhaps the most divisive and negative presidential campaign in modern history. Over the entirety of this project, our entire student body was inundated with negative story after negative story through mainstream news outlets and social media. More than one observer mentioned that our students are "in a weird and negative head-space." Prior to election night, plans were made for activities focused on reconciliation and healing, to held campus-wide -- such was the divisive impact of the proceeding months. After the election results came through, these plans evaporated, and the campus seemed to emotionally retreat.

The second issue is related to the first. Over the academic year, multiple incidents of civil unrest occurred on campuses across the nation. Again, these have been highly documented and covered in the media. These events concerning social justice – a foundational principle of Jesuit education – and the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement sent shock-waves across our nation. Gonzaga University was not immune to these tremors, and they have added to the overall feeling of malaise observed in our students. One might argue that both of these issues should increase the desire for "meaning-making" and spiritual development. It seems the perfect catalyst to jump-start interest in these big questions.[203] Perhaps it was the gravity of the issues or perhaps our students were unprepared to face topics such as these – either way, the net result was a palpable and negative influence on the overall student experience this past year.

The last unforeseeable event that impacted this program was the tragic death of a well-known student as a result of suicide. His death occurred in the final weeks of the spring semester, right before final exams and exactly at the time of the administration of the post-tests in both RM communities. I am unable to exactly pinpoint the degree to which this collective community loss affected the results of the program (visa-vie the post-test), however, I can state without reservation the entire community was impacted.

What these events share are themes of desolation and consolation. These terms have specific meaning in Ignatian spirituality, but Margaret Silf simplifies them by saying, "What do we mean when we talk of consolation and desolation? We are really only talking about our orientation, and the bottom line is this: which direction is our life

[203] Parks, *Big Questions. Worthy Dreams, Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*. (2011), Kindle edition.

taking us – toward God, or away from him?"[204] A primary focus of Ignatian spirituality is the idea that God wants us to locate and follow our passion. It is from this deep place within us that God resides and by following this, we move closer to God. Consolation and desolation are more than just feelings, but it is important to pay attention to when they appear in our life – as a compass gives direction, so do these modes of operation.

Unexamined Influences

In this section, I will briefly present four items that were beyond the scope of this project, but have interesting intersectionality with the topic of spiritual development.

During the process of proposing this project for considered for my doctoral thesis, more than one individual suggested that an equally impactful study would have been to focus on the RMs themselves rather than on the affects they had on community and spiritual development of undergraduate students. Having been so deeply involved with the two RMs over the nine months of their employment, I agree that would have been a fascinating study. Watching their own development, and defining what "ministry" meant for them was both encouraging and frustrating. An examination of the changes that occur in the lives of student ministers would influence countless university program.

The second topics is related the section about (unforeseeable influences). In each of those cases the lack of hope was present and strongly felt by the greater community. This raises the question about the influence of hope or hopelessness on a community and on individuals. I believe the measuring of hope and changes in that measure could have significant impact on support for spiritual development.

[204] Self, Margaret, Inner Compass: An Invitation to Ignatian Spirituality. (1998), Kindle edition, Loc. 778.

The third unexamined issue relates to the concept of identity formation. In chapter three, this topic was raised through developmental processes primarily espoused by social theorists. I pose the question in this section, if spiritual development were more closely aligned with other identity formation models, would our current generation be more open to exploration? In my discussions with students (unaffiliated with the RM project), I have asked the question about their hesitation to identify with specific faith traditions. The responses I have received boil down to students not wanting to be "put in a box" of belief. One specific conversation of note, resulted in this reflection, "Why would I want to be identified as Christian, when there is so much hate attached to that label?" Probing further, this student was referring to organizations akin to Westboro Baptist Church – notorious for disruptive and un-Christian behaviors. They admitted that this had not been their personal experience, but there was still a fear of being seen in that light.

When reflecting on various identity formation models, there seems to be a preference toward continuums rather than formal steps. Identity is also strongly connected to experience and empowerment. I wonder if concepts of faith and belief are too firmly rooted in binary structures – you believe, or you do not believe; you are a member or, you are an outsider; you have faith, or you are lost. Would a more fluid method of spirituality identity formation resonate with college-aged students who seem more comfortable with this type of ambiguity?

Lastly, I observed differences in how male and female students spoke about and responded to the topic of spiritual development. This perhaps is too much of a generalization, but I find it related to the differences in Kohlberg and Gilligan's approach to moral development. Kohlberg's research was of course performed exclusively with

male subjects, Gilligan's published works in *A Different Voice*, documented difference between genders.

During this project, the potential for gender difference related to spiritual development were observed in the focus groups and during the one-on-ones with the RMs. Broadly speaking, these differences fell into two categories: passive verse active outreach, and individual verses group experiences. In the male community, there seemed to be a preference for active engagement and personal reflection. These preferences were exemplified by higher assessment of physical activities, lower-risk group involvement (where feelings, questions, and conflicts where not explored), and group support for shared experiences. Conversely, men seemed to prefer private interaction when meaningful questions were being explored. Females overwhelmingly gravitated toward passive engagement, such as the prayer board and secret messages. These spiritual activities seemed to unite their community and assisted in forming their group culture. Likewise, they identified a preference for sharing in groups settings their questions and concerns. I recognize these observations are loaded with gender stereotypes, however, the issue of gender and spiritual development has limited research. It is for this reason, and genders connection to identity formation that I raise the subject for future consideration.

Reflection: Changes in Me

During the process of presenting this thesis as a proposal, more than a couple of faculty made comments to the effect, "Pay attention to how this project affects you." Similarly, one of my advisors cautioned, "The project is important, but what will be most meaningful is how you change." I did not know at the time how true those statements would be, and I would be remiss to not reflect on the changes I have experienced over the

last 17 months. This section is not meant to be a "testimony," but rather an endorsement to any readers of this thesis – perhaps those exploring projects of their own – to pay attention to your own growth.

First, throughout this process, I have become much more aware of my internal biases related to spirituality and faith traditions. In the past, I have negatively associated overly evangelical attitudes and behaviors as judgmental and exclusionary. I have linked these traditions with ideas of replacement theologies. Emotionally, I have prejudged these methods (broadly) as communicating, "We have the truth, we know what you need, this is the path." During this process, I began to question if my motivations for the residential minister program were any less prescriptive? Could someone look at my process and conclude the same about me? I provided context and data that indicated a spiritual need in my student population, and I documented generational evidence that backed up those claims. Additionally, I sought theological and development theories that addressed faith formation in community settings, and I designed an instrument to measure the effects of the RM on student attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making. Does the RM project reflect my own, "I have a truth, I know what you need, this is the path" moment?

In my desire to do something good, did I rush to find a solution? This is not to suggest that this thesis or project was baseless, rather, I am more aware and sympathetic to expressions of faith different from my own, especially when it comes to outreach and acts of ministry. Assuming there are not elements of bigotry or discrimination, I can recognize the desire to do good. Having this new outlook has allowed me to engage in others' acts of ministry with an openness I had not had before.

A second way this project has affected me is my awareness of (or reawakening of) the importance of an active prayer life. Prior to my enrolling in the doctoral program at VTS, I was actively engaged in the *Education for Ministry* program through Sewanee – University of the South. As part of this program, I began a practice of weekly prayer with my program cohort. During my doctoral residencies, a similar "group prayer practice" was established with my classmates. Outside of these contexts, my prayer life reverted back to traditional worship and my private reflective prayers at night.

As mentioned previously in this chapter – particularly in the implementation and focus group sections – prayer became a central positive experience for the support-team and at least for one of the two communities with an RM. For me, the experience of the support-team offered the first opportunity to engage in weekly reflection and prayer with colleagues and students (outside of formal worship). Having worked in faith-based institutions for over 25 years, this sounds implausible. However, the fact remains, I had not taken part in "group prayer" in the work setting prior to this project. In large part, the apprehension expressed by the support-team when deciding to abandon that model of oversight was based upon the fact we were losing that occasion to gather and pray.

Lastly, this process (the project, the classwork, and the relationships) have provided me with a sense of peace – one of personal and professional peace. The RM project is a small part of a longer journey to embracing my profession as a "ministry." When people hear that I am pursuing a Doctorate in Ministry, they eventually ask if I am currently ordained or if I am seeking ordination? It is an honest question. Growing up in the church and through most of my college years, I asked myself the same question – should I become a priest? Having sat on a number of discernment committees for

individuals considering the priesthood, I can honestly say I never "heard the call" that so many describe.

What I have experienced, however, is the abiding notion that I am an instrument of God's Kingdom – just as necessary and useful as my ordained colleagues and friends. This project has increased my commitment to that thought. I began this chapter stating an awareness that my work is made possible because of Christ's presence in my life. I close this thesis and this project hoping that my work brings Christ and the love of God into the world. Afterall, that is what ministry is about.

Final Reflection on this Act of Ministry

Significant time has been spent in this concluding chapter reflecting on the process and outcomes of the residential ministry program. Statistically, the program did not affect the changes in spiritual development predicted in the thesis. There are unanswered questions related to Community C, and how the RM may have been more impactful in Communities A and B. Does this mean the program failed? The answer to that is a strong and resolute NO! An indication of this is the decision to continue the program and grow the residential minister ranks. The project was successful in raising the topic of spiritual development beyond the doors of the Ministry office. This has resulted in a renewed awareness that spiritual development (as defined in the University Mission Statement) is a shared responsibility. This first experience of RMs has given us rich information to continue to refine the program, and perhaps see it evolve into something greater than first anticipated.

I believe the greatest impact and success attached to this project were the lessons learned in the planning and implementation stages. The reason I spent so much time unpacking these phases, was my belief they have relevance to any act of ministry or collaboration designed to assist students. Primarily, these lessons are the importance of pre-work that prepares the community; the importance of approaching new projects from a place of peace rather than frantic energy; the importance of foundational principles (such as Mission Statements); the importance of shared understandings on leadership; and the importance of being prepared for the unexpected. Do any of these items have anything to do with religion and spirituality? Perhaps not, but because we live and work in the "real world," these elements of management are vitally important to ministry.

Lastly, this project reinforced the imperative that growth and development (spiritual or personal), occurs best in the context of community. The abiding value of this project was the fact that our team – students and professionals – labored together to bring this ministry into being. And as the first step of the Examen requires, this reality is embraced with gratitude.

ENDNOTES:

[xxxix] The approval to continue the RM program was given by the Vice President for Student Development, the Vice President for Mission & Ministry, and the Vice President of Business & Finance. This decision was provided to myself and the director of University Ministry during the annual budget request period. Programs seeking continued or additional funding submit the request in March, new budget allocations begin in July.

[xl] Evaluation of the planning process is based upon feedback gleaned during a summary debrief meeting that took place amongst the three primary architects of the RM program (the director of university ministry, the associate director of housing & residence life, and myself). During this half-day retreat on April 22nd, 2016, the goal was to openly reflect on roles and responsibilities, challenges, and successes.

[xli] Housing and Residence Life leadership felt the RM position would be most effective as an additional staff person providing programming and oversight to the communities. They were interested in the concept of a non-judicial presence and how that might influence community behaviors.

[xlii] Up until this proposal, University Ministry did not have paid leadership positions for students. This had been a concern for a number of years by the professional staff in that office. There was an underlying feeling of inequity with other areas that offered students various paid roles.

[xliii] This was the term used to identify my leadership style during the planning phase.

[xliv] Mission Statement: Gonzaga University is an exemplary learning community that educates students for lives of leadership and service for the common good. In keeping with its Catholic, Jesuit, and humanistic heritage and identity, Gonzaga models and expects excellence in academic and professional pursuits and intentionally develops the whole person -- intellectually, spiritually, culturally, physically, and emotionally. Through engagement with knowledge, wisdom, and questions informed by classical and contemporary perspectives, Gonzaga cultivates in its students the capacities and dispositions for reflective and critical thought, lifelong learning, spiritual growth, ethical discernment, creativity, and innovation.
The Gonzaga experience fosters a mature commitment to dignity of the human person, social justice, diversity, intercultural competence, global engagement, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and care for the planet. Grateful to God, the Gonzaga community carries out this mission with responsible stewardship of our physical, financial, and human resources.

[xlv] This observation was made by the associate director of residence life (Evangelical). A follow-on observation of “how can we expect our students to openly discuss matters of faith and believe if we aren’t able to set the example for them?”

[xlvi] Robert Palestini’s Seven Principles of Effect Leadership: (1) adapting leadership style to the situation, (2) keen awareness of organizational structure and culture, (3) engender a sense of trust, (4) be an agent of change for continuous improvement, (5) be well organized and creative, (6) communicate effectively, and (7) motivate followers and manage conflict.

[xlvii] This statistic is reported by the Registrar’s Office from student self-reported data. Corresponding data is also collected by Enrollment/Admissions surveys. These numbers are documented in Chapter one of this Thesis.

[xlviii] Small focus-groups were convened from both communities with RM’s prior to the end of Spring semester. These groups consisted of six students each. Both groups were asked the same four questions and allowed to give general feedback as well.

[xlix] The RM in Community A sponsored weekly Bible study, attendance at Saturday Mass (in the main university chapel), and coordination with University Ministry for "Faith Retreats" – these are the examples of "religious programming" the focus group identified.

[l] The RM in Community A sponsored Monday Night Football Pizza, Zag Men's Basketball watch events, video game challenges, and a "spaghetti night" with one of the Jesuit priests – these were the examples of "non-religious programming" the focus group identified.

[li] There are several established "Living-Learning" Communities at Gonzaga. An example is the residential community for Engineering students. First-year residents can pre-select to be assigned to these communities that align with academic major or special interests. RMs are being considered for placement in those first-year communities without special focus. If this occurs, it will be in academic year 2017-2018.

[lii] Strayhorn references Bronfenbrenner's contribution to, The Biological Model of Human Development, in The Handbook of Child Psychology: Theoretical Models of Human Development, 6th Edition. Edited by W. Damon and R. M. Learner (New York, NY: Wiley 2006) Vol. 1, pp.793-828.

Bibliography

Allen, Diogenes. *Theology for a troubled believer: An introduction to the Christian faith*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010.

Amit, Yaira. *Reading biblical narratives: Literary criticism and the Hebrew bible*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2001.

Anders, Max E., Glen Martin, Trent C. Butler, Kenneth O. Gangel, and Steven J. Lawson. *Holman Old Testament commentary*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001.

Andrews, Alan K. *The kingdom life a practical theology of discipleship and spiritual formation*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010.

Argyris, Chris. *Organizational traps: Leadership, culture, Organizational Design*. New York, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 2013.

Arnett, Jeffrey Jensen. *Emerging adulthood: The winding road from the late teens through the twenties*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2024.

Astin, Alexander W., Helen S. Astin, and Jennifer A. Lindholm. *Cultivating the spirit how college can enhance students inner lives*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011.

Barbezat, Daniel, and Mirabai Bush. *Contemplative practices in higher education: Powerful methods to transform teaching and learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, a Wiley brand, 2014.

Barry, William A. *Finding god in all things: A companion to the spiritual exercises of st. Ignatius*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1994.

Beale, G. K. *We become what we worship: A biblical theology of idolatry*. New York, NY: IVP Academic, 2009.

Blimling, Gregory S. *Student learning in college residence halls: What works, what doesn't, and why*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/Wiley, 2015.

Block, Peter, Walter Brueggemann, and John McKnight. *An other kingdom: Departing the consumer culture*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2016.

Block, Peter. *Community: The structure of belonging*. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc, 2018.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, and Samuel Wells. *Life together*. London: SCM Press, 2015.

Bonner, Fred A., Aretha Faye Marbley, and Mary F. Howard-Hamilton. *Diverse millennial students in college implications for faculty and Student Affairs*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Pub., 2011.

Brantley, Jeffrey. *Calming your anxious mind: How mindfulness and compassion can free you from anxiety, fear, and panic*. New York, NY: Paw Prints Baker & Taylor, 2010.

Bronfenbrenner, Urie. *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.

Browning, Don S. *A fundamental practical theology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991.

Browning, Don S. *Reviving Christian humanism: The new conversation on spirituality, theology, and psychology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2010.

Browning, Don S., and Terry D. Cooper. *Religious thought and the modern psychologies*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000.

Brueggemann, Walter. *Prophetic imagination: Revised edition*. Lanham, MD: Fortress Press, 2001.
Buechner, Frederick. *The alphabet of grace*. New York, NY: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
Buechner, Frederick. *Whistling in the dark: An ABC theologized*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1990.
Cahalan, Kathleen A., and Gordon S. Mikoski. *Opening the field of practical theology: An introduction*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014.
Carpenter, Edward. *Pagan and Christian creeds - their origin and meaning*. New York, NY: Obscure Press, 2012.
Chickering, Arthur W., Jon C. Dalton, and Liesa Stamm. *Encouraging authenticity and spirituality in higher education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006.
Christakis, Nicholas A., and James H. Fowler. *Connected: The surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives*. New York, NY: Little, Brown, 2011.
Cooperrider, David L., and Diana Kaplin Whitney. *Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2005.
Copeland, Adam J. *Kissing in the chapel, praying in the frat house: Wrestling with faith and college*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015.
Cote, James E., Charles G. Levine, and Charles Levine. *Identity, formation, agency, and culture: A social psychological synthesis*. Hoboken, NY: Taylor and Francis, 2014.
Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York, NY: Harper and Row, 2009.
Cunningham, David S. *At this time and in this place: Vocation and higher education*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016.
Curran, Charles E. *The development of moral theology: Five strands*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013.
Dean, Kenda Creasy. *Almost Christian: What the faith of our teenagers is telling the American church*. New York, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 2010.
Delbanco, Andrew. *College: What it was, is, and should be*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023.
Dettoni, John, and Jim Wilhoit. *Nurture that is Christian: Developmental perspectives on christian education*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004.
Dickeson, Robert C. *Prioritizing academic programs and services: Reallocating resources to achieve strategic balance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
Drescher, Elizabeth. *Choosing our religion: The spiritual lives of america's nones*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016.
Duckworth, Angela. *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Collins, 2018.
Fleming, David Lee. *What is Ignatian spirituality?* Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2008.
Fluker, Walter E. *Ethical leadership: The quest for character, civility, and community*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009.
Fokkelman, J. P., and Ineke Smit. *Reading biblical narrative: An introductory guide*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
Fowler, James W. *Faith development and pastoral care*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1989.

Frankl, Viktor E., Harold S. Kushner, and William J. Winslade. *Man's search for meaning*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2006.
Freitas, Donna, and Christian Smith. *The happiness effect: How social media is driving a generation to appear perfect at any cost*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019.
Freitas, Donna. *Sex and the soul: Juggling sexuality, spirituality, romance, and Religion on America's college campuses*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015.
Gallagher, Timothy M. *Discerning the will of god: An ignatian guide to christian decision making*. New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2018.
Gallagher, Timothy M. *The discernment of spirits an Ignatian Guide for Everyday Living*. Johanneshov, Poland: TPB, 2012.
Garland, David E., and Andreas J. Köstenberger. *A theology of mark's gospel: Good news about jesus the messiah, the son of god*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015.
Generation Z: What it's like to grow up in the age of likes, lols, and longing. New York, NY: Diversion Books, 2016.
Gentile, Mary C. *Giving voice to values: How to speak your mind when you know what's right*. Winnipeg, Canada: Media Production Services Unit, Manitoba Education, 2013.
Gibbs, John C. *Moral development and reality: Beyond the theories of Kohlberg, Hoffman, and Haidt*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019.
Gilbert, Roberta M. *The eight concepts of Bowen Theory: A new way of thinking about the individual and the group*. Lake Frederick, VA: Leading Systems Press, 2013.
Gilligan, Carol. *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.
Goldstein, Rebecca. *Plato at the googleplex: Why philosophy won't go away*. New York, NY: Pantheon, 2014.
Grenny, Joseph, Kerry Patterson, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler, and Emily Gregory. *Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 2022.
Guenther, Margaret. *Holy listening: The art of spiritual direction*. London, England: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1993.
Hawthorne, Gerald F., Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid. *Dictionary of paul and his letters a compendium of contemporary biblical scholarship*. InterVarsity Press, 2015.
Heifetz, Ronald, Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky. *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.
Higgins, Michael W. *Thomas Merton: Faithful visionary*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014.
Howe, Neil, and William Strauss. *Millennials rising: The next great generation*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2009.
Hurst, Aaron. *The Purpose Economy: How your desire for impact, personal growth and community is changing the world*. USA, USA: Imperative Press, 2018.
Jacobsen, Douglas G., and Rhonda Hustedt Jacobsen. *No longer invisible: Religion in university education*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012.

James, William. *Meaning of truth*. S.l., S.I: KRILL PRESS, 2015.
Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Creed: What christians believe and why it matters*. Westminster, England: The Crown Publishing Group, 2007.
Jones, Susan R., Elisa S. Abes, and Baxter Magolda Marcia B. *Identity development of college students: Advancing frameworks for multiple dimensions of identity*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2013.
Kärkkäinen, Veli-Matti. *Pneumatology: The holy spirit in ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.
Kelcourse, Felicity. *Human development and faith (second edition): Life-cycle stages of body, mind, and soul*. New York, NY: Chalice Press, 2015.
Keohane, Nannerl O. *Thinking about leadership*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012.
Keys, Mary M. *Aquinas, Aristotle, and the promise of the common good*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
Kinnaman, David, and Aly Hawkins. *You lost me: Why young christians are leaving Church ... and rethinking faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016.
Kinnaman, David, and Gabe Lyons. *Unchristian: What a new generation really thinks about christianity-- and why it matters*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007.
Kohler, K. *Jewish theology*. S.l., S.!.: OUTLOOK VERLAG, 2020.
Komives, Susan R. *The Handbook for Student Leadership Development*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011.
Kreeft, Peter. *Practical theology: Spiritual direction from st. thomas aquinas: 358 ways your mind can help you to become a saint from the summa theologiae*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2014.
Kropf, Richard W. *Faith--security and risk: The dynamics of spiritual growth*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Pub., 2003.
Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2017.
Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Philosophy in the flesh the embodied mind and its challenge to western thought*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2008.
Levering, Matthew. *The theology of augustine: An introductory guide to his most important works*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.
Levine, Arthur, and Diane R. Dean. *Generation on a tightrope a portrait of today's college student*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012.
Loder, James E. *The logic of the spirit: Human development in theological perspective*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998.
Lukianoff, Greg, and Jonathan Haidt. *The coddling of the American mind: How good intentions and bad ideas are setting up a generation for failure*. New York City, NY: Penguin Books, 2019.
MacIntyre, Alasdair C. *God, philosophy, universities: A selective history of the Catholic philosophical tradition*. London, England: Bloomsbury Continuum, 2017.
Macintyre, Allister. *After virtue: A study in moral theory*. Notre Dame, IN: UNIV OF NOTRE DAME PRESS, 2022.
Martin, James. *Jesus: A pilgrimage*. New York, NY: HarperOne, 2016.
Martin, James. *The Jesuit Guide to (almost) everything: A spirituality for real life*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2012.

Maslow, Abraham H. *Religious, values, and peak-experiences.* Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1964.
Mattison, William C. *Introducing moral theology true happiness and the virtues*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2008.
Mayer, Bernard S. *Dynamics of conflict: A guide to engagement and intervention*. San Francisco, CA: JosseyBass, 2012.
McFarland, Alex, and Jason Jimenez. *Abandoned Faith: Why millennials are walking away and how you can lead them home*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2017.
McKnight, Scot, Syler Thomas, and Chris Folmsbee. *The jesus creed for students: Loving god, loving others*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2011.
McKnight, Scot. *The apostle paul and the christian life: Ethical and missional implications of the new perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2016.
Mello, De Anthony, Gerald O'Collins, Daniel Kendall, and Jeffrey LaBelle. *Seek god everywhere: Reflections on the spiritual exercises of st. ignatius*. New York, NY: Image/Doubleday, 2010.
Mercadante, Linda A. *Belief without borders: Inside the minds of the spiritual but not religious*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014.
Merton, Thomas, Robert Giroux, William H. Shannon, and Robert Barron. *The seven storey mountain*. Park Ridge, IL: Word on Fire, 2018.
Merton, Thomas, Thomas Merton, and Jonathan Montaldo. *The journals of Thomas Merton / entering the silence: Becoming a monk & writer / ed. by Jonathan Montaldo*. San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1996.
Merton, Thomas. *New seeds of contemplation*. Shatin, Hong Kong: Logos, 2002.
Miller-McLemore, Bonnie J. *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to practical theology*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2022.
Minter, Kelly. *No other gods: Confronting our modern day idols*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2008.
Mueller, John J. *What are they saying about theological method?* Ramsey, NY: Paulist Press, 2015.
Nash, Robert J., and Michele C. Murray. *Helping college students find purpose: The campus guide to meaning-making*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Imprint, 2010.
Newton, Fred B., Steven C. Ender, and John N. Gardner. *Students helping students: A guide for PEER EDUCATORS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
Newton, Fred B., Steven C. Ender, and John N. Gardner. *Students helping students: A GUIDE FOR PEER EDUCATORS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
Ormerod, Neil, Erich Lessing, and Tory Herman. *Re-visioning the church: An experiment in systematic-historical ecclesiology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014.
Osmer, Richard Robert. *Practical theology: An introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2011.
Padovano, Anthony T. *The spiritual genius of Thomas Merton*. Cincinnati, OH: Franciscan Media, 2014.

Palestini, Robert H. *A commonsense approach to educational leadership: Lessons from the founders*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2012.
Palestini, Robert H. *Leadership with a conscience educational leadership as a moral science*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2012.
Palestini, Robert H. *The human touch in educational leadership: A postpositivist approach to understanding educational leadership*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003.
Palmer, Parker J. *To know as we are known: A spirituality of Education*. Seoul, Korea: InterVarsity Press, 2006.
Palmer, Parker J., Arthur Zajonc, and Megan Scribner. *The heart of higher education: A call to renewal*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010.
Palmer. *Let your life speak. ; listening for the voice of vocation*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2009.
Pandit, Vivek. *We are generation Z: How identity, attitudes, and perspectives are Shaping our future*. Dallas, TX: Brown Books Publishing Group, 2015.
Parks, Sharon Daloz. *Big questions, worthy dreams: Mentoring emerging adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and faith*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2019.
Parks, Sharon Daloz. *Big questions, worthy dreams: Mentoring young adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and faith*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
Pascarella, Ernest T., and Patrick T. Terenzini. *How college affects students: A third decade of research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991.
Patrick, Simon, James Mynde, Van der Gucht John, Gucht Michael van der, D. Midwinter, Richard Ware, Charles Rivington, et al. *A commentary upon the historical books of The old testament ...* London, England: Printed for D. Midwinter, A. Bettesworth and C. Hitch, J. and J. Pemberton, R. Ware, C. Rivington, F. Clay, A. Ward, J. and P. Knapton, T. Longman, R. Hett, and J. Wood, 2000.
Patterson, Kerry, Joseph Grenny, David G. Maxfield, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler. *Crucial accountability: Tools for resolving violated expectations, broken commitments, and bad behavior*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2013.
Patton, Lori D., Kristen A. Renn, Florence Guido-DiBrito, and Stephen John Quaye. *Student development in college: Theory, research, and Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Brand, 2016.
Peace, Jennifer Howe, Or N. Rose, and Gregory Mobley. *My neighbor's faith: Stories of interreligious encounter, growth, and transformation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014.
Peterson, Christopher, and Seligman Martin E P. *Character strengths and virtues a handbook and Classification*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2004.
Pfaff, Donald W. *Altruistic brain: How we are naturally good*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014.
Rainer, Thom S., and Jess W. Rainer. *The millennials: Connecting to America's largest generation*. Nashville, TN: B & H Pub. Group, 2011.
Rasor, Paul B. *Faith without certainty: Liberal theology in the 21st Century*. Boston, MA: Skinner House Books, 2005.

Ricoeur, Paul, and Mark I. Wallace. *Figuring the sacred: Religion, narrative, and imagination*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995.
Riley, Naomi Schaefer. *God on the Quad: How Religious Colleges and the Missionary Generation Are Changing America*. Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 2006.
Robinson, Ken, and Lou Aronica. *Finding your element: How to discover your talents and passions and Transform your life*. London, England: Penguin Books, 2014.
Roehlkepartain, Eugene C., Pamela Ebstyne King, Linda Wagener, and Peter L. Benson. *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in childhood and adolescence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2006.
Rolheiser, Ronald. *The holy longing: The search for a Christian spirituality*. New York, NY: Image, 2019.
Root, Andrew. *Christopraxis a practical theology of the Cross*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014.
Ross, Allen, ed. *Introduction to the devout life*. London: Dover , 2009.
Sanders, E. P. *Paul: The apostle's life, letters, and thought*. London: SCM Press, 2016.
Scharen, Christian, and Aana Marie Vigen. *Ethnography as Christian theology and Ethics*. London, England: Continuum, 2011.
Schmidt, Richard H. *Glorious companions: Five Centuries of Anglican spirituality*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003.
Sedgwick, Timothy F. *The Christian moral life: Practices of piety*. New York, NY: Seabury Books, 2008.
Seemiller, Corey, and Meghan Grace. *Generation Z goes to college*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2015.
Setran, David P. *Spiritual formation in emerging adulthood: A practical theology for college and Young Adult Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.
Siegel, Daniel J. *Brainstorm. the power and purpose of the teenage brain*. New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2013.
Silf, Margaret, and Margaret Silf. *Inner compass: An invitation to ignatian spirituality*. Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2007.
Slater, Thomas. *A short history of moral theology*. New York, NY: Benziger Brothers, 1909.
Small, Jenny L., and Christopher MacDonald-Dennis. *Making meaning: Embracing spirituality, faith, religion, and life purpose in student affairs*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis (Unlimited, 2015.
Smith, Christian Stephan. *Young Catholic America: Emerging adults in, out of, and gone from the Church*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014.
Smith, Christian, and Melinda Lundquist Denton. *Soul searching: The religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011.
Smith, Christian, Hilary Davidson, Kari Marie Christoffersen, and Patricia Snell Herzog. *Lost in transition: The dark side of emerging adulthood*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011.
Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. *The meaning and end of religion*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996.
Sternberg, Meir. *The poetics of biblical narrative: Ideological literature and the drama of reading*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999.

Stone, Howard W., and James O. Duke. *How to think theologically*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013.
Strauss, William, and Neil Howe. *The fourth turning: What the cycles of history tell us about America's next rendezvous with destiny*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press, 2009.
Strayhorn, Terrell L. *College students' sense of belonging: A key to educational success for all students*. New York , NY: Routledge, 2012.
Sundene, Jana L., and Richard R. Dunn. *Shaping the journey of emerging adults: Life-giving rhythms for spiritual transformation*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012.
Swinton, John, and Harriet Mowat. *Practical theology and qualitative research*. London, England: SCM Press, 2016.
Taylor, Charles W. *The skilled pastor: Counseling as the practice of theology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998.
Taylor, Walter F. *Paul, apostle to the nations: An introduction*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012.
Teasdale, Wayne, Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, and Beatrice Bruteau. *The mystic heart: Discovering a universal spirituality in the world's religions*. Novato, CA: New World Library, 2001.
Tetlow, Joseph A. *Making choices in christ: The foundations of ignatian spirituality*. Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2008.
Thompson, James Weldon. *Moral formation according to paul: The context and coherence of Pauline ethics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.
Tillich, Paul, and Harvey Cox. *The courage to be*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014.
Tillich, Paul. *Dynamics of faith*. London, England: Allen & Unwin, 1957.
Tillich, Paul. *Systematic theology*. London, England: SCM Press, 1978.
Trilling, Bernie, and Charles Fadel. *21st Century skills: Learning for life in our Times*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012.
Volf, Miroslav, and Dorothy C. Bass. *Practicing theology: Beliefs and practices in Christian life*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2013.
White, James Emery. *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and reaching the new post-Christian World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2017.
White, James Emery. *The rise of the nones: Understanding and reaching the religiously unaffiliated*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2014.
Wuthnow, Robert. *After heaven: Spirituality in America since the 1950s*. Berkeley, California: Univ. of California Press, 2023.
Zweig, Connie, and Steve Wolf. *Romancing the shadow: A guide to soul work for a vital, authentic life*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 1999.