
LOVE OR MONEY: VOCATIONAL ATTITUDES OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHER

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Public and private schools experience teacher shortages today, but the problem is acute in Catholic schools. Reasons given for the shortage in Catholic schools include salaries and benefits. Have teachers' views of teaching in a Catholic school changed from teaching as ministry or vocation to teaching as merely a job? This study discusses the sense of teaching as vocation among a sample of Catholic high school and elementary school teachers in the state of New York. It ascertains the sense of vocation among these teachers; correlates financial considerations with the sense of vocation; and illustrates that religious preference and practice, years of teaching and ownership, and presence of religious men and women affect how teachers see their job as ministry.

By the fall of 2000, observers were calling the shortage of teachers an epidemic and predicting that it could grow much worse as up to one million veteran teachers are slated to retire in the next year (Kantrowitz, Wingert, Tesoriero, Foote, & Downey, 2000). While this crisis is acutely felt in public schools, it is even more serious in private, including Catholic, schools. The United States Department of Education (Kantrowitz et al., 2000) reports that the annual growth in the number of classroom teachers from 1992 to 1998 has been 2.4% in public schools and only 1.2% in private schools. While historically Catholic schools were staffed by teaching orders of religious men and women, lay teachers currently make up the bulk of Catholic school faculties (Youniss & Convey, 2000).

Analysis of the national teacher shortage focuses on salaries, as they have increased in public schools by only 11% since 1995 (Kantrowitz et al., 2000). The traditional gap between public school and Catholic school teachers' pay

has exacerbated the problem (O'Keefe, Traviss, & Schuttloffel, 2000). But rarely examined is the motivation for teaching in the Catholic school as an extension of the teaching ministry of the Catholic Church. Although several studies cited throughout this paper focus on the vocational aspect of teaching, they also tend to center on teachers' willingness to transmit Catholic teaching (Helbling & Kushner, 1995), their sense of responsibility to transmit values (Lacey, 1998), personal acceptance of Catholic teaching (Benson & Guerra, 1985), and the effects on the school of belief in one's ministerial role (Convey, 1992).

The explanations for the teacher shortage in Catholic schools frequently point to remuneration (Cooke & Lund, 2000; O'Keefe, Traviss, & Schuttloffel, 2000). While the shift from religious to lay teachers has made evident a failure on the part of Church leaders to move from the concept of stipend to that of salary and adequate retirement benefits, there has been little attention paid to the shift from a view of teaching in the Catholic school as ministry or vocation to that of a profession or a job. In the past, men and women religious had no concerns regarding the financial remuneration for their work because their ministry arose out of their religious vocation. Catholic school leaders have assumed that there is a continued sense of vocation as motivation for staying in Catholic education.

The study discussed in this essay focuses on the sense of teaching as vocation among a sample of Catholic school teachers in schools located in New York City, Rochester, Long Island, and Troy, New York. It will ascertain the degree of the sense of vocation among both high school and elementary school teachers by factoring their religious preference, their years in teaching, whether they teach in a diocesan or congregation-owned school, and their intentions of remaining in Catholic schools. Finally, it will correlate teachers' financial considerations with their sense of vocation to determine whether the current teacher shortage is as much a vocation crisis as a financial one. The study will show that religious preference and practice, years of teaching and ownership, and presence of religious men and women have an effect on the teacher seeing his or her job as ministry.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

SHIFT FROM RELIGIOUS TO LAY TEACHERS

Religious communities of men and women have staffed Catholic schools for more than a century. The most dramatic trend in Catholic schools in the past 30 years is the decline in religious teachers and the increase in lay faculties. By 1970, the percentage of lay faculty in Catholic schools was 53% in elementary schools and 48% in high schools. By 1980, the figures had increased to 75% and 70%, and by 1990 to 88% and 83% respectively. Currently, 92%

of teachers in Catholic schools are laypersons (Youniss & Convey, 2000). Although there were many changes during that period, changes in the staffing patterns financially transformed the Catholic schools, since salaries have traditionally been tied to tuition (Youniss & Convey, 2000).

This change from religious teachers to lay teachers was predicted over 40 years ago. In his master's thesis in 1957, Josiah Stephens addressed the issue of increased numbers of lay teachers in the Catholic schools. Stephens noted that there must be more appeal to the good that these lay teachers could do in the Catholic schools and recommended that in order to entice and retain lay teachers, clergy, religious, and lay teachers must be educated to the importance that lay teachers will play in the future of Catholic schools. Stephens continued to suggest that if this group was properly educated the teaching profession would be made attractive to men and women and the teacher shortage would begin to be resolved.

TEACHERS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED

The demographics reported by Youniss and Convey (2000) indicate the impact of this change from Catholic schools being religiously staffed schools to schools encompassing a predominantly lay faculty. These lay teachers in Catholic schools resemble in many ways the lay teachers in the public schools, but there are also noted differences. Teachers' gender, age, and first degree are similar both for public and Catholic school teachers. As indicated in Table 1, advanced degrees and certification show a greater gap between public and Catholic school teachers, although the difference is not greatly significant. A great disparity exists, however, in the areas of certification and salary.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Teachers, 1993-1994

	Public		Catholic		Other Private	
	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary
% female	84	54	91	53	83	65
% minority	10	8	5	3	7	4
Mean age	42.9	43.5	41.9	42.9	41.4	40.9
% bachelor's	99	98	96	99	91	91
% master's	44	50	24	51	27	37
% Ph.D.	1	1	0	3	1	3
% certified in main field	92	92	67	64	51	45
Mean teaching salary	\$33,116	\$34,387	\$17,926	\$25,089	\$19,451	\$21,105

Source: Adapted from Youniss & Convey (2000)

Although some attempts have been made to enhance the status of the teacher, teaching is still considered by many to be a semiprofessional occupation (Lortie, 1975). Teachers in Catholic schools have fewer professional requirements; however, Catholic and public school teachers show similar trends in some areas of professional development such as mentoring programs and continuing education. Although there are some differences between the measured professionalism of public and Catholic school teachers, there are no significant differences (Youniss & Convey, 2000) (see Table 2). The relation of these data to the problem of the teacher shortage is crucial: The fact that teachers in Catholic schools are increasingly meeting the same standards and professional requirements as public school teachers has only made it easier for them to leave the Catholic school in order to teach in the public sector.

Table 2
Measures of Average Teachers' Professionalism, 1993-1994

	Public		Catholic	
	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary
Induction				
% in mentor program	27	26	26	29
Professional Development				
% receiving continuing education support	20	21	18	25
% participating in professional activities	74	66	64	57
School Environment				
% with influential principal	78	81	97	99
% with influential faculty	37	28	36	44

Source: Youniss & Convey (2000)

TEACHERS' MOTIVATION

Salary is but one component of the total compensation package. Catholic school teachers often lag behind their public school colleagues with regard to benefit packages including pension contributions. The attrition rate in non-public schools (10%) is nearly double the rate in public schools (6%). The great concern in this attrition rate report is the number of young teachers that are leaving the Catholic schools (O'Keefe, 1999) (see Table 3).

Table 3
Teachers Leaving the Profession

Age	Public	Non-public
<25	2.4%	17.1%
25-29	9.9%	12.0%
30-39	6.3%	14.5%
40-49	3.5%	7.7%
50-59	5.4%	4.5%
60-64	31.0%	10.4%
>64	32.4%	24.0%

Source: O'Keefe (1999)

Kantrowitz et al. (2000) point out that the United States Department of Education predicts that nearly half of the current teaching force of 2.6 million teachers will have to be replaced by 2010. Early retirement packages and smaller class sizes will account for the bulk of the shortage, but the authors also point out that half of all graduates of schools of education never set foot in a classroom. The teacher shortage in Catholic schools, however, presents a special problem because of its vocational nature. Through data collected in a teacher survey, this analysis will attempt to determine the level of vocation and its impact on the future of Catholic schools (see Appendix).

Five unique characteristics distinguish the ideal Catholic school teacher. The teacher: 1) creates a growth-conducive classroom environment as a Christian community builder; 2) is seen as committed to lifelong spiritual growth both professionally and communally; 3) ensures professional competence by continually renewing, updating, and applying knowledge; 4) acts as a spiritual guide; and 5) facilitates human development by relating religious truth and values to the lives of the students (Shimabukuro, 1994).

Love for teaching; love for working with the young; and commitment to Catholic education, the environment, ministry, and being a witness to faith are the reasons most frequently given by teachers to the question of why they chose to teach in a Catholic school (Convey, 1992). Catholic school teachers also indicate general job satisfaction despite the discrepancy between their salaries and those of their public school counterparts.

Teachers' attitudes toward workplace conditions generally show satisfaction with their working environment. This satisfaction is expressed by both public and Catholic school teachers in most areas, but the area designated as being least satisfactory is the area of salary as noted by the Catholic secondary school teachers (see Table 4).

Table 4
Selected Attitudes of Teachers on Teaching Conditions, 1993-1994
(Percent Agreeing)

	Catholic		Public	
	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary
Salary satisfaction	44	26	47	42
Parental support	58	85	43	83
Materials available	74	79	73	85
Share colleagues' views	87	95	79	90
Clear communication from principal	83	88	77	86
Conflict with school rules	22	18	32	15
Best effort useless	23	13	32	15

Source: Youniss & Convey (2000)

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The nature of the Catholic school teacher has been outlined in countless Church documents. *The Declaration on Christian Education* (Vatican Council, 1965) uses the terms "minister" and "vocation." *Teach Them* (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1976), a document from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, speaks of teachers' lifestyle and character as vital to their professional credentials; and *The Catholic School* (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977) emphasizes the "authentic apostolate" of teaching (#63). *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982) further refines the vocation of the teacher as "not simply a professional person...[but] one who helps to form human persons" (#16). *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988) concludes that unless the vocational aspects of teaching are present, "there is little left which can make the school Catholic" (#97). Although Church documents abound in citing the vocational nature of teaching, Hansen (1994) defines in a more secular sense the meaning of vocation when applied to the social and moral benefit to society and goes on to encourage the exploration of this meaning in the entire profession.

Research in the realization of this ideal has sought to prove that the existence of this sense of vocation has contributed to the success of Catholic schools. Chubb and Moe (1990) cited this in their study as an institutional component that makes Catholic schools "high performing schools" (p. 86). By surveying a total of 20,000 students, teachers, and principals in 500 high schools, they investigated, among other factors, the familiarity with and attention to mission among teachers. They concluded that this willingness to

provide service, as integral to the job, had a major impact on the quality of education delivered.

Benson and Guerra (1985) reported on a survey of 1,062 Catholic high school teachers. This study examined the beliefs, religious practices, experiences, values, and social and political attitudes of teachers. They found, among other things, that lay faculty's commitment and level of Church activity differed significantly from that of religious faculty. Although lay teachers tended to define their role in religious formation narrowly, they articulated a responsibility to foster tolerance and compassion among their students.

Convey's (1992) study cited the high degree of commitment and sense of collegiality and community among teachers in Catholic schools by reporting 25 years of research which included quantitative as well as qualitative studies. He concluded that there is a Catholic "school effect" that is, in large part, due to the high value teachers place on passing on moral values, devoting attention to the mission of the Catholic school, and living that mission.

Lacey (1998) examined personal value preferences among lay and religious Catholic high school teachers in a single diocese. By using a taxonomy of personal values, Lacey concluded that it is in the context of these values that the institutional mission is shared. The significance of her study is that previous research focused on the institutional beliefs of the Catholic Church. Lacey's study, centered on personal beliefs and based on a taxonomy developed by Allport (1937, 1961), found that faculty members tended to select the religious values over other value preferences, and that the economic orientation was last in order of preference. Differences among lay teachers and religious teachers were also significant, with the religious teachers indicating a stronger preference for religious values. Lacey concluded, "paramount to those who exhibit a religious value preference is the concept of unity" (p. 64). In other words, according to Lacey, it is this concept that allows individuals to build a life around an abiding philosophy. Most significant, and vital to the study discussed in this essay, is the following conclusion: "A teacher who demonstrates a strong religious value preference, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, may better serve the school community than a nominal Catholic" (p. 65).

Donovan's (2000) qualitative study of the moral orientation of six novice male teachers in three Catholic high schools brings the perception of the moral vocation of Catholic school teachers up to date. Donovan concluded that, although all six saw their jobs as participation in the ministry of the Church, their attitudes ranged from a sense of responsibility to proselytize to refusal to offer any moral guidance at all. Furthermore, Donovan noted that, although their administrators paid much attention to the professional development of these teachers, their spiritual development was wholly neglected.

O'Keefe (1999, 2000) examined teachers' motives for leaving the profession and urged Catholic school leaders to foster a sense of vocation and to

attend to the spiritual formation of teachers. He cited several programs currently in operation in Catholic colleges and universities that pair recent graduates with poor, Southern Catholic schools and suggested that national organizations need to network, to study the issue of remuneration, and to find further means of encouraging young people to work in Catholic education.

Schaub (2000) described 150,000 individuals currently teaching in Catholic schools and profiled four areas: training and professionalism, compensation, working environment, and job satisfaction. Although she reported positive results in the areas of job satisfaction and work environment (e.g., ability to influence decision making in the school), the areas of training, professionalism, and compensation gave cause for concern. Schaub concluded that issues such as the maintenance of the Catholic identity of the school, continued employment of qualified professionals, and teacher morale need to be emphasized and addressed.

The necessity for teachers' awareness of their role as evangelical is explored by Shimabukuro (1998), who invites teachers' reflection on their vocation to further the mission of the Catholic Church. Five themes—teacher as community builder, as committed to lifelong spiritual growth, as committed to professional growth, as committed to students' spiritual formation, and as committed to students' human development—are presented in a year-long reflection format in her workbook.

O'Keefe, Traviss, and Schuttloffel's (2000) survey of Catholic dioceses offers some evidence as to why teachers choose not to teach in Catholic schools in the first place. In a survey which drew responses from 68%, or 122, of the nation's Catholic school superintendents, O'Keefe et al. determined that financial considerations made up the number one reason why teachers declined job offers at Catholic schools. Concomitantly, the survey revealed that only four dioceses, or 3%, reported that more than half of the prospective hires were Catholic; 82 dioceses, or 67%, reported that one in five prospective teachers was Catholic; and 34 dioceses reported this group as fewer than 10%. The applicant pool is not Catholic, giving proof to the allegation that Catholics are not only among the wealthiest Americans, but that they intend to stay that way (Youniss & Convey, 2000).

The retention factor detailed by O'Keefe, Traviss, and Schuttloffel (2000) found that nearly half of the dioceses reported that 50% of the teachers hired in 1994 have left their positions in Catholic schools. These findings, newly publicized, are closely related to the survey which is the focus of this paper.

Finally, the work of Cooke and Lund (2000), which examined the number and preparation of high school religion teachers, was revealing in its findings regarding motivation of these teachers. In surveying 959 teachers from all parts of the United States, the researchers found that while veteran teachers highly ranked on their list of motivators their enjoyment of teaching, knowledge that they made a difference in the lives of students, and their per-

sonal faith journey, newly hired and younger teachers tended to focus on salary. The researchers also focused on the teachers' own background and found that, while more of the younger teachers had attended Catholic high school, 22% had had no Catholic schooling at all. Finally, Cooke and Lund found that 60% of the lay teachers and 75% of the religious or clergy plan to leave teaching in the next 10 years.

THE SURVEY

Although the literature explores the idea of the vocation of the teacher, studies the willingness of teachers to uphold and pass on Catholic Church teachings, and measures Catholic school teachers' personal beliefs, recent studies have not correlated teachers' designation as Catholic and their sense of vocation. Indeed, two of the most recent studies, namely those of O'Keefe, Traviss, and Schuttloffel (2000) and Cooke and Lund (2000), emphasize the necessity of this focus on the vocational aspect of teaching in the Catholic school as a possible solution to the problem of teacher recruitment. This study focused on the aspect of what is termed a "sense of vocation" by surveying 124 Catholic school teachers, all working in New York State. The teachers were selected from two elementary diocesan schools; one diocesan high school; and two private, religious congregation-owned secondary schools.

Teachers were asked to indicate the number of years they have been a teacher, number of years in Catholic education, and number of years in the Catholic school in which they are currently employed. The religious status of the teachers as practicing Catholic, nonpracticing Catholic, or non-Catholic was determined by asking only the frequency of their attendance at church and nothing else. Of the 124 teachers who returned the survey, 80 or 64.5% were practicing Catholic, 25 or 20.2% nonpracticing Catholic, and 19 or 15.3% non-Catholic. It is noteworthy that, of the 25 that were eventually designated nonpracticing Catholic, 12 had self-selected the designation practicing Catholic; it was in the frequency of church attendance that the redesignation was made, as they reported "seldom" or "never" in church attendance.

The survey was given at the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year. The results might be different if it had been given midyear or at the end of the year, but that is another study.

Table 5 correlates the religious designation with mean number of years in teaching, teaching in Catholic schools, and teaching in the current school.

Table 5
Mean Number of Years in Teaching

	In Teaching	In Catholic School	In This School
(n=80) Practicing Catholic	22.75	20.8	10.9
(n=25) Nonpracticing Catholic	11.8	8.64	7.48
(n=19) Non-Catholic	15.5	9.52	8.1

As shown in Table 5, the teachers designated as practicing Catholics and non-Catholics have not only been involved as professionals in teaching longer than those designated as nonpracticing Catholics, but they have been involved in Catholic education longer. As will be seen later in this study, a correlation exists with their plans to remain in Catholic education. It can also be inferred that the non-Catholics are teachers who have had careers in public education, have retired, and now choose to spend the remainder of their professional lives in Catholic schools.

In a survey using a Likert scale, teachers were asked to indicate whether they *agreed strongly*, *agreed*, *disagreed*, or *disagreed strongly* with a set of 10 statements focusing on their motives for being a teacher in a Catholic school. The first five questions incorporated a high vocation sense, that is, implied a motivation that was highly religious in nature. Following is a list of those questions:

1. I teach in a Catholic school because I believe that it is God's choice for my life.
2. I teach in a Catholic school because I view teaching as a ministry.
3. I teach in a Catholic school because I desire to teach in this kind of educational environment.
4. I teach in a Catholic school because it is an opportunity to be a part of a faith community.
5. I believe that I have the responsibility to pass on my religious beliefs to my students.

The next five questions integrated a low vocation sense, that is, where motivation was more self-interested.

6. I teach in a Catholic school because of my own experiences during my youth.
7. I teach in a Catholic school because of the influence of a teacher I had.
8. I teach in a Catholic school because it is a means of gaining experience for future job opportunities.
9. I teach in a Catholic school because it was the only teaching position open for me.
10. I teach in a Catholic school because of the salary and the benefits.

An additional question asked the teachers' intention to remain in Catholic education.

11. I plan to spend the rest of my teaching career in a Catholic school.

The questionnaire may be found in the Appendix.

The responses to each of the groups of questions were correlated by indication of practicing Catholic, nonpracticing Catholic, and non-Catholic.

Table 6

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 1: I teach in a Catholic school because I believe that it is God's choice for my life.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	37.2	25.0	0.0
% Agree	49.4	50.0	33.3
% Disagree	10.2	20.0	58.3
% Disagree strongly	3.2	5.0	8.3

Table 7

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 2: I teach in a Catholic school because I view teaching as a ministry.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	44.1	25.0	0.0
% Agree	41.1	45.0	41.6
% Disagree	10.2	20.0	50.0
% Disagree strongly	4.6	10.0	8.3

Table 8

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 3: I teach in a Catholic school because I desire to teach in this kind of educational environment.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	53.9	47.4	38.1
% Agree	38.2	42.1	47.6
% Disagree	5.1	10.5	9.5
% Disagree strongly	2.8	0.0	4.8

Table 9

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 4: I teach in a Catholic school because it is an opportunity to be a part of a faith community.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	38.2	25.0	23.8
% Agree	50.0	55.0	38.1
% Disagree	10.2	20.0	38.1
% Disagree strongly	1.6	0.0	0.0

Table 10

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 5: I believe that I have the responsibility to pass on my religious beliefs to my students.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	36.2	20.0	9.5
% Agree	41.1	10.0	14.3
% Disagree	20.4	50.0	66.7
% Disagree strongly	2.3	20.0	9.5

Questions 1 and 2 are directed at eliciting a strong "vocation" response. As shown in Tables 6 and 7, the highest percentage of those *agreeing* or *strongly agreeing* on these two questions was from the practicing Catholics and non-Catholics. None of the nonpracticing Catholics *strongly agreed* with either question. (Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.) Of note is the fact that the nonpracticing Catholics indicated a stronger agreement in regard to working environment (Question 3). The reasons for this may have nothing to do with faith community, but with parental support, discipline, and other factors as noted in Table 4.

Questions 6-10 intended to show self-interest as the respondents' motivation for teaching in Catholic schools. Statements alluded to personal gain such as the view that the job was intended for training for a position elsewhere or that the Catholic school position was the only one open, as well as the influence of a teacher one had in school and salary and benefits. Of note is the fact that no group rated salary and benefits especially highly as its reason for teaching in a Catholic school, but correlated with the high or low sense of vocation, the importance of this factor can be viewed as either high or low.

Table 11

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 6: I teach in a Catholic school because of my own experiences during my youth.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	30.8	5.7	14.3
% Agree	42.6	5.2	28.6
% Disagree	21.7	42.3	52.4
% Disagree strongly	4.9	36.8	4.8

Table 12

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 7: I teach in a Catholic school because of the influence of a teacher I had.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	13.8	5.2	8.0
% Agree	38.6	10.4	16.0
% Disagree	34.6	52.6	52.0
% Disagree strongly	12.8	31.5	20.0

Table 13

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 8: I teach in a Catholic school because it is a means of gaining experience for future job opportunities.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	10.8	0.0	12.0
% Agree	10.8	36.8	32.0
% Disagree	39.6	31.5	28.0
% Disagree strongly	38.6	31.5	28.0

Table 14

Responses by Religious Preference to Question 9: I teach in a Catholic school because it was the only teaching position open for me.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	10.8	15.7	9.5
% Agree	11.9	31.5	19.0
% Disagree	35.6	21.0	38.1
% Disagree strongly	38.6	31.5	33.3

Table 15
Responses by Religious Preference to Question 10: I teach in a Catholic school because of the salary and the benefits.

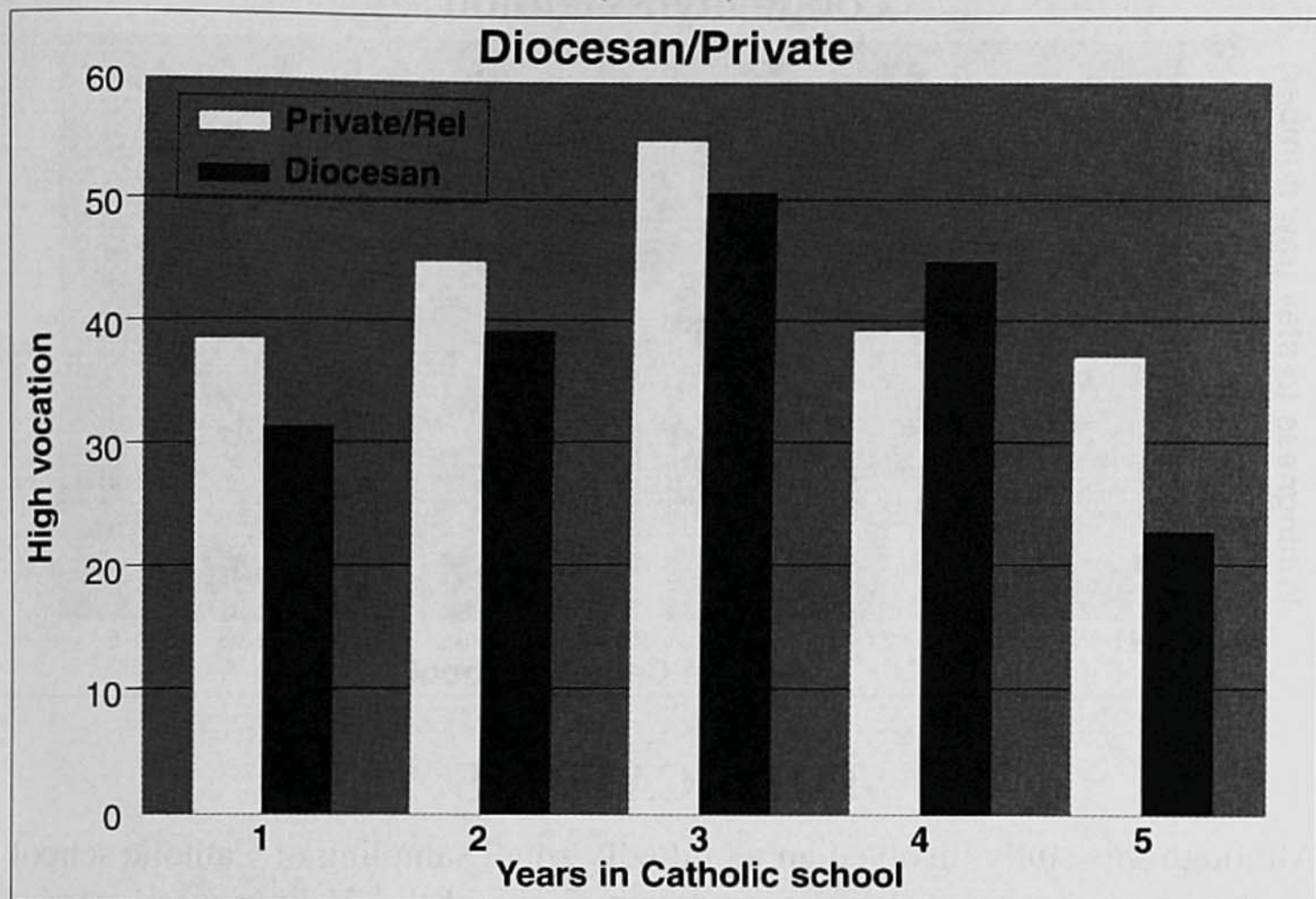
	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Agree	5.2	0.0	0.0
% Disagree	20.8	31.5	38.1
% Disagree strongly	74.0	68.4	61.9

Just as the answers to questions 1-5 indicated a strong sense of vocation among those designated practicing Catholics and non-Catholics and a weaker sense of vocation among those designated nonpracticing Catholics, the answers to questions 6-10 showed a similar trend. While no group indicated a motivation that could be considered personal financial gain, the answer to question 8 is revealing in its results. In responding to question 8, 21.6% of the practicing Catholics indicated that they see their job in the Catholic school as an entree into an eventual public school position; 36.8% of the non-Catholics expressed this; and 44% of the nonpracticing Catholics indicated that they may be biding their time until a public school position is open to them.

The survey also compared the sense of vocation between those teachers who work in diocesan schools and those who work in private schools, specifically, those owned, operated, and staffed by members of religious orders. Figure 1 shows that teachers who work in schools owned, operated, and staffed by members of religious orders had a higher sense of their job as vocation than those in the diocesan schools. One might infer that because these schools that are owned by religious orders have a more defined charism or character than diocesan schools, the appreciation for mission is stronger. Also, the literature cited has traditionally found that religious men and women have had a greater sense of teaching as vocation, concomitant to their vocation to religious life. The presence of religious men and women, albeit small at the present time, may yet hold significant sway over their lay colleagues. The presence of religious in diocesan schools may not have the same effect because of the nature of diocesan schools; they might be considered generic. Having a cachet or special character based on specific core values might account for this difference. This may be a point for diocesan leaders to consider when designing teacher formation programs and for religious congregations to consider in deciding to staff or sponsor schools.

Diocesan school leaders might also wish to emulate the practices of schools owned, operated, and staffed by religious orders in crafting a mission statement; defining core values, traditions, and religious practices; and attending to the development of teachers' faith life.

Figure 1
Comparison of Diocesan/Private Schools for High Vocation
(N=124)



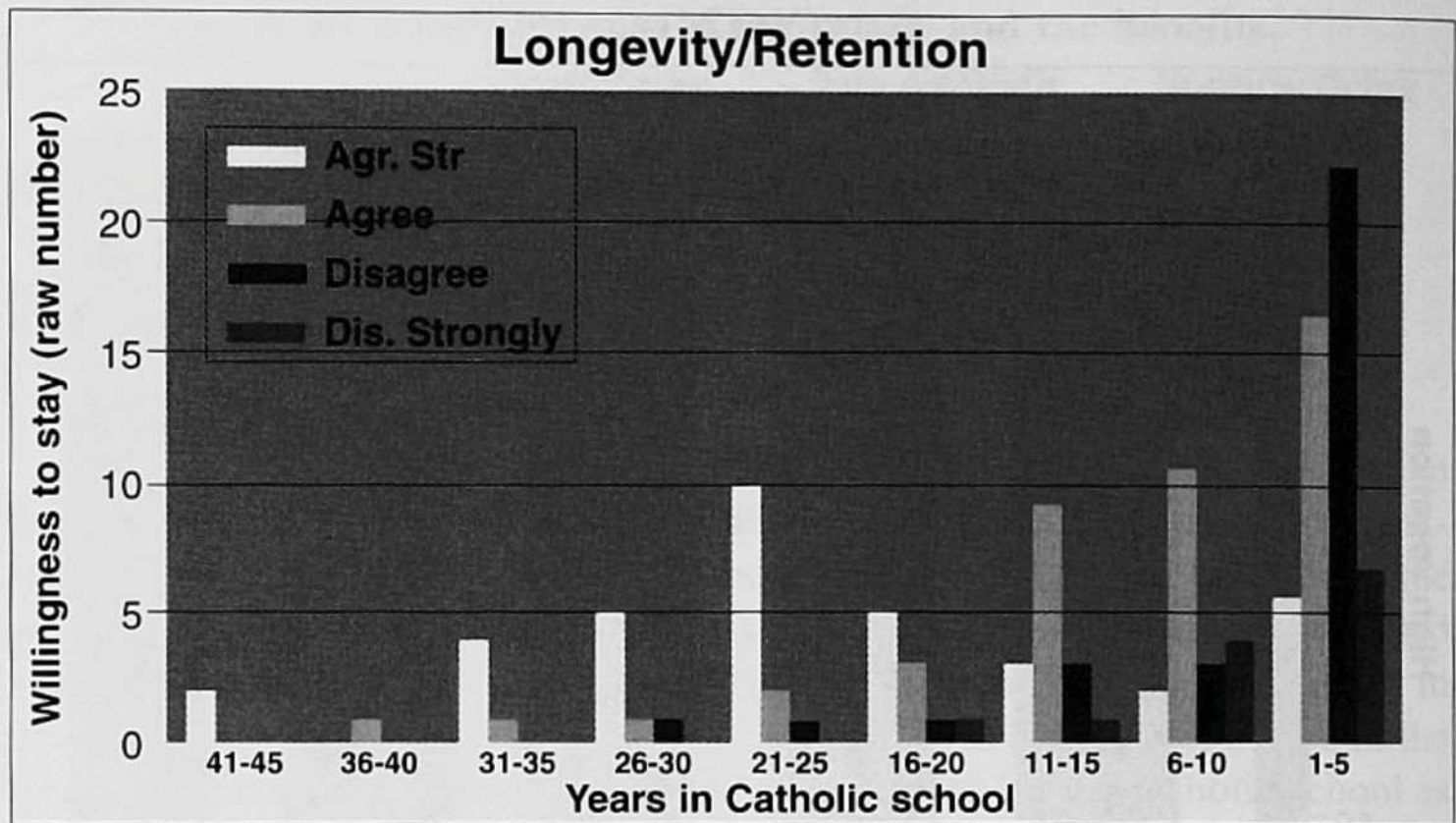
THE PROBLEM OF RETENTION

The problem of teacher recruitment is connected to the problem of teacher retention. O'Keefe, Traviss, and Schuttloffel (2000) found that 50% of the teachers hired by the respondent dioceses in 1994 had already left barely six years later. While Archer (2000) reported that most teachers who leave Catholic schools do so in order to teach in public schools, a significant percentage leave teaching altogether. This survey asked teachers in question 11 to indicate their willingness to spend the rest of their teaching career in Catholic education. The information was then broken out according to indication of religious affiliation and number of years in Catholic education. The results are shown in Table 16 and Figure 2.

Table 16
Responses to Question 11: I plan to spend the rest of my teaching career in a Catholic school.

	Practicing Catholic	Non-Catholic	Nonpracticing Catholic
% Agree strongly	37.5	0.0	10.5
% Agree	32.3	18.1	47.4
% Disagree	19.8	54.5	36.8
% Disagree strongly	10.4	27.3	5.2

Figure 2
Retention Willingness by Years in Catholic School



IMPLICATIONS

Although this study involved an admittedly small sampling of Catholic school teachers, some conclusions may be drawn. Some of the findings were surprising; others were to be expected. The conclusions based upon the research and the survey lend themselves to several directives for administrators.

The sense of vocation appears to be higher among those designated as either practicing Catholics or non-Catholics, while it seems lower for those designated nonpracticing Catholics. Perhaps this lack of commitment to any religious group affects their lack of commitment to the career of teaching—a career which demands commitment.

The longer the teacher has been in the Catholic school, the greater is the willingness to remain teaching in the Catholic school. Practicing Catholics and non-Catholics had greater longevity in Catholic education than did nonpracticing Catholics.

Table 17

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 1 – I teach in a Catholic school because I believe that it is God's choice for my life.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	23.4	35.0	14.2	9.0	52.3
% Agree	48.9	40.0	71.4	72.7	30.9
% Disagree	21.2	2.0	14.2	9.0	9.5
% Disagree Strongly	4.2	5.0	0.0	0.0	7.1

Table 18

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 2 – I teach in a Catholic school because I view teaching as a ministry.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	14.8	35.0	28.5	45.4	59.5
% Agree	57.4	40.0	57.1	36.3	26.1
% Disagree	19.1	20.0	14.2	18.0	7.1
% Disagree Strongly	4.2	5.0	0.0	0.0	7.1

Table 19

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 3 – I teach in a Catholic school because I desire to teach in this kind of educational environment.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	34.0	35.0	42.8	54.5	76.1
% Agree	55.3	50.0	50.0	27.2	21.4
% Disagree	10.6	15.0	0.0	9.0	0.0
% Disagree Strongly	0.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	2.3

Table 20

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 4 – I teach in a Catholic school because it is an opportunity to be a part of a faith community.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	27.6	15.0	14.2	45.4	59.5
% Agree	48.9	60.0	64.2	45.4	33.3
% Disagree	21.2	25.0	21.4	9.0	7.1
% Disagree Strongly	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Table 21

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 5 – I believe that I have the responsibility to pass on my religious beliefs to my students.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	21.2	20.0	21.4	45.4	42.8
% Agree	34.0	50.0	42.8	36.3	30.0
% Disagree	36.1	20.0	35.7	18.1	9.5
% Disagree Strongly	6.3	10.0	0.0	0.0	2.3

Table 22

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 6 – I teach in a Catholic school because of my own experiences during my youth.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	19.1	20.0	14.2	18.1	45.2
% Agree	27.6	50.0	28.5	45.4	33.3
% Disagree	40.4	25.0	28.5	18.1	11.9
% Disagree Strongly	8.5	5.0	21.4	18.1	7.1

Table 23

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 7 – I teach in a Catholic school because of the influence of a teacher I had.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	2.1	0.0	7.1	18.1	28.5
% Agree	29.7	45.0	14.2	36.3	26.1
% Disagree	53.1	30.0	57.1	27.2	28.5
% Disagree Strongly	10.6	25.0	21.4	18.1	14.2

Table 24

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 8 – I teach in a Catholic school because it is a means of gaining experience for future job opportunities.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	14.8	5.0	0.0	0.0	7.1
% Agree	40.4	15.0	0.0	9.0	9.5
% Disagree	27.6	45.0	64.2	45.4	28.5
% Disagree Strongly	12.7	35.0	28.5	45.4	52.3

Table 25

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 9 – I teach in a Catholic school because it was the only teaching position open for me.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	4.2	25.0	7.1	18.1	14.2
% Agree	34.0	10.0	7.1	18.1	4.7
% Disagree	34.0	25.0	42.8	18.1	35.7
% Disagree Strongly	25.5	40.0	42.8	45.4	42.8

Table 26

Respondents' Sense of Vocation in Relation to Years of Experience Teaching in Catholic Schools: Question 10 – I teach in a Catholic school because of the salary and the benefits.

Years Teaching	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20+
% Agree Strongly	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% Agree	6.3	0.0	0.0	9.0	0.0
% Disagree	34.0	0.0	28.5	27.2	20.5
% Disagree Strongly	55.3	100.0	71.4	63.6	79.4

Although salary dissatisfaction was high among all groups, it was highest among the nonpracticing Catholics. In fact, it was this group that scored highest in the areas that were concerned with self-interest.

The sense of vocation was higher among teachers in schools owned, operated, and staffed by religious communities of men and women than among teachers in diocesan schools. Although diocesan schools may have a few religious men and women on staff, their presence does not have the same effect as it does in private schools.

Finally, the results showed that the personal notion of one's being a practicing Catholic is changing; frequency of church attendance did not appear to be essential to teachers' definition of "practicing."

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

While this study looked closely at the motivation of Catholic school teachers and correlated their religious practice, their longevity in the Catholic school, and their willingness to remain in Catholic education, the issue of money should not be dismissed. In a cover story focused on the current teacher shortage, Kantrowitz et al. (2000) indicated that monetary considerations affect public school teachers, most of whom earn between 25% to 50% more than Catholic school teachers. In other words, money is an issue with teachers in public and Catholic schools, and, in all likelihood, the salary and benefit demands of teachers will never be met to their satisfaction. When compared with salaries and benefits of workers in jobs other than education, the teacher salary is low, even taking into account the fact that it is, for the most part, a 10-month job.

While salaries and benefits must be given urgent attention, several conclusions and inferences from the survey offer solutions and direction for Catholic school leaders and may offer hope because of the unique role of the Catholic school teacher in the context of the evangelizing mission of the Catholic school.

First, administrators and hiring agents need to consider both the religious affiliation and level of commitment to that affiliation of candidates for teach-

ing positions. As the survey showed, practicing Catholics and non-Catholics had proportionately more experience in Catholic education and a greater propensity to remain in Catholic education. Furthermore, they tended to evidence a greater sense of vocation by agreement with questions 1 through 5, indicating a high sense of the job as vocation.

Second, administrators of diocesan schools and diocesan leaders should study the reality of a higher sense of vocation among teachers who work in schools owned, operated, and staffed by religious congregations. The special character and history of these schools may offer a greater sense of mission and the presence of members of the religious congregation on the faculty may heighten this awareness of the special character of the school.

Third, attention must be given to the spiritual and religious formation of all teachers. While there has been an increased emphasis on the professional preparation and development of Catholic school teachers as evidenced by the high percentage of certified teachers in Catholic schools, not much attention has been devoted to spiritual growth. The research of Cooke and Lund (2000) presented herein enforces this need.

Fourth, several dioceses now require certification of Catholic school teachers as catechists, thus familiarizing these teachers, especially younger and newer teachers, with Church doctrine. As O'Keefe, Traviss, and Schuttloffel's (2000) and Cooke and Lund's (2000) research has shown, more and more teachers coming to Catholic schools are not Catholic, and many of those who are Catholic did not attend Catholic school.

Fifth, national Catholic education efforts need to focus on the teacher shortage as a true vocation crisis. In fact, O'Keefe, Traviss, and Schuttloffel's (2000) and Cooke and Lund's (2000) research pointed out that the most successful recruitment efforts relied heavily on personal appeals to young people.

Sixth, the problem of retention must be faced on two fronts. First, the issue of salaries and benefits will not go away. While the demand for more pay and smaller class sizes by public school unions continues to dominate the national teacher shortage debate, more and more districts are raiding Catholic schools for teachers, enticing them with sometimes triple what they are currently earning. This has had a deleterious effect on both numbers and morale, and Catholic schools will continue to lose teachers at a perilous rate. Veteran teachers in Catholic schools experience significantly smaller salary increases the longer they remain in Catholic education (Youniss & Convey, 2000). Coupled with the minuscule pensions or lack thereof, veteran teachers feel more and more obligated to prepare for retirement by fleeing to public schools.

The second part of the retention question has to do with the survey's results regarding those teachers who were designated nonpracticing Catholics. The finding that these teachers had a lower sense of their job as

vocation and a lesser willingness to remain in Catholic education than the practicing Catholics or the non-Catholics has ramifications for Catholic school administrators. School leaders may need to ask prospective teachers about their affiliation and practice; certainly they are permitted by law to do so because of the pervasive religious nature of the schools.

The current success of Catholic schools and the national attention they are drawing because of their success is in danger of being obviated by the teacher shortage crisis. This study has been conducted in the hope of shedding some light on the special nature of the shortage in Catholic schools and in order to suggest some steps for Catholic school leaders to take to ease the crisis. Is it love or money? It is, in the main, some of each, and for Catholic school leaders to solve the problem, they must realize that it must be a two-front approach. While Catholic school leaders look for ways to pay teachers more, they should be capitalizing on the high sense of vocation among most teachers and increasing that sense among those who are not so much committed to the Church as to her schools.

CONCLUSIONS

Of the survey sample, the numbers of teachers fell evenly on either side of the aggregate with an almost equal number of novice and veteran teachers. The sense of vocation of the novice (first- through fifth-year) teachers, however, is shared more with the group of teachers in the next age cohort than with the veterans of more than 20 years.

While the novice teachers evidenced a sense of vocation, it is not as strong as that of the veterans of more than 20 years. Like their fellow teachers in the 6-10, 11-15, and 16-20 years' experience categories, they *agreed* more often than *agreed strongly*. In contrast, the veterans with more than 20 years in Catholic education tended to *agree strongly* more frequently.

Critical to assessing the high sense of vocation are questions 1 and 2: I teach in a Catholic school because I believe that it is God's choice for my life; and I teach in a Catholic school because I view teaching as ministry.

Twenty-three percent of the novice teachers *agreed strongly* with question 1, and only 15% with question 2. Forty-nine percent *agreed*, however, with question 1, and 57% with question 2. This may indicate a tentative exploration of their motivation; they are idealistic, but not yet committed. As the cohorts age out, the tendency to *agree strongly* with questions 1 and 2 decreases by percentage, to a point.

For the years 6-10, 35% *strongly agree* on question 1, and 35% *agree strongly* on question 2. For years 11-15, 14% and 28% *strongly agree* on questions 1 and 2 respectively. In the 16-20 cohort, 9% and 45% *agree strongly*. When it comes to the veterans with more than 20 years' experience, 52% and 59% *agree* to questions 1 and 2 respectively.

It would seem that the longer one remains in teaching in the Catholic school the more one experiences a diminution of the sense of vocation. However, those who stay for more than 20 years experience a rise in the sense of the job as ministry.

For the low-vocation questions, questions 8 and 9 are crucial because they point to clearly self-interested motives: I teach in a Catholic school because it is a means of gaining experience for future job opportunities; and I teach in a Catholic school because it was the only teaching position open for me.

The novices *agreed strongly* with question 8 15% of the time and with question 9 only 4% of the time. The teachers with 6-10 years of experience *agreed strongly* with question 8 5% of the time and with question 9 25% of the time. Teachers with 11-15 years *agreed strongly* with questions 8 and 9 0% and 7% respectively. Teachers with 16-20 years *agreed strongly* 0% and 18%. The veterans with more than 20 years *agreed strongly* 7% and 14%.

While they scored high on the high sense of vocation, the veterans may be reflecting several factors in their lives by their responses to questions 8 and 9. First, although they indicate high job satisfaction and high sense of vocation, they may be at a point in their lives where they are actively seeking higher pay. Second, they may be reflecting on why they got into Catholic education in the first place. Third, they may be looking toward administrative positions as the next step in their careers.

Finally, when administrators are planning teacher formation programs, attention should be given to novice teachers. As their responses to the survey indicated, they are still tentative about their sense of vocation. Their responses indicate that it is present, but not strongly. Teacher formation programs in Catholic schools need to focus on this aspect of the position and foster the idea of teaching as ministry. Teachers in the middle years need renewal to rekindle that sense of vocation, and the veterans should be asked to share their sense of what they do. This would allow the veterans to articulate their experience, renew it, and have the opportunity to mentor the novice teachers.

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APPENDIX

TEACHER SURVEY

Dear Teacher,

I am conducting a survey of teachers' beliefs about their job as part of a research project. I am very grateful to you for taking time out of your busy schedule to answer these few questions.

The survey forms are confidential; please do not write your name. I'd like them back as soon as possible, so please give your completed form to your principal in the accompanying envelope so that she/he may return them to me for collating and interpretation.

Thank you for your help. May your school year be blessed.

Sr. Carol Cimino

For the following questions, place an "x" in the appropriate blank.

1. Please check all that apply in this question.

_____ elementary school teacher (grades preK-6)

_____ middle school teacher (grades 7-8)

_____ high school teacher (grades 9-12)

2. I have been engaged, professionally, in teaching for _____ years.

3. I have been engaged as a Catholic school teacher for _____ years.

4. I have been teaching in this school for _____ years.

5. I am a Catholic _____ yes _____ no

6. I am a practicing Catholic _____ yes _____ no

If you indicated that you are a Catholic in question 5, please answer question 7, and then proceed to question 8. If you indicated that you are not a Catholic in 5, please go on to question 8.

7. I attend Church _____ daily _____ weekly _____ once a month _____ less than once a month _____ never.

8. Please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly with the following statements by circling the appropriate number.

Agree strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	
1	2	3	4	
1. I teach in a Catholic school because I believe that it is God's choice for my life.	1	2	3	4
2. I teach in a Catholic school because I view teaching as a ministry.	1	2	3	4
3. I teach in a Catholic school because I desire to teach in this kind of educational environment.	1	2	3	4
4. I teach in a Catholic school because it is an opportunity to be a part of a faith community.	1	2	3	4
5. I believe that I have the responsibility to pass on my religious beliefs to my students.	1	2	3	4
6. I teach in a Catholic school because of my own experiences during my youth.	1	2	3	4
7. I teach in a Catholic school because of the influence of a teacher I had.	1	2	3	4
8. I teach in a Catholic school because it is a means of gaining experience for future job opportunities.	1	2	3	4
9. I teach in a Catholic school because it was the only teaching position open for me.	1	2	3	4
10. I teach in a Catholic school because of the salary and the benefits.	1	2	3	4
11. I plan to spend the rest of my teaching career in a Catholic school.	1	2	3	4

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