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AN INVESTIGATION INTO CHAPLAINCY

IN

IRISH CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

(Two Volumes)

VOLUME 1

by

Máire Maighread Fennin

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR IN PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

TRINITY COLLEGE

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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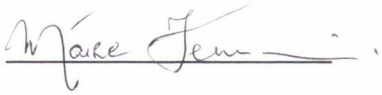

Máire Fennin.

October 1999.

SUMMARY

This qualitative study investigates chaplaincy in voluntary Catholic secondary schools in the Republic of Ireland. It is an exploratory study in which focus groups, interviews and a questionnaire were used to elicit the perceptions of the chaplains regarding their objectives, functions, role and experiences in connection with their work as school chaplains. The study's emphasis is not on the effectiveness of school chaplaincy but on its structure and internal processes. As no equivalent research on Catholic school chaplaincy could be found it is an innovative research study.

Because of the dearth of literature on school chaplaincy, the views and expectations of the Irish hierarchy, as appointers of chaplains to schools, were sought with regard to school chaplaincy and its role in education. The information received was then used as a point of departure from which to embark on the research. Other interested bodies, e.g. school trustees and CORI were also asked for their policies and views regarding chaplaincy.

As chaplains are official representative of the Church in schools, the thesis first discusses the position of the Church as regards Catholic education. It also

examines school ethos, school climate and the need for spirituality since these relate to the chaplain's remit.

Major differences were found between school based and parish based chaplains. The former appear to contribute widely and meaningfully to the faith life and spiritual vitality of school environments and to pastoral care structures and services afforded to both students and staff. The latter's work in schools seems to be generally sporadic and scant due to priority of commitment to parish duties, many of which are unpredictable. Further to this school based chaplains were found to be sub-divisible into four different models of chaplaincy, each of which possesses particular strengths and values and contributes in a special way to the life of the school community.

The results also showed that the most common cause of stress to chaplains in the voluntary sector is lack of recognition on the part of the Department of Education and Science as well as discrimination between themselves and chaplains in State schools. Yet, they expressed a sense of achievement from their work and a vision for the future of chaplaincy which is far-reaching.

The thesis recommends that this vision be realised. Its proposals include that chaplains be trained, enjoy professional status in schools, be State paid and employed on a permanent basis as are teachers. It also recommends a clear definition of their role in schools and a full understanding and acceptance of that role by principals, staff, students, parents and society as a whole.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Associations:

AMCSS	Association of Managers of Catholic Secondary Schools
ASTI	Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland
CCMS	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools: Northern Ireland
CMCSS	The Council of Managers of Catholic Secondary Schools
CHA	Catholic Headmasters' Association
CMRS	Conference of Major Religious Superiors (whose name was changed to CORI)
CORI	Conference of Religious of Ireland
SCA	School Chaplains' Association
TBA	Teaching Brothers' Association

Other Abbreviations:

RE	Religious Education
PBC	Parish based chaplain
SBC	School based chaplain
JLO	Junior Liaison Officer

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

It is natural in a society undergoing unprecedented social and cultural change that much of the recent debate in Ireland concerned the future of education. In keeping with the expectations of society, the providers of second level education have had to cope with considerable expansion of the curriculum and of the pastoral needs of the pupils in schools. Simultaneously, in Catholic voluntary secondary schools, there has been a modification of traditional resources in the form of diminishing numbers of religious personnel. McDonnell (1995) stresses that, as the prescribed curriculum has expanded to become more fashioned to the needs of a technological age, some facets of education have declined as their value has become less readily apparent in the market place. There is a growing functionalism among pupils and their parents as industrial interests have increasingly exerted their influence. Consequently, the realm of education and the education system have come under mounting pressure from a multiplicity of forces as they attempt to satisfy the increased expectation placed upon them by Irish society (McDonnell 1995: vi).

Yet, in this changing and evolving situation, it is incumbent upon the custodians and providers of Irish education "to preserve what is best in our society's inheritance, while at the same time engaging in constructive dialogue with changing cultural modes" (Cassidy 1995: 33). Gallagher (1997) writes that "the whole zone of culture is inevitably the place where meanings are formed, consciously or unconsciously" (Gallagher 1997: 29) and that there may be a dichotomy at present between the official vision of the school and the "unofficial cultural agenda lived in the daily praxis of both school and society" (ibid.: 28). Therefore, he invites education to become counter-cultural in the sense of helping students to identify the dehumanising factors present in today's lifestyles and assumptions (ibid.: 25), listing "religious anaemia, secularist marginalisation, and anchorless spirituality" among issues to be addressed (ibid.: 21). Breen and Donaldson (1997) also warn that a holistically directed vision of education must now be articulated and presented and must not be lost to a narrow market driven system (Breen and Donaldson 1997: 11).

Education has to centre on those issues that society currently values. Williams (1995a) points out that:

> Our values are woven into the stuff of how we conceive of human life and its purposes. And this conception of human life will inform the kind of education which we seek for our children (Williams 1995a: 87).

Ireland has undergone an unprecedented expansion in its economy in the present decade. In addition to a growth of consumerist values, there has been a fall in Church attendance paralleled by a rapid decline in the number of clergy and the available number of religious personnel in schools. This has resulted in a greater sense of secularisation in Irish society. Notwithstanding these changes, among the essential elements of Irish cultural inheritance are its Christian faith and spirituality. Most Irish parents still voluntarily choose to belong to a local worshipping community i.e. the Church (Cassidy 1995: 36). Furthermore, Cassidy states that:

> it is precisely the Church which gives expression to the ideals, values, and aspirations of the majority of the parents who have the primary responsibility for their children's education. Consequently, ... it would be strange, and indeed undemocratic, if the education system, which is so intimately concerned with the transmission of the ideals, values and aspirations of a community to the next generation, was somehow to exclude that institution/community whose very purpose is to give expression to this dimension of life (Cassidy 1995: 36).

In the light of this it can be argued that the Church's role as a partner in education must be acknowledged as one of the standard norms in Irish society.

However, with the decline in the presence and influence of the religious in voluntary schools, the expression of faith, which was a factor in the daily life of the school community may significantly diminish. Many factors are involved in the implementation of the principles of Catholic education and many variables contribute to making a school Catholic. The researcher

singled out the work of chaplains for consideration because, as a sub-group, they may be important indicators of the principles of Catholic education in schools today. The role of the school chaplain may be seen as a service likely to re-vitalise the influence of faith and spirituality in the school community. At the same time it may bring necessary counsel and support to many young people. In the longer term, the influence of school chaplaincy could provide a foundation for a renewed interest and greater participation in the life of the Church. This may balance the present trend towards secularisation in society and the diminution of its Christian values.

The Research Study

This research is qualitative. It examines the role of chaplaincy as it is practised at present in Catholic voluntary secondary schools. It began in October 1996 and spanned a three year period during which developments occurred in relation to chaplaincy in second level schools. These developments are discussed in Chapter 1, pages 40 to 42.

The research instruments were designed to focus on the concept of Catholic chaplaincy in randomly selected schools. An examination of various factors influencing school chaplaincy was made, such as the appointment

system, goals, objectives and aspirations, diversity of work, and the time and participation levels which chaplains invest in the school communities which they serve. These factors were researched from the perspective of the chaplains themselves who were working within the environment of Catholic education. The research was also carried out in the context of Church directives with regard to education in Catholic schools.

However, the work of chaplains is not quantifiable in that the end product of that work cannot be evaluated in order to test the effectiveness of what they set out to do. Their work in schools is largely in the affective domain of the lives of members of the school community and, therefore, many of the effects of the work of school chaplains are long term.

The study was based on a number of underlying assumptions:

1) That there is a distinct and unique value to Irish society in the existence of Catholic schools;

2) Voluntary secondary schools represent an ideal in education which the majority of parents support;

3) That the principles of Catholic education as articulated in the various official ecclesiastical documents are worthy of examination since, in the last decade of the twentieth century, they are still deemed suited to the spiritual formation of young people in Catholic schools;

4) In a society of diminishing religious numbers, chaplains have a role to play in the spiritual formation and well-being of young people;

5) That chaplains themselves have an especially valuable contribution to make in describing the nature and extent of their work, and have hitherto had too little opportunity to do that.

Geographical Locus of the Study

There is a total of 26 episcopal jurisdictions on the island of Ireland as shown in Figure 0.1. They comprise 4 archdioceses governed by archbishops (Figure 0.2), and 22 dioceses, each governed by a bishop. The boundaries of the dioceses were established at the Synod of Rathbreasil in 1110 A.D. (Milne n.d.: 12), thereby shifting the ecclesiastical power of the time away from the abbots and monasteries and into the hands of bishops and dioceses (Collins 1998: 3). A feature of these episcopal jurisdictions is that their boundaries do not wholly concur with political or administrative divisions such as the counties of Ireland. As a result of both this and of the modern political boundaries on the island of Ireland, only two dioceses, Dromore and Down and Connor, fall entirely within Northern Ireland. The remaining 24 archdioceses and dioceses fall either wholly or partially within the Republic of Ireland. The administration of the

The Dioceses of Ireland

Figure 0.1 : Diocesan Boundaries

(Source: Irish Catholic Directory 1997)

The Provinces

Provincial Boundaries: ——

Figure 0.2 : R.C. Provinces

(Source: Irish Catholic Directory 1997)

voluntary schools within the geopolitical boundaries of the Republic of Ireland is the responsibility of the Department of Education and Science.

The central focus of the study of the role of chaplaincy concentrated on school chaplains in the ecclesiastical Province of Dublin. In addition to the archdiocese, the ecclesiastical Province of Dublin comprises the dioceses of Kildare and Leighlin, Ossory and Ferns (Figure 0.3).

In 1994/1995, there were a total of 225,486 students attending 452 voluntary secondary school in the Republic of Ireland. Of these, the number of students attending 162 Catholic voluntary secondary schools in the ecclesiastical Province of Dublin was 90,933, 40.35% of the total (Dept. of Education and Science, 1995). Following either a postal questionnaire or telephone interview of school principals within the ecclesiastical Province of Dublin, the study focused only on those schools which had chaplains in the academic year 1996/1997.

Parameters of the Research Process

A synopsis of the research process is shown in Figure 0.4. This figure depicts the various areas from which information was systematically sought at different times throughout the research.

The Province of Dublin

Figure 0.3 : Dioceses in the Province of Dublin

(Source: Irish Catholic Directory 1997)

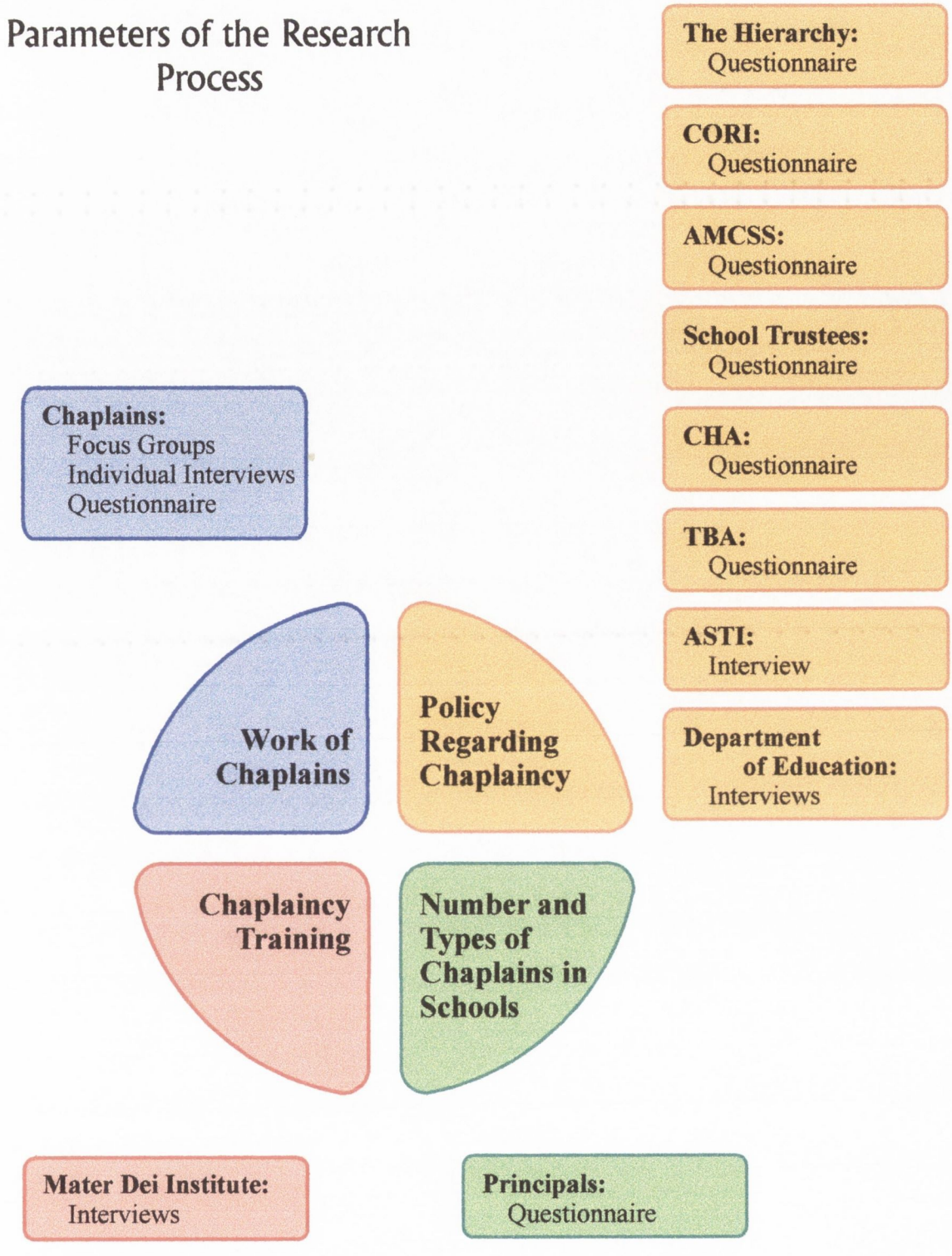


Figure 0.4 Parameters of the Research Process

In order to establish the context of the study, recognition was given to the role of the Catholic hierarchy, who have "overall responsibility for the ministry of school chaplains" (CCMS 1996: 21). A questionnaire was sent to each of the 24 members of the hierarchy with episcopal jurisdiction in the Republic of Ireland for the purpose of establishing the role, policy and expectations of the hierarchy in relation to chaplaincy in Irish voluntary secondary schools. Full responses were received from each of the 24 dioceses (see Appendix C, Vol. 2, page 205) and were taken into consideration in forming a basis for the focus group discussions with the chaplains.

Other organisations having a role of influence in Catholic education were subsequently sent either a questionnaire or were interviewed in order to seek their views, policies, and future plans regarding chaplaincy in the voluntary sector. Those consulted comprised the Conference of the Religious of Ireland (CORI), the Association of Managers of Catholic Secondary Schools (AMCSS), the Schools' Trustees, the Catholic Headmasters' Association (CHA), the Teaching Brothers' Association (TBA), the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland (ASTI) and the Department of Education and Science. This segment of the research relating to the hierarchy and other interested bodies is indicated in the yellow section of Figure 0.4.

All school principals within the Dublin ecclesiastical province were contacted either by questionnaire or telephone to ascertain the number and type of chaplains engaged in their schools. This segment of the research is portrayed in the green section of Figure 0.4.

The director and a member of staff of Mater Dei Institute of Education were interviewed in relation to the chaplaincy training-programme provided in the institute. This segment of the research is indicated in the red section of Figure 0.4.

However, the central emphasis of the study was on the work of the chaplains themselves. This segment of the research is represented in the blue section of Figure 0.4.

In its research this thesis set out to examine the objectives, role, functions, actual work, sense of achievement and difficulties of chaplains who served in voluntary secondary schools in the academic year of 1996/1997. Part of the work was that of making an analysis of their roles as perceived by the chaplains themselves. Part of the work also consisted of making an appraisal of how the future role of chaplaincy in voluntary schools might be carried out, and also its ultimate effect on those whom it was intended to assist.

Limitations of the Study

The research study has a number of limitations:

1. It is confined to chaplaincy in Catholic voluntary secondary schools in the Province of Dublin. As can be seen from the geographical extent shown in Figure 0.3, it takes account of chaplaincy in metropolitan schools in Dublin as well as schools in towns in the midlands and in the south-eastern part of the Ireland. While the results of the research may be applicable to the Republic of Ireland as a whole, this is not claimed to be an outcome of the study.

2. The researcher acknowledges the presence of other second level schools, both Christian and non-Christian, within the geographical area of the study and across the country at large. However, as stated in 1. above, the scope of the present study does not encompass these schools.

3. While acknowledging the arguments with regard to the value of Christian education in a Christian society, the researcher is not interested in the promotion of particular religious tenets. As a Deputy Principal in a Catholic voluntary secondary school, the researcher is not a chaplain, a priest, a member of a religious order or congregation, and is not in any way involved in religious ministry or education. Therefore, the research is

approached from a position of disinterest in the advancement of particular religious ideologies or beliefs.

4. This limitation is related to the approach taken in the study. Since the researcher has not undertaken any formal studies in theology there is no attempt to make an in-depth analysis of the theological qualifications of school chaplains. Therefore, a theological analysis of chaplaincy as a form of ministry, which might be of both interest and value in its own right, does not come within the scope of this thesis. Therefore, the approach taken in the research has been to examine the roles and functions and perspectives of chaplains from the point of view of their perception of their capacity and ability to add to the faith and spiritual dimension of the school community and to the pastoral care structures within their schools.

5. A specific limitation relates to other partners in education. No attempt was made to survey the views of staff members, parents, students or members of Boards of Management. The incorporation of such views might also be of value in their own right. However, the added scope of such a wider study would have overwhelmed the basic intent of the study in determining the role of chaplains in voluntary secondary schools as perceived by the chaplains themselves.

6. School outcome has been excluded. This is not to say that it is of no concern. In a system spending public or private money on an enterprise effectiveness matters

and it must be of concern. However, the effectiveness of school chaplaincy is outside the scope of this discussion.

7. Finally, chaplains who participated in the study requested confidentiality regarding their identities. Therefore, in order to maintain this confidentiality, neither the identities of the chaplains nor of the schools in which they minister are revealed in this thesis.

Terms Used in the Study

Certain terms have different meaning in accordance with their use. However, in this thesis some terms are used with one sense of meaning only, unless otherwise specifically stated. The following terms have particular meanings throughout this thesis:

Church:

Means the institutional Catholic Church of the Roman rite, or the Roman Catholic Church. The term refers to the institutional Church unless an alternative meaning is made obvious.

Catholic:

Refers exclusively to membership of the Catholic Church of the Roman rite.

School(s):

Is used to mean Catholic voluntary secondary school(s) only unless it is made clear that it means otherwise, for example in its use to denote 'community or comprehensive schools'.

Voluntary Secondary Schools:

Are second level schools that are privately owned by the order in the case of a school run by a religious order or by the diocese in the case of a

diocesan school or college. "In other countries, the privately owned 'voluntary' secondary school is the exception; in Ireland it is the norm" (A Manual for Management of Catholic Secondary Schools: 1991: 3). The vast majority of voluntary secondary schools are Catholic, founded to give specifically Catholic education to their pupils (ibid.).

State School(s):

Refers to community and comprehensive schools only.

Second Vatican Council:

A gathering in Rome of bishops of the Catholic church under the leadership of the Pope, the bishop of Rome. The Second Vatican Council, also known as Vatican II, was the twenty first ecumenical council of the Catholic church announced by Pope John XXIII on 25th January, 1959, and held in Rome in four sessions between 11th October, 1962 and 8th December 1965. The Second Vatican council was a meeting of bishops of the Roman Rite although representatives of other rites were also present. Sixteen documents dealing with various aspects of the church emanated from this Council.

Outline of the Thesis

A rationale for the study is examined in Chapter 1 and views cited by a diversity of bodies who have an interest in Catholic education are recorded. According to the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) "it is the bishop of the diocese who has overall responsibility for the ministry of school chaplains (CCMS 1996: 21). Therefore, the views of the Irish hierarchy were first sought and are noted in this chapter.

According to the Council of Managers of Catholic Schools (CMCSS) it is the function of trustees of Catholic

voluntary secondary schools to "act as guarantors that the school will continue to be run in accordance with the Catholic ideals and philosophy of the founders" (CMCSS 1991: 6) and to establish and underpin school ethos (CCMS 1996: 9). In view of this, the principal Catholic trustees were asked about their policy and views regarding chaplaincy in their schools.

The Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI), formerly known as The Conference of Major Religious Superiors (CMRS), is involved in the changing profile of religious orders and congregations in education. It has issued statements on the direction which Catholic voluntary secondary schools could follow in the future. CORI, therefore, was asked for its policy and views on chaplaincy in these schools. The position and policy of the Department of Education and Science and other interested bodies were also sought and the results are given here.

Finally, the Catholic school is deemed to be "a vital instrument in the Church's mission" (CCMS). In a statement of the CMCSS, academic development and achievement are not the sole objectives of Catholic education. The spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural and physical potential of students must also be developed and Catholic education must aim "to bring Catholicism alive in the life of the student" (CMCSS 1991: 11). As the focus of this research does not include an evaluation of this argument Chapter 1 simply presents the Catholic

Church's claim to a role in education in order to contextualise the discussion of chaplaincy within a Catholic school.

Part of the Church's argument lies in the fact that Ireland is a Catholic country and is largely composed of people who claim to be Catholic. This is the framework within which chaplains are working in Catholic voluntary secondary schools. Since the culture of a society is substantially transmitted to its younger generations through the education process, and since Catholicism is a significant component of the cultural heritage of the great majority of the Irish people, Chapter 2 examines Irish Catholicism. It does so from a historical perspective. It presents it as a precious, if diminishing, component of Irish cultural heritage, and it argues that Irish society should not allow the Christian values which Irish Catholicism has established to be lost as an inheritance to its future generations. It also asserts that the most effective way in which to ensure the continuance of this inheritance is through the education system in an appropriate manner.

Among the requirements of the hierarchy were that chaplains should be "innovative in maintaining the Catholic ethos within the school" (see Chapter 1, page 26). School trustees also expect that chaplains will promote and uphold the Catholic ethos of their schools (see Chapter 1, page 36 and 37). Moreover, the Second Vatican Council emphasised the importance of both ethos

and climate or 'friendly atmosphere' in the Catholic school (see Chapter 1, page 53). Chapter 3, therefore, explores the importance and effects of both school ethos and school climate in Catholic schools. Ethos and climate are terms which are frequently confused and used interchangeably. However, they are quite distinguishable from each other. Each is a distinct facet of the school environment and each impinges on the quality of life of the school community. The importance of both is examined in this chapter.

Chapter 4 explores the the need for spirituality, especially Christian spirituality in a Catholic educational environment. The rationale for this chapter is that both the hierarchy and the school trustees see spiritual formation as an important component in the educational environment of young people and as appropriate to the work of the school chaplain (see Chapter 1, pages 26 and 34). Furthermore, the CCMS emphasise the significance of the role of the chaplain in meeting the spiritual needs of the members of the school community (see Chapter 1, page 22).

The situation regarding the training of school chaplains is examined in Chapter 5. It should be noted that Ireland is the only country in the British Isles offering a full year training course directed specifically at the needs of second level school chaplains.

The methodology employed in the research is set out in Chapter 6. A brief outline of the research design is

also illustrated in Figure 0.5, showing how the focus groups, interviews and questionnaire were used to glean data for analysis. The groups and individuals who partook in the study are more fully described under the heading 'Participants in the Research' in Chapter 1, Vol. 1, pages 21 to 22.

Initial findings and their analysis are presented in Chapter 7, where the Status of Chaplains in schools is appraised, showing a marked difference between school based chaplains and parish based chaplains in their role in schools. Chapters 8 to 11 give an account of four models of chaplaincy discernible among school based chaplains, viz., the host-chaplain, the loiterer-chaplain, the helper-chaplain and the community builder-chaplain. Chapter 12 presents a comparative review of the fours different models of chaplaincy. Chapter 13 then explores chaplains' perceptions of the need for chaplaincy in schools and their vision for the future of school chaplaincy. Finally, in Chapter 14, a résumé of the findings and implications of the research are presented, and recommendations are made for the future of school chaplaincy.

It should be noted that no equivalent research on Catholic school chaplaincy in the Irish context, or indeed elsewhere, was available with which to draw fruitful comparison at the time the research study was undertaken. As a consequence, this research is wholly innovative.

Summary of the Research Design

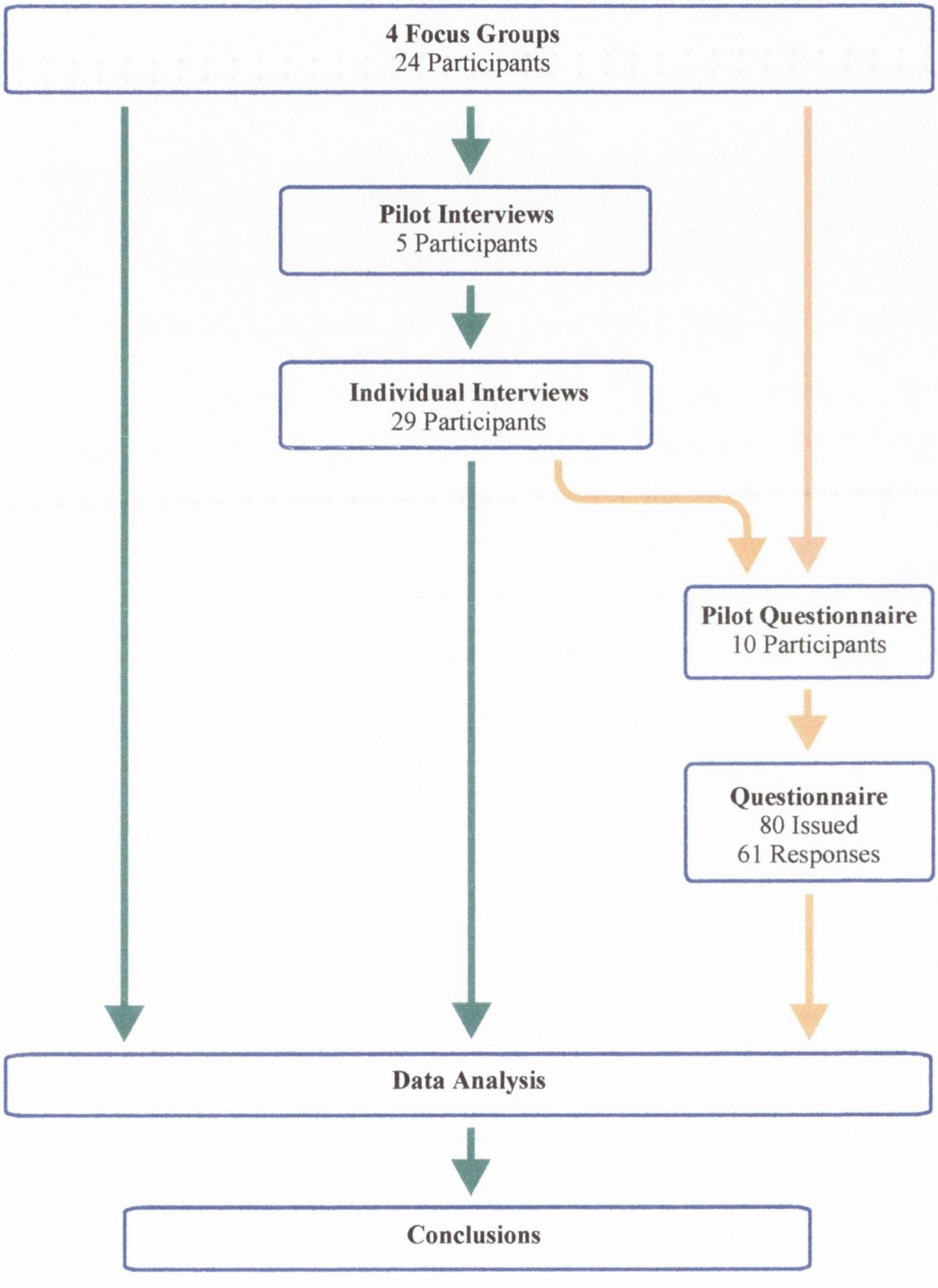


Figure 0.5: Summary of the Research Design

Chapter 1

The Rationale and Significance of Chaplaincy Within a Catholic Education System

CHAPTER 1

THE RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHAPLAINCY WITHIN A CATHOLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

A number of subject matters will be examined in this chapter which touch upon the work of chaplains within the secondary education system. Firstly, the focus of the research will be outlined followed by the views and expectations of the Irish Catholic hierarchy with regard to school chaplaincy in secondary education. Because of the utter paucity of existing documentation on the role of school chaplains in Irish secondary schools, the researcher sought the views of the Irish hierarchy who have Catholic voluntary secondary schools in their arch-dioceses or dioceses within the Republic of Ireland. This chapter notes their views and expectations regarding school chaplaincy in secondary schools.

Secondly, the policies, views and aspirations of the trustees of Catholic voluntary secondary schools, in relation to school chaplaincy, were sought and are recorded. According to the Conference of Religious of

Ireland (CORI), the religious congregations who provide secondary education in the Republic of Ireland:

> are trustees of over 360 voluntary secondary schools, attended by nearly 50% of the second level school going population. The fact that this level of involvement by religious in schools is being maintained at a time of great transition in religious life reflects the importance which congregations attach to education as part of their Christian mission. (CORI 1996: vii)

Religious congregations privately own their schools. They own the school buildings and lands, or 'real property', registered in their names. They also own the enterprise of education in their schools. However, congregational leaders are legally "obliged to hold school property in 'trust' for the purposes (mission) to which the congregation is currently committed - hence the use of the term 'trustee'" (CORI 1996: Chapter 1, page 5). The definition of trusteeship needs four elements:

1) It should indicate that the trust relates to a responsibility for Catholic education;
2) It should state that, within the overall responsibility for Catholic education, each congregation has a religious and educational philosophy which it must ensure is reflected in the ethos of the school;
3) It should make clear the legal basis for the trustee role; and
4) It should establish that decisions about the future of the school rest ultimately with the trustee, albeit following extensive consultation (CORI 1996: Chapter 1, page 6).

For the purpose of this study 27 trustees in total were contacted (see Appendix C, Vol. 2, page 216). Of these, 24 returned the completed questionnaire, while one wrote a letter explaining the position of the congregation.

Thirdly, information was gleaned from all Catholic voluntary secondary schools in the Province of Dublin, regarding the provision of chaplaincy service. The number and type of chaplains deployed in all of these schools was noted and the results are given in this chapter.

Fourthly and lastly, the function of a Catholic education system will be considered in the light of official statements on Catholic education in both conciliar and post-conciliar documents dating mainly from the Second Vatican Council.

1.1 The Focus of the Research

The focus of the research centred on a study of chaplaincy in Catholic voluntary secondary schools. Many voluntary secondary schools have either full-time or part-time chaplains. Officially, such chaplains are an unrecognised group of people who give of their time and commitment to schools and, thus, subscribe to the life of those schools.

However, voluntary secondary schools do not possess chaplains who are recognised by the Department of Education and Science, and who are employed on a salaried basis. The only chaplaincy service which they can draw upon depends on four factors:

1) the commitment of the leaders of the institutional church to the provision of a chaplaincy service to the schools;

2) the time and levels of undertaking which parish clergy can afford to devote to the school on a part-time basis;

3) availability of religious community members who can perform as chaplains to schools; and

4) other personnel available to the school, on a voluntary or privately paid basis, who are willing and able to work as chaplains.

This research proposes to examine the contribution of chaplaincy to secondary education as seen through the eyes of the contributors themselves.

1.2 Participants in the Research

The research population consisted of chaplains in Catholic voluntary secondary schools exclusively within the ecclesiastical Province of Dublin. A random sample of chaplains was chosen and asked to take part in the study. They worked in the schools indicated in Chapter 6, Vol. 1, page 235. A total of 24 chaplains participated in the focus group discussions. In addition, 10 chaplains in schools outside the Province of Dublin took part in the piloting and re-piloting of the questionnaire. A further 24 chaplains, together with 5 chaplains who had taken part in the focus groups, were then interviewed individually. questionnaires were sent out to a total of 80 chaplains.

This number represented 20 chosen at random from those who had already participated in either focus groups or individual interviews, and 60 others. A total of 61 responses to the questionnaire were received. As an assurance was given to the respondents that their contribution would be unattributable, the questionnaires are anonymous. Therefore it is not possible to differentiate between the chaplains who responded to the questionnaire and those who were either individually interviewed or who took part in the focus groups.

1.3 Dearth of Literature Referring to School Chaplaincy

A basic requirement of research is an understanding of the history of the subject of study. This means "acquiring sufficient knowledge of the subject area along with comprehending the significance of work already done in the field" (Hart 1998: 27). However, before starting this research, an extensive study of the literature regarding Catholic education failed to yield any substantial account of school chaplaincy. This is surprising in view of the CCMS's statement that:

> A key feature of a Catholic school is its chaplaincy provision. It is a fundamental expression of the Church's mission to respond to the personal and spiritual needs of each member of the school community (CCMS 1996: 21).

It was found that most of the literature about Catholic education contains no reference at all to chaplaincy. In

the following sample list of modern key works concerning Catholic education, reference to school chaplaincy either occurs minimally or is generally absent:

> CMRS (1991); Flynn (1992); Treston (1993); Curtis and Wilmot (1994); Feheney (1995); McLaughlin, O'Keeffe & O'Keeffe (1996); CORI (1997); Hogan and Williams (1997); Feheney (1998); Kennedy and Doyle (1998); Conroy (1999); Smyth (1999).

Because of the shortage of research material, this study of school chaplaincy is exploratory. Therefore, the basis of its investigation required careful consideration to establish an appropriate point of departure. In this thesis, the basis on which the investigation was founded on the views and statements received as a result of an approach to the Irish hierarchy.

1.4 The Views of the Irish Hierarchy on School Chaplaincy

A questionnaire was set out in order to establish the views of the Irish hierarchy in relation to school chaplaincy. This consisted of four questions, qualitative and quantitative, regarding the appointment and requirements of Catholic school chaplains. The questionnaire is set out in full in Appendix C, Vol. 2, pages 208 to 209. The accompanying letter included with the questionnaire is shown in Appendix C, Vol. 2, pages 206 to 207.

In the case of the Archdiocese of Dublin, the Education Secretary of the diocese was interviewed using

the questionnaire as a basis for the interview. The questionnaire was sent to the 23 other members of the hierarchy whose dioceses have jurisdiction within the Republic of Ireland. A full response was received in all cases. Most respondents took the opportunity to add a qualitative dimension to the quantitative section. This proved useful in examining the responses.

1.4.1 The Method of Appointment of Chaplains to Secondary Schools:

As no documentation or research was found to exist on the matter, the manner of appointment of chaplains was addressed in Question 1 (In the (arch)diocese, who usually appoints chaplains to secondary schools?). In all cases the answers to this question indicated that the archbishop or bishop appoints chaplains to voluntary secondary schools. However, in a number of cases the response indicated that the (arch)bishop's role in appointing a chaplain is influenced by consultation or association with other interested persons or bodies.

In some cases the consulting body was an interview board, viz.

> "The bishop always appoints after an interview board makes a recommendation."

In other cases, the consulting body might be the school itself or those closely associated with it, viz.

> "The bishop or the Board of Management";
> "The Bishop or the Trustees";

"The Archbishop in consultation with the school in question".

The bishop might also seek the advice of the parish priest, and the view of the school itself, viz.

"The Archbishop on the advice of his priest advisor. The school may express a view. The school principal's view will be accommodated if at all possible";

"The Bishop, and it is usually the local priest in the parish, or in the city, a member of one of the religious orders. In some secondary schools the Religious Order appoints the chaplain".

In the case of part-time chaplains, the method of appointment was stated to be pragmatic, viz.

"Full-time chaplains appointed by the bishop; part-time appointed by parish priest of the same parish";

"The bishop assigns personnel to the voluntary secondary schools, but many of these make their own arrangements";

"The bishop, or by the parish priest of the area".

Therefore, with few exceptions, the archbishop or bishop is involved either directly of indirectly in the appointment of chaplains to voluntary secondary schools.

1.4.2 The Criteria for Appointment to the Post of School Chaplain:

The criteria for the appointment of chaplains was addressed in Question 2 (What are the criteria for appointment to the post of school chaplain?). Answers to this question were allowed for in the form of qualitative data. Responses varied considerably and embraced a wide range of criteria. However, one diocesan reply in particular was very full and specific in outlining the

criteria for appointment of that diocese. It is quoted in full here, since it incorporated most of the measures stated by all of the other dioceses. It read as follows:

> Some Criteria for the Appointment of School Chaplain in the Diocese of ...(name of diocese):
>
> 1. Interest and enthusiasm for this particular role.
> 2. Availability for Role (for part-time chaplains).
> 3. Ability to communicate/listen, and attitude to youth.
> 4. Adult faith and desire to share it.
> 5. Leadership skills in liturgy and/or prayers.
> 6. Organisational skills.
> 7. Recreational skills (music, games, etc.).
> 8. Qualifications:
>   a) Basic knowledge of developmental patterns in adolescence.
>   b) Basic counselling skills or desire to acquire same.
>   c) Theological qualifications.
>   d) Knowledge of deviance.
>   e) Knowledge of Social and Health care
> 9. Being innovative in maintaining the Catholic ethos within the school.
> 10. Paying particular attention to the Hidden Curriculum.
> 11. Developing (in so far as time allows) Home-School-Parish liaison.
> 12. Attitude to ongoing personal and spiritual development.

While this comprehensive answer covers most areas, three specific criteria became evident when other responses were considered. These were:

> "commitment to the Faith and a desire to share it";
>
> "competence and interest in dealing with young people";

"availability and readiness to devote adequate time to chaplaincy work".

Less frequently stated criteria included:

"concern for families";
"ability to be part of a school team";
"to be relatively young";
"willing to take initiative";
"an interest in education";
"prepared to engage in ongoing training";

In summary, the main trait which the hierarchy require of those whom they wish to appoint as school chaplains are that they should be committed to their faith and to the sharing of it, especially with young people. In addition, they should possess adequate leadership and organisational skills, and sufficient knowledge to deal successfully with young people in a school environment in which a Catholic ethos is to be nurtured.

1.4.3 The Understanding of the Hierarchy of the Amount of Time Chaplains should devote to Pastoral Work in a Secondary School:

The extent to which chaplains should engage in their work was addressed in Question 3 (What is the understanding in the diocese of the amount of time a chaplain should devote to pastoral work in a secondary school?). The answers received to this question indicated a difference in thinking between the roles carried out by full-time and part-time chaplains in voluntary secondary schools.

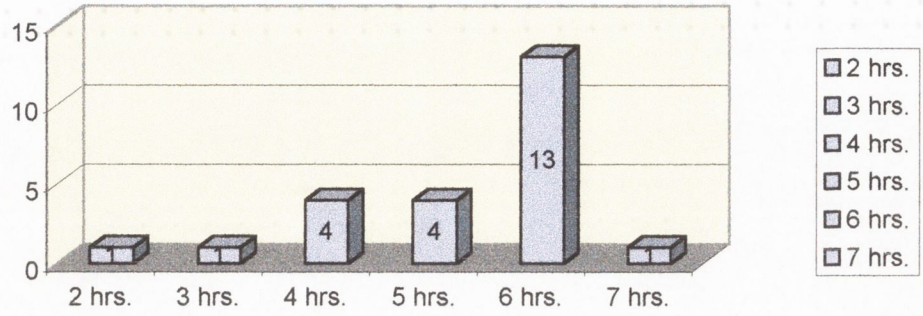
In the case of full-time chaplains it was stated that the amount of time which they were expected to spend in school ranged from four hours to six hours daily, with an average figure of 4.86 hours per day.

In the case of part-time chaplains, the view of most members of the hierarchy was that the overwhelming majority of part-time chaplains are priests who also bear the burden of parish duties. The time asked of them to spend in school ranged from two hours to six hours per week. However, it was made clear that the amount of time that priests were expected to devote to school chaplaincy was purely dependent on time available in each individual case. While a desirable amount of time was specified, it was made clear that it was at the discretion of each priest to allocate time to chaplaincy work according to his own circumstances.

Therefore, while full-time chaplains were expected to be specifically dedicated to their duties in a voluntary secondary school, the role of part-time chaplains was expected to be of a much greater ad-hoc nature. At best, they were asked to spend the equivalent time per week in the school which a full-time chaplain would expected to spend in a day. At worst, they were expected to do the best they could in the light of other parish duties.

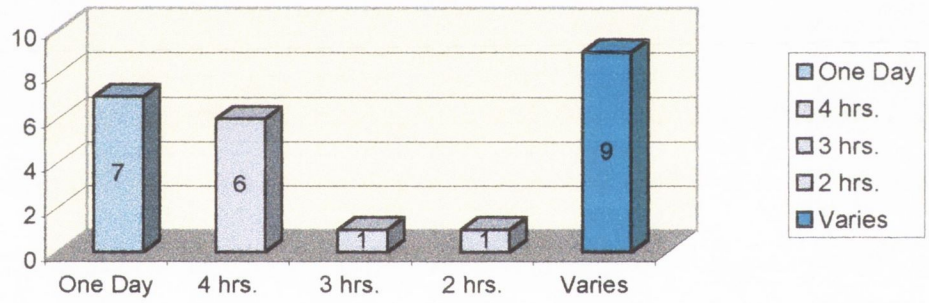
Graphs 1.1 and 1.2, page 29, show the general time in school required of chaplains in the eyes of the hierarchy:

Expectation of the Hierarchy of Full-Time Chaplains (Hours per Day):



Graph 1.1 N=24

Expectation of the Hierarchy of Part-Time Chaplains (Time per Week):



Graph 1.2 N=24

1.4.4 <u>The Type of Pastoral Work, in the Hierarchy's Opinion, which Chaplains should do in a Secondary School</u>:

The appropriate type of pastoral work to be engaged in was addressed in Question 4 (In the diocese, what type of pastoral work, in the bishop's opinion, should a chaplain do in a secondary school?). The layout of the question allowed for answers to be given under

category headings. The responses indicated that there were three levels of importance in the type of pastoral work which the chaplains should do. Every diocese stated that the following should be carried out:

Celebrate Mass (if ordained)
Sacrament of Reconciliation (if ordained)
Youth Liturgy
Pastoral contact with pupils
Pastoral contact with staff
Retreat Programmes

A majority of respondents stated that the following were important:

Bereavement Counselling	(91%)
Counselling pupils (if skilled)	(66%)
Home visitation	(79%)
Family breakdown	(75%)
Substance addiction/personal problems	(75%)

Only ten per cent stated that the following were of importance:

Deal with truancy/delinquent	(12.5%)
Classroom Teaching	(8%)

It is clear from the above data that it is expected of ordained chaplains to celebrate Mass in the school and to administer the sacrament of reconciliation. It is also evident that appropriate chaplaincy work is envisaged by the hierarchy to be in keeping with the criteria for appointment of school chaplains specified earlier. It is expected of chaplains to be involved with youth liturgy, pastoral work with both students and staff and retreat programmes. The purpose of retreat programmes is to

further the spiritual life of the students. It is largely expected that chaplains would attend to bereavement needs, to students who have difficulty with substance addiction or personal problems, and also to students' families, especially in circumstances of difficulty.

The hierarchy, on the whole, do not think the work of school chaplains should involve classroom teaching and those who did stated that it should be kept to a minimum. Dealing with truancy or delinquency was also, by and large, deemed unsuitable as chaplaincy work. The bishops who indicated otherwise, made it clear that chaplains should deal with truants and delinquents in a pastoral manner only, and never in disciplinary capacity. It was also made clear that counselling, while wholly suitable in chaplaincy, should be undertaken only if one has the necessary skills. Otherwise, it was indicated, referral should be arranged.

The option of appending other expectations of chaplains was allowed in Question 4. The following views were expressed:

> "Being available to RE teachers as support";
>
> "Guidance on vocations to priesthood/religious life when requested or when appropriate";
>
> "Fostering pastoral interaction between school and parish";
>
> "The chaplain should foster good relations among all the school population, principal, staff and students. The chaplain should be present at significant times in their lives - first days/weeks in school, pre-examination times, times of results, times of bereavement or tragedy. .... (the chaplain should have) individual meetings with 1st years and 6th years in particular."

In addition to the above, two sets of guidelines were forwarded: guidelines for chaplains in secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Dublin, and guidelines for chaplains in post-primary schools in the Diocese of Kerry. They are reproduced in Appendix C, Vol. 2, pages 210 to 215. In the view of the hierarchy, therefore, there is a range of duties which are regarded as appropriate to school chaplains. The extent to which it is expected that these duties are honoured depends on the time which chaplains are free to give to school. In the case of full-time chaplains it can be assumed that time is available to them to carry out this range of duties fully. However, the hierarchy recognise that part-time chaplains may experience difficulty in finding sufficient time to do so. Therefore, in this case, all they ask is that school chaplains act to the best of their ability in the time available to them in performing their chaplaincy work in schools.

1.5 The Views of Trustees of Catholic Voluntary Secondary Schools and Other Relevant Bodies on School Chaplaincy

A questionnaire was sent to 27 principal trustees of Catholic voluntary secondary schools, in the Republic of Ireland, selected from those listed in the Irish Catholic Directory of 1996 (see Appendix C, Vol. 2, page

216). The questionnaire contained 8 open questions regarding policy on chaplaincy in Catholic voluntary secondary schools (see Appendix C, Vol. 2, pages 217 to 221). A total of 25 replies were received, all but one accompanied by a completed questionnaire. The questions were set out in order to seek qualitative rather than quantitative information.

1.5.1 The policy of Trustees as regards having a school chaplaincy service in schools:

At the time of completing this questionnaire only two respondents had a policy regarding chaplaincy in their schools. A typical comment was: "At this time we do not have a formal policy - we may very well formulate one in the coming year". However, most respondents stated that they recognised the importance of supporting faith development in their schools, and would desire full time chaplains in all of their schools. One response stated:

> Given the awesome complexity of life for young people today, the phenomenon of youth culture with all its attendant pressures and the absence of 'easy answers' to many of life's problems, a school chaplaincy service which addresses the unique individual's quest for meaning and happiness is a prerequisite for a school committed to cherish the personal growth of its students."

A religious order, who did have a policy on chaplaincy, stated: "Because the spiritual/religious and moral formation form an integral part of our educational endeavour, we see school chaplaincy as essential".

1.5.2 How Trustees see Chaplaincy as a Service in Schools:

Most trustees stated that they viewed chaplaincy as a great enhancement of pastoral care in schools. They qualified this in adding that it is important that the role of the chaplain is effective only if it is accepted, understood and valued by the school principal and staff. It was also stated that "chaplaincy provides an opportunity to make contact with young people at a time when there is an apparent disinterest in spiritual questions".

1.5.3 The Views of Trustees on the Need for School Chaplaincy Training:

Almost all trustee respondents were of the view that chaplaincy training is extremely important for school chaplains. The following typical comments were proffered:

> "The chaplain's role is a difficult and challenging task. Therefore, I think it is important for the person to know his/her task thoroughly,and to be able to cope with apparent failure and disappointment as well as the successes."
>
> "Very important. Not every priest/religious has the skills necessary to do the job well."
>
> "Training would be needed in the area of counselling and in coping with the very wide spectrum of beliefs, unbeliefs etc."
>
> "I would consider training very important, but the personality and relational skills of the individual are paramount."

The general perception was that, in order to have an effective chaplaincy service in schools, chaplains should undergo an adequate course of training for the role.

1.5.4 The Policy of Trustees towards releasing Teachers to train as School Chaplains:

Views varied on the issue of allowing time off to train as school chaplains. This is understandable since, in many schools, staffing resources are not conducive to this idea. The following quotation serves to typify the general view:

> In the ideal situation I would have no problem with this. Indeed I would encourage it, But, in smaller schools, because of the constraints of the curriculum and limited finance, a more imaginative organisation of the pastoral care programme and catechetical programme may have to suffice until such time as chaplains are recognized and paid on an ex-quota basis.

It was also stated that, in some schools, only members of the religious community have so far been released to train as chaplains where they showed a desire to do so. In general, however, the expressed view was that it did not seem feasible to consider releasing teachers on school-time in order to attend chaplaincy training courses.

1.5.5 The policy of Trustees as regards Training Non-Teachers as School Chaplains:

In general there was no policy expressed on this question. Most trustees said they would be in favour of

having non-teachers trained as chaplains if this proved to be necessary. However, some expressed the caveat that, in training for school chaplaincy, one should "bear in mind the importance of having some experience of working in a school environment." Others said that they would encourage the training of non-teachers provided they have "other relevant qualifications, gifts and experiences" to work effectively with young people.

1.5.6 The Views of Trustees on the Merits/Demerits of having a Member of their Own Religious Order or Congregation as a School Chaplain:

Most respondents stated that they have no experience in dealing with lay chaplains in their schools and, therefore, could not comment on the merits or demerits of such. One trustee epitomized the views of the majority by writing:

> If a suitably qualified religious confrere is available for school chaplaincy then that is our first option. However, such availability is very limited and so a suitable lay person is welcomed and actually works out very well.

Another gave the view that:

> Since I have only experience of chaplaincy by our own religious members I am not in a position to judge. The merits of having a member of our own congregation are largely around ethos and saves the hassle of trying to find a priest whenever we have sacramental celebration within the school. It depends on how one defines the role of chaplain!

While most trustees said that they are not experienced in dealing with lay chaplains and, therefore, not prepared to

comment extensively on the matter they also made the point that they would support the appointment of whoever is best suited to the position.

1.5.7 How well Secondary Schools are served at Present as regards Chaplaincy:

On the whole, the response of the trustees indicated that only some schools are well served in terms of school chaplaincy. In the majority of cases chaplaincy is provided by agreement with the local clergy. In a minority of schools there are full-time chaplains employed, paid by either Boards of Management or by the trustees themselves. Most of these full-time chaplains are members of religious communities or orders. As such, they are usually retired from teaching which means, however, that they are no longer young. Some of them spend a full day in school while others spend less.

In a small number of cases the trustees can provide an excellent chaplaincy service in their schools. Because these schools are usually fee-paying they can afford to maintain one chaplain or a team of chaplains to look after the ethos and spiritual needs of the school community.

It would seem from the response of the trustees that, in the light of the general lack of provision of school chaplaincy, their priorities in the matter of allocating limited staff resources necessarily lie elsewhere.

1.5.8 The Plans for the Future as regards Chaplaincy in Secondary Schools:

In general, while a majority said that they had no future plans for chaplaincy in their schools, some consideration had been given to it. Many of them said that they had discussed possibilities and probabilities but "these could not be described as 'plans' just yet." However, a minority indicated that they were considering the future in terms of some or all of the following:

* Promotion and training of staff members as chaplains;
* Promotion of official recognition of school chaplains by the State;
* Provision for voluntary laity who, if trained, may be able to enrich the faith life of the school.

A response from one of the trustees read as follows:

> "Regardless of recent 'official' announcements from Rome, we see a role for lay chaplains in schools. In fact, it is the only guarantee that there will be any chaplains in the not too distant future."

This statement related to a an instruction issued from the Vatican in 1997 concerning 'The Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priest'. It declared that

> It is unlawful for the non-ordained faithful to assume titles such as 'pastor', 'chaplain'... or other such similar titles which can confuse their role and that of the Pastor, who is always a Bishop or Priest (Ratzinger et al. 1997:19).

However, the general view was that the subject of school chaplaincy had not yet been given much consideration, but

that the situation was likely to change. Extracts from responses read:

> "No. For the foreseeable future we can keep our own men on the job. Into the future we will have to look at other models of chaplaincy. But for me a skilful listening, caring presence is essential in the way schools are generally geared at the moment."

> "No plans just now. We are about to begin formulating such a plan. Our first meeting in this regard is arranged for 30th April of this year [1998]."

At the time of completing the questionnaire, neither the trustees nor the other interested bodies had a policy on chaplaincy in secondary schools. Later, however, plans were initiated to this effect, as previously discussed on pages 35 to 37.

1.5.9 The Views of Other Educational Bodies:

A questionnaire, (see Appendix C, Vol. 2, pages 222 to 226), similar in content to that sent to the Trustees of Catholic voluntary secondary schools was also sent to the following organisations who have an interest in Catholic education in Ireland:

* CORI Conference of Religious of Ireland);
* AMCSS Association for Catholic Managers of Secondary Schools;
* CHA Catholic Headmasters' Association; and
* TBA Teaching Brothers' Association.

A response in the form of a letter was received from CORI indicating that they had no policy on school chaplaincy but that "it is an issue which will be on our

agenda in the near future." This letter is reproduced in Appendix C, Vol. 2, page 227.

The AMCSS did not return the questionnaire but stated, when contacted subsequently by telephone, that the association did not have a policy on the matter at that time but consideration was being given to examining the issue (Secretariat of Secondary Schools, 11th March 1998).

The two other organisations, the CHA and the TBA, did not respond to the questionnaire, and subsequent attempts to contact them were unsuccessful.

1.5.10 Recent Developments since 1998:

At the time of completing the questionnaire, the trustees of voluntary secondary schools had not formulated a policy on chaplaincy, nor had they clear plans for the future as regards chaplaincy in their schools. One trustee put this addendum at the end of his/her questionnaire: "Your questionnaire and your work may very well set us thinking along these lines. The need is great."

Clearly, the trustees of voluntary secondary schools acknowledge that school chaplaincy is an important aspect of education and they would desire that every school have a chaplaincy service. The allocation of staff resources did not allow this.

However, this is likely to change as Fr. Luke Monaghan informed the AMCSS on April 29th 1999 that

> the Department of Education is "moving towards" paying State salaries to ... chaplains in voluntary secondary schools. ... it was a "a matter of when rather than if" such State paid chaplains are appointed ... the chairman of the hierarchy's education commission, Bishop Thomas Flynn had recently had talks with the Department on the issue and had been 'very happy with the outcome (Irish Times, April 30th 1999).

Bishop Flynn's talks with the Department of Education followed the Supreme Court's judgement in a case taken by the Campaign to Separate Church and State against the Department of Education and Science. The basis of the action taken in the High Court was that it was unconstitutional for the Department of Education and Science to pay chaplains in community and comprehensive schools. The judgement of the High Court was that it was constitutional, a judgement with which the Supreme Court agreed (Irish Times, April 30th 1999).

In June 1999, in order to clarify the current situation and the viewpoint of those with an interest in it, the author telephoned Fr. Abe Kennedy of the SCA (School Chaplains' Association), Brother Bede Minehane of CORI, and Fr. Jim Cassin of the AMCSS. A telephone conversation was also held with Sr. Teresa McCormack, Director of the Education Office of CORI.

Following Bishop Flynn's recent representation to the Department of Education and Science, a sub-committee was formed, involving the Hierarchy, CORI, AMCSS and SCA, to clarify appointment procedures, conditions of employment and the role of school chaplains (Cassin, 1999). In particular, the sub-committee is to examine the

situation regarding chaplaincy in State schools (McCormack, 1999). At present, chaplains are appointed on a temporary basis only in State schools, a matter which has drawn little comment until now (Neary, 1999). However, in view of the prospect that more lay chaplains are likely to seek employment in schools in the future, this arrangement needs to be amended since temporary positions as chaplains in schools generally will be unacceptable to them (Minehane, 1999). It was viewed that, as of June 1999, it was "a waiting situation" (Cassin, 1999).

1.6 Existing Chaplaincy Service in The Ecclesiastical Province of Dublin

A letter to the Secretariat of Secondary schools, (Appendix C, Vol. 2, page 228) seeking information about chaplaincy services in secondary schools, received no reply. A subsequent telephone call revealed that this information was not to hand (Secretariat of Secondary Schools, Nov. 1996). The principals of all the Catholic voluntary secondary schools in the Province of Dublin were then contacted and asked to supply information about the kind of school chaplain, if any, serving in their schools (Appendix C, Vol. 2, page 229). Most of these principals were asked to fill a short questionnaire (Appendix C, Vol. 2, page 230), while the remainder were contacted by

telephone. Information was received from all the schools in the ecclesiastical province and is as follows:

Chaplaincy Service in Voluntary Secondary Schools

County	Full-time	Part-time	None	Total
Dublin	20	72	13	105
Kildare		14	1	15
Wicklow		8	1	9
Laois		6		6
Carlow		5		5
Offaly		4		4
Kilkenny		6	1	7
Wexford	2	8	1	11
Total:	22	123	17	162
	(13.58%)	(75.93%)	(10.49%)	(100%)

It can be seen from this information that of the 22 full-time chaplains in voluntary secondary schools in the province 90% are in Dublin schools. However, Dublin also has a greater number of schools with no chaplain. A breakdown of the significance of the numbers given in the above table is set out in Chapter 6, Vol. 1, pages 235.

To describe the context in which these chaplains work a review of the Catholic education system is presented next.

1.7 **The Functions of a Catholic Education System**

The Church maintains that it has a clear and decisive role in Catholic education. It argues that it may legitimately decide upon permissible influences in the

religious, spiritual and moral formation of young people, and therefore, that it may rightfully assert its authority in Catholic schools. However, it has modified its priorities regarding Catholic education since the Second Vatican Council.

1.7.1 The Emergence of a Modern Era:

Following infrastructural rebuilding after the Second World War, the world witnessed unparalleled developments in global communications, transport, and technology. Mankind also attained an ability to destroy itself though the use of nuclear weapons. However, increased economic activity and well-being was accompanied by crumbling social and familial structures. In facing the problems and challenges of its time, the Church saw the need for change and for a renewed understanding of the needs of its members.

Its response was to call together a plenary meeting of its hierarchy worldwide. The ensuing gathering, the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was an epochal event in the history of the Church. It opened a new era in the history of Catholicism. It marked the end of an old order and the emergence of a new vision. It was a council of renewal, of aggiornamento. Facing up to the multiple technological and social transformations taking place in the world, the Second Vatican Council, commonly referred to as Vatican II, sought to address humankind's revised needs. This initially manifested itself in notable

changes and developments in theology and in liturgical practice.

However, the Catholic church still very much valued the role of the Catholic school in education. Gravissimum Educationis ('The Declaration on Christian Education', Vatican II, 1965) promulgated some fundamental principles concerning Christian education. It encouraged the Catholic church to accept the challenge of the modern age. It also encouraged the Catholic school to take up this challenge. While endeavouring to understand contemporary humanity, the Church maintained that its role as educator should not be neglected, more especially in an age when the mass media have become so powerfully influential as a medium for communicating and disseminating values and norms of behaviour which might often run counter to the message of the Gospel. As explained by Abbott:

> So it is that while the Catholic school fittingly adjusts itself to the circumstances of advancing times, it is educating students to promote effectively the welfare of the earthly city, and preparing them to serve the advancement of the reign of God (Abbott 1966: 646).

Henceforth, in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, while Catholic education was to contribute to the development of the modern world, and to also to stimulate the welfare of that world, its role too was to serve the promote the religious aspect of modern life.

1.7.2 The Vision of Education Prior to Vatican II:

While the Second Vatican Council generated a new vision, it did not abandon the fundamental principles of doctrine hitherto upheld by the Church. It still honoured these and acknowledged their importance, but, in some situations, it modified them so as to render them more appropriate to the modern era. Before the Second Vatican Council, the most significant pronouncement on Catholic education, one which merits attention, was that of Pius XI. In his encyclical 'The Christian Education of Youth' (Divini Illius Magistri) (1929) he states that "there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end" (Article 7). The purpose of this encyclical was to explain briefly the "main fundamental principles and norms, and to indicate the practical conclusions which flow from them" (Pius XI 1929 The Christian Education of Youth, Article 3). It deals with the ideal of partnership involving the Church, the family, the school, and finally, the State as a supportive, but non-interfering, agent in Catholic education. Pius XI's views reflect attitudes of separatism and individualism reminiscent of the inter-denominational rivalry of the nineteenth century. His ideals stress the Christian notion of the supernatural in educating the person: "the true Christian, the product of a Christian education, is simply the supernatural man; the man who feels, judges and acts always in accordance with right reason enlightened by the example and teaching of Christ" (Art. 120).

He claimed that, in carrying out its educational task, the Church, must enjoy freedom from interference, and be "independent of any earthly power", while, at the same time, it must be willing to conform to "the legitimate requirements of the government" (Art. 19, p. 12). In addition to the freedom to establish separate schools, the Church has the additional right and duty of exercising vigilance over the education which is given to Catholic children.

The foundational principle of Catholic education, enunciated in this encyclical, is the right of the Church to take responsibility for education; "education is first and supereminently the function of the Church" (Art. 16, p. 11). This placed the Church as the foremost partner in education. A second principle is the right of the family in the matter of the education of their children. The family should be in perfect harmony with the Church in this matter since, as the encyclical claimed, both proceed from God in a similar way (Art. 35-36, pp. 17-20). The family was, therefore, to be in partnership with the Church in education.

In regard to the third partner, the school, Leo XIII (1897) wrote of the need for a suitable school environment in Christian education:

> It is not enough for the young to be taught religion at specified hours; all the rest of their training must be instinct with the spirit of piety. If this is lacking, if the minds of teachers and pupils are not pervaded and warmed by this sacred atmosphere, little benefit will be derived from any kind of learning (The

encyclical Militantis Ecclesiae (1897) of Pope Leo XIII, quoted in Jebb (1968): 172).

The fourth partner in the Catholic educational enterprise is the State, which has a secondary, yet important, role to play. The State's role is "to protect the proper right which parents possess to give their children a Christian education, and, therefore, also to respect the supernatural right of the Church over such Christian education" (Art. 50, p. 21). The principles of Catholic education, therefore have been based on a partnership in which each partner has specific rights and duties: The Church, the family, the school and the State. This idea of partnership has always been basic to the concept of Catholic education, an idea which has been restated in various official Church documents.

Having considered the agents in Catholic education, the encyclical Divini Illius Magistri defines the purpose or goal of education, which is to form the perfect man, the perfect Christian, in imitation of Christ himself "to express and form Christ Himself in those who have been regenerated by baptism" (Art. 118, p. 44). Christian education embraces the sum total of man's activities, sensible, spiritual, intellectual, moral, individual, domestic and social ..." in order to ennoble it, guide it and perfect it according to the example and teaching of Jesus Christ" (Art. 119, p. 44).

Underlying the encyclical of Pius XI is the basic concept of the Christian as being separate from the world

which is regarded as hostile and inimical to the Christian cause. Hence the emphasis on separation from the world, on isolationism and protectionism which characterised official authoritative documents of the Church prior to the Second Vatican Council.

1.7.3 The Amended Vision of Vatican II:

In the course of the twentieth century, through enhanced transport and communications, society at large transformed from being of relatively static nature to being a dynamic force for change. In addition, it moved from having fixed formulae to exploring flexibility of insight. In keeping with this, the theology of Vatican II, while still accepting former authoritative ecclesiastical pronouncements on education, arrived at a new perspective, a revised world vision. Brick (1999) states that, in order to understand the foundations of ethos upon which Catholic education is built, it is necessary to explore the Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents of the Second Vatican Council (Brick 1999: 92-93). The Council issued sixteen documents which launched this new vision in contemporary society. One of these documents, Gravissimum Educationis ('The Declaration on Christian Education') was issued to the Church on October 28, 1965.

Gravissimum Educationis restated many of the fundamental principles and norms already declared in Pius IX's encyclical. It also reflected the conversion to the

new vision which underlies the thinking of Vatican II. A central thought underlying the theology of the Council is the notion of Christ's redemptive mission. This is a central tenet of the document which, through its views on the salvation of mankind and in the wider social context, is linked with the other conciliar documents. One noteworthy feature of Gravissimum Educationis is its reiteration of the Church's understanding of its central role in the education of the young:

> Education is, in a very special way, the concern of the Church, not only because the Church must be recognised as a human society capable of imparting education, but especially it has the duty of proclaiming the way of salvation to all men, of revealing the life of Christ to those who believe, and of assisting them with unremitting care so that they may be able to attain to the fullness of life (Flannery 1975: 729).

Gravissimum Educationis expresses the Church's concern for man's eternal end, and also for his equipment for life in this world. It states specifically that it deals only "with a few fundamental principles", and that a more developed view was left to a special post-conciliar commission and to the Conferences of Bishops throughout the world. Bearing in mind the variety of regions within the world-wide church, each with a different historical heritage, the Council refrained from treating the problem of Catholic education in greater detail. Gravissimum Educationis, therefore, was descriptive rather than definitive. It was prescriptive rather than a comprehensive decree. The full significance of this declaration could only be made clear by a post-conciliar

commission with the task of applying the document to differing circumstances and differing cultures, thus achieving relevance in each. It expanded on the universal right to denominational education against a background of threat to Catholic schools from State monopoly in many countries, and the contemporary mentality which was beginning to doubt the value of Catholic schools.

According to Vatican II, all Christians have a right to Christian education by virtue of their baptism. Parents are now deemed to rank first in importance as partners in education, their right to an education of their choice for their children being based on the law of nature. They transfer this right to the school and the State, and their decision with regard to their choice of education becomes their responsibility in conscience. The role of the State is still regarded as secondary, as already mentioned in the encyclical of Pius XI. The tasks of the State are to protect the rights of parents, the primary agents of education, and to give them help and assistance. But the principle of subsidiarity must be respected; and this means that any monopoly of education by the State must be rejected.

In pre-Vatican II days, the emphasis in religious education was on doctrine, conceptual faith, intellectual assent, confession and curricula, while in the post-Vatican era, the emphasis has been more effectively-orientated with commitment, relationship, leading to a synthesis in personal faith. Vatican II attempted to

bring harmony between faith as based on belief, knowledge, doctrine and assent and faith as centred on trust, fidelity, relationship and commitment. It sought to shift the balance somewhat from faith as rooted solely in the intellectual domain through doctrine and dogma, to a coexistence of faith in both the intellectual and the affective domains. Article 50 of 'Catholic Schools' mentions this integration: "The fundamental difference between religious and other forms of education is that its aim is not simply intellectual assent to religious truths but also a commitment of one's whole being to the person of Christ" (Flannery 1982: 617). This was the great advance of Vatican II. During the three previous centuries since the Council of Trent, the general tenor of religious eduction was distinctly moralistic and doctrinal in tone. Vatican II sought to appeal to a holistic approach in education and to life as lived by Christians in the modern era.

1.7.4 The Importance of the School:

The Second Vatican Council sees the school as being of "outstanding importance ... It develops a capacity for sound judgement and introduces the pupils to the cultural heritage bequeathed to them by former generations" (Flannery 1975: 730). Gravissimum Educationis linked the quality of relationships within Catholic schools with the 'climate' of the school. It does so through advocating that schools should provide for a friendly atmosphere

among students of different character and of varying backgrounds. It also recommends that the the school should

> constitute a centre in whose activity and growth not only the families and teachers but also the various associations for the promotion of cultural, civil and religious life, civic society, and the entire community should take part (Flannery 1975: 730-731).

This is achieved through the climate or the atmosphere which pervades the school, and also through the ethos or spirit which inspires the value system of the school and which represents the formal and decisive factor distinguishing the Catholic school from others. Hence, the researcher has chosen to discuss both the climate and ethos of the Catholic school in Chapter 3, pages 111 to 147 of this thesis.

Gravissimum Educationis holds that the climate is created by the participants in the educational enterprise. It asserts that its existence is linked principally with factors within the school, and is not directly at least, affected by variables exterior to the school. It states that one of the distinctive aims of a Catholic school is to create a Christian atmosphere in the school community. In its decree on Christian Education it describes the Catholic school as follows:

> The Catholic school pursues cultural goals and the natural development of youth to the same degree as any other school. What makes the Catholic school distinctive is its attempt to generate a community climate in the school that is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love. It tries to guide the adolescents in such a way that personality development goes hand in hand with the development of the 'new culture' to the good news of salvation so that the light of faith will illumine everything that the

> students will gradually come to learn about the world, about life and about the human person (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education 1988: 3).

According to the Council, therefore, the hallmark of the Catholic school lies in its religious dimension which is to be found in:

a) its educational climate;

b) its personal development of each student;

c) the relationship established between culture and the Gospel; and

d) the illumination of all knowledge with the light of faith (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education 1988: 3-4).

In the school's community there must be congruence between the religious orientation, which comprises faith, worship, belief and practice, and the academic and social organization comprising of both learning experience and life. Research findings support the belief that the Catholic school, in which there is a religious climate, reinforces the faith of the home, being the primary source of religious socialisation having, in effect, a 'multiplier' effect (Greeley and Rossi 1966, USA; Flynn 1975, Australia).

Gravissimum Educationis speaks of the universal right to education, in which truth and love are "simultaneously inculcated" (Abbott 1966: 638), and of the "harmonious development of physical, moral and intellectual endowment" (Abbott 1966: 639). But, above

all, it describes the principal aims of a Catholic education in the following terms:

> as the baptismal person is gradually introduced into a knowledge of the mystery of salvation, he may daily grow more conscious of the gift of faith which he has received: that he may learn to adore God the Father in spirit and in truth, especially through liturgical worship, that he may be trained to conduct his personal life in righteousness and in the sanctity of truth, according to his new standard of manhood (Abbott 1966: 640).

This document also claims that the Church has the responsibility of announcing the way of salvation to all people, and to use fitting means to do so: "in the exercise of its functions in education the Church is appreciative of every means that may be of service, but it relies especially on those which are essentially its own (Flannery 1975: 730).

This pronouncement points to a new identification of the Church with the world. It is no longer to be a church aloof from the world, but is to affirm its presence in the world, thus indicating a redirection of concern towards the wholeness of the life process. The Catholic school, therefore, has its part to play in this concern, "educating its students to promote effectively the welfare of the earthly city, and preparing them to serve the advancement of the reign of God" (Abbott 1966: 646). In this lies a response to the needs of its students in a holistic context.

Other documents issued since Vatican II have taken this process a little further. Gravissimum Educationis was followed by 'The Catholic School' (1977) and by 'Lay

Catholics in School' (1982). Both of these post-conciliar documents are the work of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. The publishing of 'The Catholic School' (1977), was an attempt by the Sacred Congregation to clarify and justify the role of the Catholic School in a pluralistic society. 'Lay Catholics in School' stressed a new vision of the Church as being culturally pluralistic and was an encouragement to Catholic schools to serve in a pluralistic society in a distinctively Christian way.

1.7.5 Doctrine of 'Catholic Schools':

'Catholic schools' recognized that the Church has to solve educational difficulties in a sociocultural context. It stressed the need to provide a service which is truly civic and apostolic. The fundamental significance of a Catholic school is that it is gospel-centred.

> It is precisely in the Gospel of Christ taking root in the minds and lives of the faithful that the Catholic school finds its definition as it comes to terms with the cultural conditions of the times (Flannery 1982: 608).

The document takes up the question of faith and culture. The Church seeks to discern in the events, needs and hopes of the modern era the most insistent demands that it needs to answer. Cultural pluralism leads the Church to reaffirm its commitment to education to ensure strong character formation. The Church must foster Christian living and apostolic communities within the modern

cultural conditions of secular societies. A Catholic school becomes a place of integral formation by means of a systematic and critical assimilation of culture (Flannery 1982: 608).

The school must be a community whose values are communicated through the interpersonal relationships of its members and through both individual and corporate adherence to the outlook of life that permeates it. Faith is assimilated through contact with people who live it: "faith is principally assimilated through contact with people whose daily life bears witness to it" (Flannery 1982: 618). It is born and grows within a community. In Christ, the Catholic school differs from all others, and by its teaching and witness shows something of the mystery of Christ. To do this, the school must be nourished by the Christian theme as in the scriptures and tradition, especially liturgical and sacramental tradition.

> Being aware that baptism by itself does not make a Christian - living and acting in conformity with the gospel is necessary - the Catholic school tries to create within its walls a climate in which the pupil's faith will gradually mature and enable him to assume the responsibility placed on him by baptism (Flannery 1982: 616).

The Catholic school also emphasizes the aspect of service as a function of the Catholic school. Education, it sees, as a call to serve and be responsible for others: "The Catholic school community is an irreplaceable source of service, not only to pupils and its other members, but also to society" (Flannery 1982: 620).

It restates the right of the Church to establish its own schools. However, it acknowledges the pursuits of other kinds of school, and it accepts both coexistence and co-operation with other forms of schooling as a source of enrichment. It defines the specific task of the Catholic school as being:

> fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life: the first is reached by integrating all the different aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught in the light of the Gospel; the second in the growth of the virtues characteristic of the Christian (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education 1977: 15).

1.7.6 A New Era of Lay Educators:

In 1982, the document 'Lay Catholics in Schools' was issued at a time of noticeable decline in the number of religious personnel in schools. It foresaw that, in the modern world, the survival of Catholic schools must depend on lay Catholic teachers. It also recognised the difficulties in realising this ideal. Enumerated among the perceived obstacles were "personal situations ... (and) ... deficiencies in the school and in society; all of them have their effect on children and young people" (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education 1982: 15). However, the school that maintains a Catholic breadth and openness is seen to be in a position to do much to repair the present deficiency in education. In view of this, what was asked of lay educators is unambiguous:

> Their work has an undeniably professional aspect; but it cannot be reduced to professionalism alone. Professionalism is marked by the exercise of personal vocation to the church ... It is therefore very desirable that every lay Catholic educator become fully aware of the importance, the richness and the responsibility of this vocation. They should fully respond to all of its demands, secure in the knowledge that their response is vital for the construction and ongoing renewal of the earthly city, and the evangelization of the world (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education 1982: 22).

To implement the theory and the demands articulated here may pose many difficulties in present-day Ireland. Modern society has witnessed a major shift in values. Many teachers today are both the product of, and members of this society. The basis on which Catholic schools have operated is that Catholic children should be taught by Catholic teachers in a Catholic school, and where practice belies this ideal there are inevitable ambiguities.

All teachers in Catholic voluntary secondary schools are expected to uphold the ethos of those schools. To those who view ethos primarily in terms of compliance with the officially authenticated standards and expectations of school authorities, this may seem reasonable. However, as is discussed in Chapter 3 on school ethos, this notion is labelled by Hogan (1985) as a "custodial" concept of ethos (Hogan 1985: 11). It accepts that the authorities of the educational system "view themselves largely as custodians of a set of standards, which are to be preserved, transmitted and defended through the agency of the schools and colleges" (Hogan 1985: 11). Hogan points out that this view of ethos is

outmoded and likely to fail in the modern school context (Hogan 1985: 12).

1.7.7 'The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School':

In 1988, The Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education published 'The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School'. This post-conciliar document re-stated all of that which was proclaimed in the earlier documents. However, it also devoted considerable space to recognising the deep cultural changes in society and the characteristics and implications of such changes for the lives of young people. It is somewhat pessimistic about the attitude of young Catholics towards their religion:

> For some of today's youth the years spent in a Catholic school seem to have scarcely any effect. They seem to have a negative attitude toward all the various ways in which a Christian life is expressed - prayer, participation in the Mass or frequenting of the sacraments. Some even reject these expressions outright, especially those associated with an institutional church (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education 1988: 13).

It demands of the Catholic school to "witness to authentic values" (ibid.) and show a concern for pastoral care. Where schools do not already do this, it calls for renewal "in the overall school planning which governs the whole process of formation of the students" (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education 1988: 13).

This document reiterates the Church's need to solve educational dilemmas in a sociocultural context, and it

stresses that Catholic education must be centred on Christ. It explains that the Catholic school does not stop at uniting faith and culture, but also involves the integration of faith and life, a sentiment which is echoed in Lindbeck's advice: "The grammar of religion, like that of language cannot be learned by analysis of experience, but only by practice" (Lindbeck 1984: 22).

Lindbeck's words are in accordance with the recommendations of a study group set up in 1977, by the bishops of England and Wales, to look at the work of the Catholic church in education there. As a result of its brief, "to review the principles of Catholic Education and to make recommendations" (Signposts and Homecomings, p. 1), the group examined the pattern of Catholic education in England and Wales. It also looked closely at the social, cultural, educational and theological context in which Catholic education took place. In 1981, it presented its findings in a report entitled 'Signposts and Homecomings'. While this report emphasised the role of the Church in education, its principal conclusion indicated a need for a radical shift in the attitudes of Catholics to the meaning and scope of religious education and formation. In view of this it proposes some practical and far-reaching recommendations. It did not confine itself to education in school, but also to the education of Catholics in a broad sense, including the understanding and living of their faith at home, at school and in adult life in the contemporary world.

The report tends to be imprecise and to generalise at times. It also makes unsubstantiated statements and fails to provide empirical evidence for some of its findings. However, it isolated four key elements which distinguish Catholic education. Catholic education should:

1) be prophetic and encourage a critical response to the world around;
2) proceed from a religious understanding of life;
3) impart wisdom; and
4) elucidate the meaning of Christ to each ensuing age.

In other words, Catholic education is meant to foster a distinctive outlook on life. It is to stimulate a value-orientation which is not fixed in the temporal benefits of this world, but founded on the message of the gospel. Such value-orientation may, therefore, embody spiritual wisdom, being both critical and prophetic.

Within the foregoing analysis of the authoritative ecclesiastical and official pronouncements of the Church on Catholic education lies the essence of what constitutes the task of the Church in education. The present study was undertaken in the belief that school chaplains may be influential agents in the accomplishment of that task. It was also embarked upon on the assumption that school chaplains may play a role, to whatever extent, in helping to implement the principles of Catholic education as enunciated by the Church.

Summary

In order to ascertain broadly the extent to which school chaplains are expected to promote the ideals of Catholic education by Church authorities, 24 members of the Irish hierarchy were approached. A prompt and very full response was received in each case, a matter which is appreciated by this researcher.

This chapter has noted the views and aspirations concerning school chaplaincy, of the Irish hierarchy and of the Trustees of Catholic voluntary secondary schools and of other interested bodies. It recorded the level of chaplaincy service in Catholic schools in the province of Dublin on both a full-time and part-time basis as well as the number of schools who did not have any chaplain at the time of the enquiry.

It examined the functions of a Catholic education system as understood before the Vatican Council in the mid-1960s. It then outlined its functions and its doctrines according to conciliar and post-conciliar documents and the importance of the role of the school and of religious education in promoting a Catholic ethos.

Chapter 2 will look at Catholicism as a substantial component in Irish culture and tradition. It will look at the Catholic Church's policy in Irish education and at its circumstances in a rapidly changing milieu.

Chapter 2

Irish Society: Predominantly Catholic

CHAPTER 2

IRISH SOCIETY: PREDOMINANTLY CATHOLIC

To a significant degree the culture, traditions, creed and ethos of a society are transmitted to its younger generations through its education system. A Christian and predominantly Catholic society may reasonably expect to impart its ethos to its young people through its schools. Indeed, it has been argued that, "more and more of the onus is being placed on the school, not only to teach religion, but to hand on the faith" (Murtagh 1991: 224-225) and that the Catholic school should:

> immerse students in a living Catholic culture that permeates all aspects of schools life. They should experience the traditions of prayer that mark the passage of the hours, understand the rhythm of the liturgical year from fasts to feasts and experience sound, sight, taste, touch and smell the living tradition which they inherit (O'Keeffe 1999: 23-24).

With this in mind, this chapter looks at the extent of Catholicism in Irish society today. Firstly, it examines three types of religious practice as delineated by Inglis (1987 and 1998). Secondly, it looks at the past

and present standing of the Catholic church in Irish life and identity. Thirdly, it notes Church policy in education, particularly in relation to Irish education. Finally, it reviews the Church's altering role, since the mid-1960s, in a radically changing Irish society.

2.1 A Typology of Irish Religiosity According to Inglis

Being a "faith presence" in the Catholic school, and stimulating the expression of the Catholic faith in the school community are among the primary concerns of school chaplains (Monahan and Renehan 1998: 23). However, faith is expressed in various ways in the community at large. Despite extensive research of current and recent periodicals, other literature and computerised resources, this author found very little material which appraised the actual practice of religion by the laity as opposed to Church structure, organisation and government. An exception is an appraisal of Christian religious practice by Inglis. The results of his research was first published in 1987 under the title, Moral Monopoly: The Rise and Fall of the Catholic Church in Modern Ireland. It was re-issued in a second, expanded edition in 1998. Hence, the preponderance here is on his explication of the ways in which religion is observed.

Described by Inglis (1987), it is shown that within the same faith there can be more that one approved way of

asserting one's religion. This occurs, not only in Ireland, but elsewhere. Among people who profess Catholicism, religious behaviour and practice varies from one individual to another, from one family to another and from one generation to another. The task of this section is to give a brief understanding of the three types of religious behaviour as described by Inglis (1987). However, this discourse refers to Irish Catholics only.

2.1.1 Inglis's Three Models of Religious Behaviour:

Inglis (1987) asserts that, in Christianity, there are three main models of religious behaviour all of which are approved practices in the Catholic Church. They may be embraced separately or in combination.

Firstly, there are religious 'magical' practices or the enactment of rituals, formulae, traditional prescriptions or procedures which, if properly performed, are designed to gain favour with the supernatural. Secondly, there is legalistic religious behaviour, which "is based on winning God's favour by supplication, entreaty and being holy through following the Church's teachings and rituals" (Inglis 1987: 17). This means adhering to the religious rules and regulations of a Church in order to achieve salvation. Thirdly, there is the principled adherence to religion which means methodically following a set of ethical guidelines which are founded on both individual reasoning and developed principles. This last

form of religiosity is the most rational of the three. Inglis asserts that:

> these types of ethical behaviour are often seen in terms of developmental stages with individually principled ethics as the most rational. In other words, societies as well as individuals go through stages in which their ethical behaviour develops from being predominantly magical to being legalistic, to finally becoming individually principled (Inglis 1987: 14).

Connolly (1985), who predates Inglis, states that, until the first half of the nineteenth century, "unorthodox practices, many of which were magical, appear to have been the dominant type of religious behaviour in Ireland" (Connolly 1985: 45-50). Inglis claims that religious development from the mid-nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century, resulted in the predominance of a legalistic form of adherence to the rules and regulations of the Catholic Church. He suggests that, since the 1960s this form of religious adherence began to give way to an individually principled form. Since then Catholics have been more inclined to base their evaluation on what is morally right or wrong on their own individual reasoning and on their own individual sense of moral responsibility rather than on official rulings on Church doctrine (Inglis 1987: 14). As regards prayer, Gibson (1995) argues that educators should now be conveying more mature concepts of prayer to young people during their adolescent years, since immature concepts may "lead to a growing disillusionment with the practice of prayer" (Gibson 1995: 145). He, therefore, encourages practice of the third and highest model of devotion among

young people. It may be important to acknowledge that this could be critical to the cultivation of faith in a maturing Irish society.

An more detailed explication of the three models of religious observance, as put forward by Inglis, is given in Appendix A, Vol. 2, pages 195 to 202.

2.2 Ireland, a Catholic Country

A substructure to the Church's present position in Irish life is the traditional loyalty of the laity to the Catholic faith. The institutional Church's rise to being a crucial and powerful force fashioned and controlled Irish society and Irish education throughout the greater part of the twentieth century. However, since the late 1960s society underwent radical transformation from being an essentially rural, conservative and devoutly Catholic people to becoming more urban, sophisticated, feminist and liberal. Notwithstanding this metamorphosis, modern Irish society, though less devout than in the past, is still essentially Catholic.

2.2.1 Ireland - Traditionally Catholic:

Catholicism is very much the majority religion in Ireland. The 1981 census indicated that the Catholic church had an affiliation of 93% of the population (Nic Ghiolla Phádraig 1992: 3). Mac Gréil (1996) also found

the population of the Republic to be predominantly Roman Catholic and that religion was important to the self-identity of Irish people. As he stated,

> it is very clear ... that the population of the Republic is predominantly Roman Catholic at 94.2%, while the total proportion of the other Christian denominations is less than 5% (4.3%) ... (the percentage) who declare "no religion" is extremely small (1.1%). .... The relatively small percentage who declared they had "no religion" ... is indicative of the widespread importance of religion as part of the Irish person's self-identity (Mac Gréil 1996: 155-156).

Furthermore, Ireland continues to have one of the highest levels of religious practice and church attendance in Western Europe (Inglis 1987: 2; Weafer 1991: 19; Whelan and Fahy 1996: 101; Corish 1996: 159), "religious values continue to occupy a central position" (Whelan 1994a: 213), and in 1990 the European Values Survey found that 71% of Catholics consider that the Church adequately answers their spiritual needs (Hardiman and Whelan 1998: 80).

Adherence to the Catholic faith is rooted in Irish culture. The Church is known as 'poball Dé', the people of God, and the church building is 'teach an phobaill', the people's house (Kirby 1984: 65). The seamlessness of the sacred and the secular is also to be found in everyday idiomatic speech in the Irish language. As Williams (1996) affirms, such expressions as 'Dia dhuit', 'Dia's Muire dhuit', and 'Beannacht Dé ort' "communicate something of the theocentric quality of the Irish mindset" (The Irish Times, July 23 1996). Irish culture strongly reflects Catholic belief in the presence and power of God.

Imbued with Christian belief, traditional customs in Catholic homes illustrated both the strong commitment and sense of obligation which Catholics held towards their faith, and a determination to uphold this commitment openly and unreservedly.

The majority of Irish people are born, marry and die within the Church. They regard their Church membership as important. They regularly receive the sacraments. They obey the Church's teachings and accept its definition of what constitutes good moral conduct. It is for these reasons that being Irish and being Catholic have become almost synonymous (Inglis 1987: 11). Mac Gréil(1996) attributes the strong Catholic presence to

> the strong place of religion in Irish self-identity, and the fact that, for the past 130 years, there has been a more-or-less continuous out-migration of population resulting in the absence of any inflow of new religious groupings (Mac Gréil 1996: 158).

Despite reference to 'post-Catholic' status, Irish society remains Catholic.

2.2.2 Irish Catholicism Synonymous with being Irish:

That the faith of the majority was so strong in Ireland, that the profession of religious belief was so overt and that church attendance, rituals and liturgies were so regular and frequent is an unusual phenomenon by international standards. Dunlop (1997) observed that "Catholicism and Irishness were wedded in such a way as to create a defining entity which was deemed to be an

inviolable sign of authenticity" (Dunlop 1997: 14). Elsewhere, as in France, Italy and Spain, the profession of Catholicism, the religion of the majority, has "provoked large percentages of atheism, agnosticism, dissent and anti-clericalism" (Nic Ghiolla Phádraig 1992: 3). However, the exceptional religious commitment in Ireland is attributed to her colonial history (Nic Ghiolla Phádraig 1992: 3; Hussey 1994: 381). According to Breen et al.:

> The basis for Church and State partnership dates back to the mid-nineteenth century when the Church worked in close co-operation with Catholic political movements that won successive battles with the UK government to gain control over schools for Catholic children and to disestablish the local Episcopalian Church. ...So when the new southern State gained independence, the Catholic Church could build on its base as the 'church of the people' and on the shared experience of the long struggle against a foreign oppressive power (Breen et al. 1990: 107).

Hull (1992) argues that "it is a characteristic of modern Europe that the resurgence of religion is accompanied by a revival of tribal nationalism" (Hull 1992: 22). In keeping with this tradition the Irish identified Catholicism with Nationalism and, in the struggle to gain independence from 'Protestant England', defiantly guarded Catholicism as a precious and extremely important part of their heritage. Being a good Catholic became central to being Irish (Corish 1996:139; Inglis 1987: 93) and the link between Catholicism and nationalism was a dominant aspect of the Irish psyche until very recent times (Cassidy 1996: 57).

However, an apparent anomaly rests in the ability of the Irish to show allegiance to the Church in one way "at the very time they challenge it in another" (Whyte 1984: 12). This incongruity has led Ireland to posses two distinguishing features in Church-State relationships. One of these is that, unlike other Catholic countries, Ireland has never produced an anti-clerical political party (Corish 1996: 140). Another is that, since the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869, Ireland does not have an established church. The Catholic Church "remains a voluntary body in its finances, dependent on donations from the faithful for the salaries of its priests and the upkeep of its churches and seminaries" (Whyte, 1984: 15). Therefore, disputes over State payment for clergy, or over State interference in the appointment of bishops do not arise in Ireland as can happen in, for example, Spain or Italy. Historical agreement to this form of coexistence of the two institutions has minimised the field of potential conflict and led to relative harmony and between Church and State (Whyte, 1984: 15-16).

As a very powerful presence in Irish life and in Irish identity, the Church became a kind of surrogate State and "an organised and institutionalised expression of nationality" (O'Toole 1994: 123). Prior to the mid-1960s, the symbiotic relationship between Church and State in Ireland can best be described in terms of "a grand alliance in which each maintained the power of the other"

(Inglis 1987: 93-94) and in which the secular and the sacred were almost indistinguishable.

2.2.3 The Church as a Power Bloc in Irish Life up to the Mid-1960s:

As the influence of the Church was underpinned by the State it became a powerful order which controlled virtually all aspects of Irish family and public life for most of the twentieth century. It was commonplace for service in the public domain to be open only to those whose religion and morality withstood the scrutiny of the clergy and people attained power, positions and social prestige through their standing as members of the Church (Inglis 1987: 71).

In Irish political life in the past relationships with the Vatican and with the hierarchy were carefully maintained, especially in the early years of the State. To the State's first cabinet in 1919 de Valera "conspicuously failed to appoint a Minister for Education, in order to avoid potential tension with the Catholic Church" (Lee 1989: 42). In 1933 the Holy See conferred upon him the Grand Cross of the Order of Pius IX (Keogh 1995: 105), and in 1937 "de Valera saw fit to get John Charles McQuaid ... to help him to write the Constitution" (O'Toole 1994: 124). Since the establishment of the State, therefore, the Catholic Church was accorded a very high status and its assumed authority became extremely strong. By modern standards, it commanded the fealty and obedience of the

laity to an extraordinary extent, and the model of church which thrived in Ireland throughout the first half of the twentieth century is referred to as "'Holy Mother Church', the unquestioned teacher and authority" (O'Mahony, 1986: 5). Since the foundation of the State, therefore, and with the aid of political leaders such as De Valera, the Church, was in such a powerful position that it could dominate, regulate and shape Irish society.

However, much of the enormous power wielded by the Church, especially during the 1940s and 1950s was either used negatively or grossly abused. Moloney (1997c) describes Ireland then as having been

> a confessional State in which the Catholic Church held total power and was not afraid to exercise it, a backward, insular, priest-ridden land far removed from the more civilised societies of Western Europe (Moloney 1997c: 4).

He deplores the suffering of young people during those years, arguing that this country was then a particularly frightening place for many children. He says that young people were sexually repressed by "a Church which invaded every aspect of their lives even to the point of suffocation" (Moloney 1997c: 4). He also condemns the manner in which orphaned children were abandoned "in cold church-run institutions, which specialised in cruel and unusual methods of punishment" (Moloney 1997c: 4).

Hussey also portrays a model of a dominating Church where, until the 1970s, its position as controller of all matters to do with the family and society remained almost

unquestioned. She asserts that Ireland's political and social history until then reflected

> conservative Catholic social thinking, where religious discrimination manifested itself openly, where the Church obstructed attempts by legislators to provide for family needs, and where the 'hiring and firing' of teachers took place on grounds of personal beliefs or life-style which had nothing to do with standards of teaching. It was a place where the clergy were accorded an awed respect, and dominated community life, particularly outside Dublin (Hussey 1993: 383).

As the Church's authoritarian and anti-intellectual strain of narrow-mindedness became an effective arbiter of social legislation it encouraging the draconian Censorship of Films Act (1923) and the Censorship of Publications Act (1929). These acts were rigorously enforced up to the 1960s by a Censorship Board which was vigilantly supervised by Catholic lay organisations such as the Knights of Columbanus (Inglis 1987: 91), and censorship, it is argued, resulted in a "superficially conforming, furtive, under-the-counter mentality ... one of the more unlovely facets of the Irish heritage" (Murphy 1984: 62). O'Toole censures the Church for "delaying the legalisation of artificial contraception until 1979, retaining largely unquestioned control over schools and hospitals funded by the taxpayer (and) resisting the slow development of a welfare state (O'Toole 1994: 129)

It would seem that the hallmark of the Irish way of life during these years was repression. An exclusively male, celibate clergy regarded their rightful role in relation to the laity as being the custodians of both public and private morality, especially in matters which

touched upon sexuality, fertility, health, education, recreation and social welfare. They controlled society at two levels: at the top, their great influence in the affairs of Government was achieved through clandestine meetings with political leaders, while "at the bottom, there was the long term power of controlling education and shaping minds. But in the middle, there was no genuinely Catholic intelligentsia" (O'Toole 1994: 129).

Most Irish Catholics then acquiesced in this process of arrogance. While many would have been aware of weaknesses and failures within the Church and their own pain as a result, its moral authority was accepted implicitly. They were "unable to admit and accept that it is a power bloc" (Inglis 1987: 6). However, the authoritarianism of the past is now remembered and resented by many. It is mainly since Irish society experienced major changes in the latter half of the twentieth century that Church authority was eventually questioned. Serious challenges to it followed Vatican II and the issuing of the encyclical, Humanae Vitae in 1968.

2.2.4 The Church's Diminishing Power since the Mid-1960s:

Vatican II relaxed a number of traditional, mainly penitential rules which were, until then, regarded as central to the religious practice of many Irish Catholics. It also changed the thinking surrounding vocations to the priesthood and religious life. This change of perception will be looked at in more detail in Section 2.4, "The

Church's Role in a Changing Irish Society", pages 89 to 108. Amended customs included those surrounding the receiving and handling of Holy Communion, Lenten fasting, abstinence from meat, the celebration of Mass and the gaining of indulgences. Around this time also doubts arose, particularly among the younger age group, about the importance of other aspects of traditional Catholic belief. Belief in a punitive God, in eternal damnation and in the power of the Devil tended to diminish somewhat as Catholics began to take "a more optimistic interpretation of religion" (Whelan and Fahy 1996: 108).

In 1968 when the encyclical, Humanae Vitae, was issued its diktats on birth control were widely ignored by a new generation of the laity. The Church lacked the means of dealing with this new challenge. At a time when it was a most powerful influence in Irish society it had little experience of a laity which would question its authority. To cite Inglis (1987):

> The absence of a systematic, rigorous critique of its power has been a handicap both to the Church itself, and to a new generation of Irish people who seek a coherent explanation of its influence in their personal lives and in Irish society generally (Inglis 1987: 2).

The immense power and unquestioned authority of the Church carried within itself the seeds of failure (O'Toole 1994: 129). Because of its almost total control over Irish society it did not perceive the need for support from a strong Catholic laity or from lay organisations, nor did it did see the need to develop the kind of complex

lay culture which the Catholic Church built in other European Catholic countries like France, Spain and Italy (O'Toole 1994: 129). Therefore, since virtually all the major influential institutions of the state were fundamentally Catholic and since there had been little or no perceived threat to the authority of the Church in Ireland, there was no perceived need for the establishment of a specifically Catholic broadcasting station nor the founding of a specifically Catholic political party or trade union. Therefore, in the words of O'Toole (1994) "Ireland, the most unequivocally Catholic society in Europe, has none of these things to this day" (O'Toole 1994: 129).

Erosion of the Church's moral authority also resulted from the decline in clerical and religious vocations and from the rise of feminism. The former left the Church with fewer clerical and religious personnel to carry out its work in health, social welfare, education and in parish administration, while the latter contributed to women's dissatisfaction with the Church's patriarchal structure and attitude and its persistent disregard for their aspirations (Murphy 1991: 214; Forde 1997: 7; Hawkins 1994: passim; Thurston 1998: passim).

In the 1990s a number of serious scandals unfolded which involved the hierarchy, clergy and religious orders, bringing the institutional Church into disrepute. The initial, crippling setback to the Church came in 1992 following the revelation that the bishop of Galway had an

unacknowledged adolescent son and had misappropriated Church funds to secure the silence of the boy's mother (Hardiman and Whelan 1998: 72). Gray (1994) described it as a tremendous blow to the Catholic Church,

> from which the Hierarchy will not readily recover. It will be difficult, in the immediate wake of the Casey affair, for the bishops to interfere in political matters, taking the high moral ground, as they have always done in the past. (Gray 1994: 336)

Revelations about cases of clerical child sexual abuse followed throughout the 1990s. Both laity and media expected public accountability and appropriate action from the hierarchy following these revelations. However, the response was slow and inept. Mishandling of cases by the hierarchy included the transfer of alleged abusers from one parish to another, the payment of large sums of money to alleged victims to buy their silence and a general reluctance and inability to deal promptly or appropriately with cases of abuse. It evoked the distrust and disrespect of many Irish Catholics, loss of clerical credibility, severe criticism from the media, the coining of the phrase 'paedophile priest' (Ferguson 1995: passim.) and the erosion of clerical morale. As Moloney (1998b) stated:

> Irreparable damage has been done to the church's moral authority at a time when it is badly needed. Not only has the faith of many Catholics been damaged, but the trust which many of them implicitly placed in priests and the institution has given way to suspicion and disappointment, even outright hostility (Moloney 1998b: 4).

All of these factors combined to weaken both the power and the moral authority of the Church towards the

end of the twentieth century in Irish society. However, religious adherence is still of great importance, church attendance is still remarkably high and personal faith is still strong among Irish people (Brady 1990: 5; Corish 1996: passim.). In viewing this apparent discrepancy it is important to note that:

> the obvious proximate explanation lies in the strength of religious adherence before the decline set in - the initial position from which the decline began was so elevated that it could sustain much weakening without being seriously undermined (Whelan and Fahy 1996: 111).

Irish Society, therefore, though urban and modern, still holds Catholicism in high regard although it is now more critical of the institutional Church, more questioning of doctrine and less tolerant of authoritarian methods than it has been in the past. Personal faith, however, did not diminish to any great extent. It is still a strong and cherished Irish characteristic (Corish 1996: passim).

2.3 The Church's Policy and Irish Education

While it would appear that the Church and State in Ireland are independent of each other, there is a great deal of interpenetration between the two institutions. Since the beginning of its endeavour to gain control of the education system in the 1830s, the main principle which the Church has fought for has been control of the type of knowledge that is produced within that system

(Inglis 1987: 58). It has done so with remarkable success.

2.3.1 Church Policy on Education:

Throughout the world the Catholic Church's attitude to education is the same (Whyte 1984: 16). It claims that the right to educate rests primarily with parents and that it is the duty of Catholic parents to see that their children receive a Catholic education. It also maintains that, while the State has a right to provide schools and to insist on certain standards in education, it does not have the right to impose a particular form of education on children in contravention of their parents' wishes.

The Church has achieved its aspirations to a Catholic education for Catholics throughout the world with varying degrees of success. For example, Catholic schools were banned altogether in former Soviet Russia. In the United States, Australia and France it could run its own schools but without State funding. In England and Northern Ireland Catholic schools receive State aid, but to a lesser extent than that which is granted to schools run by local authorities. In all of these situations the lack of or unequal funding for Catholic education is less than satisfactory from the Church's point of view. Whyte draws attention to only four countries where Catholic schools are treated with equality as regards State

funding, namely, Scotland, the Netherlands, the province of Quebec and Ireland (Whyte, 1984: 17).

However, although the Church's right to recognition and its achievement of a denominational education system for Catholics is to its satisfaction in these four countries, it gained a position of particular importance in Ireland. Whyte (1984) comments on its status In Ireland in the mid-1980s:

> If, however, the position in Quebec, Scotland, and the Netherlands could be considered as par from the Catholic point of view, the position that has developed in Ireland could be described as par plus. for in Ireland the Church secured rights, while still under British rule, which went beyond those attained anywhere else (Whyte, 1984: 17).

In the Scottish system denominational schools are run by local authorities elected by the community. In the systems of Quebec and the Netherlands they are managed by school boards elected by members of the denomination concerned. However, in Ireland until the mid-1970s almost all Catholic primary schools were under the management of the local parish priest, while Catholic voluntary secondary schools, with very few exceptions, were managed by the religious order or the diocese who owned them. Therefore, not only is there denominational control of education in Ireland, there was, until lately, full clerical control as well. Boards of management for both primary and secondary schools are a recent phenomenon which came about mainly at the request of the Minister for Education in the Green Paper of 1992 (Minister for Education 1992: 142). However, by virtue of their

structure and trusteeship, the boards of Catholic secondary schools are still largely influenced and guided by the ethos of the religious trustees of such schools (Council of Managers of Catholic Secondary Schools: 1991: 9-10).

2.3.2 Church Acquisition of Control of Irish Education in the 19th Century:

Titley (1983) argues that the development of the Irish school system in the nineteenth century was strongly influenced by a politically powerful Catholic priesthood. This influence was particularly strong because the Church traditionally attached great importance to its educational function (Titley 1983: 4; Inglis 1987: 124). Its moral authority among the laity was won through the enthusiastic work of priests and the gratuitous work of nuns and brothers in caring for the poor, the sick and uneducated (Inglis 1987: 124). A very effective denominational education system was thereby created. As Titley (1983) argues:

> when public funds were first made available for secondary education in 1878, they were given under conditions which in no way interfered with the sectarian nature of most existing secondary schools. Consequently, by the beginning of the twentieth century virtually all Irish schools, both primary and secondary, functioned as sectarian institutions. In addition, the great majority of them were operated or managed by Roman Catholic religious (Titley 1983: 159).

Governance of schools and the nature of education for Catholics has been of paramount importance for Church

authorities throughout the history of the State. As Titley states:

> As long as the clergy could guarantee the orthodoxy of those who instructed the young by controlling the hiring and firing of teachers, the Catholicity of the schools would remain intact. The managerial system in the national schools and the private nature of the secondary schools allowed for such control (Titley 1983: 142).

This situation continued from the 1830s into and throughout most of the twentieth century.

2.3.3 Continued Control of Education in the 20th Century:

The Irish hierarchy were most vigilant in enforcing the idea of Catholic education for Catholic children and they used their position to ensure that parents sent their children to Catholic schools only. The Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. McQuaid explicitly forbad Catholics to send their children to non-catholic schools "whether primary, secondary or continuation" (Whyte 1984: 306), under pain of mortal sin. This was a direct and categorical order to all Catholic of the archdiocese, which, in the extremely authoritarian moral climate of the time, few would dare disobey (Chubb 1992: 17).

In the earlier years of the century attempts by the government to reform education had to be abandoned because of strong opposition from the hierarchy to any reduction in clerical control. In 1904 the proposal to set up a Department of Education in Ireland was dropped. In 1907 the idea of setting up an Irish Council, which would have

control over education among other things, was withdrawn, and again, in 1919 an education bill which promised greatly increased grants to Irish education, but under tighter government control, was dropped because of episcopal hostility. Whyte states that "when native governments took over in Ireland they well knew that, of all subjects, the one on which the Catholic hierarchy was most sensitive was education" (Whyte, 1984: 19).

Later, in the 1960s the State set about introducing free education for all. It also wished at that time to restructure the system, making it more uniform and more vocationally orientated, and shifting "the balance of power in the administration of education between the traditionally hegemonic Catholic Church and the state" (Lee 1989: 362). However, the Catholic Church, as the principal opponent of proposals for such policies, was successful in defeating them. As Breen et al. state:

> it engaged in an active campaign against the proposals made in the 1970s by the Department of Education for the amalgamation of existing secondary and vocational schools into community schools and it succeeded, after many years, in making such community schools as were established, denominational, rather than having them non-demominational as the Department had originally proposed (Breen et al. 1990: 138).

The fact that the Minister for Education could address the issue of making some alterations in school governance in 1992 and again in the White Paper of 1995 (Minister for Education 1995: 146-147) indicated radical change. Whyte points out that, since 1963, some important reforms were carried out in education with the approval of

the Catholic hierarchy. But he points out that such reforms are very recent. Until then, because of the Church's overwhelmingly strong stance in education and of its reluctance to submit to criticism, the State was exceptionally careful to avoid offering any challenge to its authority in this domain (Whyte 1984: 21).

The Church's diminishing control and influence in Irish society is a very recent phenomenon, as was examined in Section 2.2.4, pages 76 to 80.

2.3.4 The Church's Objectives in Education:

The Vatican Congress for Catholic Education (1988) outlines the Church's present objectives in Catholic education. Since the second Vatican Council, the Church views the Catholic school as a "pastoral instrument" having a community dimension with parents as central figures, "since they are the natural and irreplaceable agents in the education of their children" (Vatican Congress for Catholic Education 1988: 20-21). The school is not only seen as "a presence of the Church in society", it is

> a place of evangelisation, of authentic apostolate and of pastoral action - not through complementary or parallel or extracurricular activity, but of its very nature: its work of educating the Christian person ... it is based on an educational philosophy in which faith, culture and life are brought into harmony. Through it, the local church evangelizes, educates and contributes to the formation of a healthy and morally sound lifestyle among its members (Vatican Congress for Catholic Education 1988: 21-22).

Therefore, in the eyes of the Church, religious and spiritual formation and the instilling of Gospel values are fundamental, and must take place alongside other aspects of education, i.e. the intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of the student.

As the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools (CCMS) point out, much of the school chaplain's role is to encourage and foster the religious and spiritual dimension of school life. Additionally, part of his or her role is to be "sensitive to the possibility that some pupils may experience an inner call to priesthood or religious life" (CCMS 1996: 23). This indicates that the Church still sees the Catholic school as a possible venue for recruitment to the priesthood or to religious life.

2.3.5 State Aid to Irish Denominational Schools:

The term 'separation of Church and State' is not one that can be applied in Ireland in the same sense in which it applies in countries such as France or the United States where it connotes, among other things that the State gives no aid to denominational education (Whyte 984: 12). According to article 44 of the Irish Constitution, although "The State guarantees not to endow any religion" (Article 44.2.2),

> Legislation providing State aid for schools shall not discriminate between schools under the management of different religious denomination, nor be such as to affect the right of any child to attend a school receiving public money without attending religious

> instruction in that school (Bunreacht na hÉireann: Article 44.2.4).

State aid is, therefore, granted to all recognised schools in Ireland, the vast majority of which are denominational. Several orders and communities of priests, nuns and brothers own and manage these schools. About one fifth of all secondary schools are owned and run by the Sisters of Mercy; a further 15 per cent are held by the Christian Brothers and 10 per cent by the Presentation nuns (Breen et al. 1990: 137). Up to the 1990s the Catholic Church controlled most schools either through direct management by the clergy as is the case in virtually all primary schools, or through diocesan management or ownership by religious orders and congregations, as is the case in most voluntary secondary schools (Inglis 1987: 55; Breen et al. 1990: 105).

School chaplains are appointed on a full-time basis to both comprehensive schools and community schools and are paid by the State. Such schools, of which there are few (Breen et al. 1990: 138), are nominally non-denominational, although as argued by Breen et al. these are now effectively denominational and are largely protective of Catholic values. School chaplains, either full-time or part-time, who are attached to primary or second level schools are neither recognised by nor paid by the State.

2.4 The Church's Role in a Changing Irish Society

The radical economic expansion and cultural change in Irish society since the 1960s encountered a greater appreciation of the concept of equality, especially gender equality, a lessening of tolerance of patriarchies and of authoritarianism in general. Diminishing trends in vocations to the priesthood and to religious life became apparent and attitudes towards clerical authority and religious observance underwent significant change.

2.4.1 Economic Expansion and Growth of Consumerism:

The publication of the Programme for Economic Expansion in 1958 "is often cited as marking the end of one era in Irish life and the beginning of the next" (Chubb 1992: 23). It encouraged the promotion of industrialization and trade and it advocated foreign investment. Ireland then experienced an unprecedented economic growth both through membership of the European Economic Community since 1973 along with favourable conditions in Western Europe generally (Chubb 1992: 23-24; Corish 1996: 144).

This economic growth which continued steadily since then, although to a lesser extent during the recession-hit 1980s, altered the prosperity and living standards of most people. In Chubb's view, prosperity may be measured "by such outward and visible indices as television-set

ownership, telephones and cars, ... and more generally by overall consumption patterns" (Chubb 1992: 24). All of these indices showed a marked increase in prosperity from the 1960s onwards.

Another huge transformation brought about by the economic and social reforms was that of rapid urbanisation (Lee 1989: 605; Convey: 1994: 18). The flight from the land was not new; it had been a feature of Irish life since the 1840s. However, the process of urbanization escalated since the 1960s. Chubb points out that in 1966 the population was half urban and half rural, but by 1986 nearly two thirds of the population lived in towns. The rapid rate of urbanization was also reflected in the growth of Dublin "at a faster rate than any Western European capital" (Lee 1989: 605).

Economic growth and urbanisation brought new paradigms for success, mostly materialistic and heralding a culture of 'having'. Modern Irish society now bears the hallmarks of one which worships "at the altar of consumerism ... (where) having as much as possible is the key to happiness" (Looney 1997:40). Looney is concerned about the effect of this message when it is transmitted to the deprived:

> when the muezzins in the marketplace echo in the neighbourhoods where there is little or no disposable income, it translates as 'Having is good. Having more is better.' And if you can't have ... well the path to goodness and happiness is closed to you (Looney 1997: 40-41).

Looney is also apprehensive about the influence which the materialistic concept of 'having' exerts on young people:

> Personally I cannot help but feel that, when this message reaches the bored and passive and limited-income younger generations, it translates as 'Having fun is good. Having more fun is better. Having as much fun as possible is the key to happiness (Looney 1997: 40).

However, Fitzgerald (1997) explains that happiness is found not in seeking pleasure on one's own but in

> a constructive interaction with others: in working with them, playing with them, helping them, or even serving them. If this truth is lost, the quality of life is hugely diminished (Fitzgerald 1997: 93-94).

The danger that young people may now be growing up in a hedonistic society marked by superficial values, transcendent individualism, secularism and "chronic spiritual anaemia ... a more dangerous and debilitating disease in the individual and society than intellectual ignorance" (Robertson 1984: 56), is cause for concern.

2.4.2 Growing Secularisation:

The gradual "transfer in the ethos of society from sacred to secular influence, practices, beliefs, values and consciousness, has been termed the process of 'secularisation'" (McNelis 1986: 82). Ireland is witnessing this process (Freyne 1993: 532) as both Irish society and its schools have been increasingly subjected to secularist values recently, endorsing the "pleasure principle and cult of individual satisfaction" (McNelis 1986: 84). One of the most alarming facets of modern

life, especially where young people are concerned, is that "religion for very many is not just seen as irrelevant but actually as a hostile and negative force" (Fitzgerald 1997:87) "concerned with things that are inane, hardly worth bothering about" (Walsh 1997: 64). It is also evinced that

> sociological surveys relating to faith and practice have continued to indicate an ever weakening sense of Christian identity, a growing sense of secularism and an overall decline in sacramental participation - in short, Christian faith in modern Ireland is beginning to weaken and lose possession of the strong roots from which it once proudly grew and flourished. Instead a 'new generation of Catholics' is emerging who look less and less to their Church for guidance in everyday matters. The result is that the gap between the faith that is handed down and the faith that is lived continues to widen as time progresses towards the end of this century. The need to re-evaluate the present catechetical system in order to cope with new situations and new demands is evidently urgent (Convey 1994: 163).

One may find more than one view of the concept of secularism. It may simply mean giving priority to material concerns of this life, such as food, shelter, career, money and entertainment, and neglecting the religious and spiritual. It may also mean an ideological commitment by those who control policy to exclude all religious concerns and values from life, or it may just mean anti-clericalism - the desire to wrest intellectual authority from the clergy (Ó Conaill 1997: 519). Ó Conaill states that the latter two are closely connected and perceived as a threat to the Church in Ireland.

According to him, "modern secularism originated in the eighteenth century enlightenment's determination to

wrest control of ideas and public policy from the clergies ... (it equates) a dogmatic and exclusive 'this world only' outlook", and is closely related to anti-clericalism (Ó Conaill 1997: 519). The Enlightenment was based on scientific discovery and the belief that science, enhanced by recent Newtonian discovery, would provide all the answers and solve all problems. Ó Conaill (1997) adverts to the failure of this ideology:

> following the Enlightenment (liberalism, democratic socialism, Marxism, Fascism chiefly) have all failed to deliver a spiritually, socially and intellectually respectable alternative to practical Christianity (Ó Conaill 1997: 523).

Two centuries later, we continue to experience both scientific and technological advances which herald huge changes, not least of which is the creation of wealth. Ó Conaill (1997) warns of the attendant danger of creating a spiritual void, thus, promoting modern secularism. He argues that

> Never before has there been the possibility of worldly success for so many people - but those who achieve it mostly haven't a clue what to do with it. In scaling the pinnacle of modern 'success' - by possessing wealth - we discover that there is no beautiful vista on the other side. Today's power symbol (the Pentium PC or Porche) become tomorrow's waste disposal problem. At the moment of triumph aspired to by teenagers the world over, the pop idol implodes into addiction, or shuts himself away in a compound to escape stalkers, thieves or the media. Our wealth is achieved at enormous environmental and personal cost. When we surf the Internet we learn that 200 million children around the world rot in sweatshops or brothels or on rubbish tips - but there appears to be no solution (Ó Conaill 1997: 519).

If young people's idols, heroes and power symbols transmit messages of transience, of shallow meaning and of

failing to fulfil, a problem arises in regard to their own spiritual fulfilment. Exclusive secularism can produce a society in which individualism reigns, and "individualism carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction: it just doesn't work" (Fitzgerald 1997: 94). The spiritual needs of its members remain unmet. Possible solutions may then be sought in the pursuit of fulfilment by other means, as is evident in the growth of sects, cultism and quackery, which are spreading as a result of decreasing social supports and increasing loneliness in a modern world where unprecedented social change has led to an urgent search for meaning, for personal identity and for a sense of community (Ó Conaill 1997: 523; O'Donnell 1997: 27-28). Cultist sects and groups usually entice the most vulnerable, such as insecure individuals in search of simple solutions to personal crises and un-met spiritual needs (Hegarty 1985: 45). Some young people also experience their allure. O'Donnell holds that "some young people dealing with their healthy adolescent struggles are more easily trapped by the recruiters" (O'Donnell 1997: 28). Recruiters may also use religion as "a basic motivation to trap people into their enslaving system either outside or within the Churches" (O'Donnell 1997: 28).

Ó Conaill (1997) argues that second level education is showing a "dominance of secularism as an exclusive cast of mind, threatening to disinherit the Church in Ireland" (Ó Conaill 1997: 520). A secular, pressure filled curric-

ulum occupies more than 85% of all students' time, pushing the spiritual ethos aside (Clayton-Lea 1993: 480), a phenomenon which deserves serious attention (Ó Conaill 1997: 520) and the result of which may be that

> 'Catholic ethos', notwithstanding, so sedulously developed in up to fourteen years of education is soon consigned by most school leavers to the attic, along with the files of Leaving Cert ... notes. Religious practice often ceases at the same time (Ó Conaill 1997: 520).

Yet, Ó Conaill (1997) avows that it is worth while concentrating on the creation of communities which foster fundamental Catholic values and spirituality in schools. He is hopeful that even if school leavers cast aside that ethos at that transitional time of life they may return to it at a later time. His words, "a Catholic education joyfully forgotten at eighteen may be remembered, in its essentials, at a moment of supreme adult crisis" (Ó Conaill 1997: 526), imply that the foundation of spirituality imparted at school is seldom lost forever.

2.4.3 Television as an Agent of Cultural Change:

"If industrialisation and urbanisation were the parents of the rapid cultural changes ... television was the midwife" (Chubb 1992: 29). The media, and especially television, were hugely important as social catalysts and particularly so in altering attitudes and values in Irish society. Over time television in particular had "a profound impact on social and cultural practices" (Inglis 1987: 90). It brought to an end "the long nineteenth

century of Irish Catholicism" (Inglis 1987: 93). It was the introduction of the national television service at the beginning of the 1960s and the dissemination of American and English produced programmes which, more than anything else, helped to break through "the iron cage of censorship" (Inglis 1987: 91). Radio Telefís Éireann was a "pioneer of free, open debate, in a society previously gripped by taboos of silence" (Ardagh 1994: 268). The television era also eroded the 'natural', unquestionable authority of the clergy. It brought to an end "the tradition that bishops and priests were above public criticism ... (and) it forced the Church into giving a public account of itself" (Inglis 1987: 92).

While the power of television may be lauded by many for its erosion of authoritarian censorship in Irish life, its other spheres of influence in society must also be acknowledged. In changing both urban and rural Ireland, its power lay in

> its ability to project new ideas and influence right into the home in a particularly insistent manner, together with the blandishments of the advertisers of the consumerist society (Chubb 1992: 29).

Through imported programmes it portrayed lifestyles in which neither religion nor traditional Catholic values were of importance. It brought sophisticated images of life based on industry, urbanity and individuality into Irish homes, "all of which added to the decline of the power of the Catholic Church" (Inglis 1987: 92). As Looney puts it: "One of the features of the new Ireland is

that religion doesn't figure ... At least not the way it used to, anyway" (Looney 1996: 26-27). Indicated here again is how religious practice is undergoing change.

2.4.4 Impact of Television on Young People:

Portrayal of consumerist values through television, the "power of which is anchored in its ubiquitous presence in our lives" (Casey 1997: 5), may have a serious impact, especially on young people. There is concern about the values which television is selling to adolescents, for example, the influence of excessive sex and violence on undiscerning young audiences (Casey 1997: 5; Moloney 1997a: 4). Reasons for such concern may be underpinned by findings on the amount of television videos watched by secondary school students at present. Video rental generates £40 million per annum, and seventy per cent of Irish homes possess a video recorder, (Dempsey 1997: 7). In a survey of an adolescent population of 1057 in 17 secondary schools, reasons given for watching videos were:

94.4% - for good entertainment;
72.5% - to pass the time;
41.8% - as a form of escape from the real world;
37.9% - to take away the pain in their life, to block out the real world (Dempsey 1997: 7).

The different age categories of videos watched were:

99.1% have watched age 15 Certificate videos;
97.4% have watched age 18 Certificate videos;
96.6% have watched horror videos;

70.9% have watched age 18 Certificate sexually explicit videos (Dempsey 1997: 7).

A cause for concern may arise from these results which indicate, firstly that a substantial number of young people wish to escape both pain and the real world, and, secondly, that the extensive video viewing among the adolescents surveyed shows the predominant choice of viewing to be of a violent nature.

2.4.5 Church Leadership:

Demographic, social and economic changes had considerable impact on Irish culture, all the more so since they coincided with other far-reaching innovations, not least of which were those which occurred in the Catholic Church following the Second Vatican Council. This Council addressed matters that had hitherto not been considered by most Irish people as matters for discussion, much less open to change. Such topics included marriage, contraception, divorce, relations between the clergy and the laity, liturgy, attitudes to other religions, and the role of the state (Chubb 1992: 26). Chubb indicated the resulting changes in attitudes:

> Urban middle class people in particular began to question the existing rules of their church and to adopt a new, more independent attitude to their clergy as they rejected rules and relationships that they thought suited only to a rural, peasant society. So, too, gradually did more and more of the growing industrial work force with its increasing proportion of women of child-bearing age. The consequences were seen in an increased number of marriages at an earlier age than hitherto and, with the rapid spread of

contraception, a marked decline in the fertility rate (Chubb 1992: 26).

By the 1980s the Church faced a dilemma. There was a shift in the accepted mores of society. Sexual morality transformed in the 1970s. Church teaching was widely rejected in matters of contraception and birth control. Marriage breakdown became more freely acknowledged. Church teaching on the indissolubility of marriage in any circumstances was rejected in principle in opinion polls, and there was "open clamour for divorce legislation" (Lee 1989: 656). It was "only on abortion, of the trinity habitually linked by traditional preachers, that church teaching was still overwhelmingly accepted by Irish Catholics" (Lee 1989: 656). Divorce was eventually introduced by referendum and legislated for in 1997.

Reflecting on the Church's altered position in a society where faith and culture are so closely intertwined, Lee (1989) has this to say:

> The church's dilemma, to which there is no easy answer, should deeply concern civic leaders. The church is a bulwark, perhaps now the main bulwark, of the civic culture. It is the very opportunism of the traditional value system that leaves religion as the main barrier between a reasonably civilised civil society and the untrammelled predatory instincts of individual and pressure-group selfishness, curbed only by the power of rival predators (Lee 1989: 657).

However, the Church has failed to provide pastoral strategies that would respond to challenges to the Irish Catholic ethos, to its own authority and to the "decline in the strength and depth of the Christian faith" in Irish society (Convey 1994: 18).

Kirby (1990) also finds fault with Church leaders for failing to design new structures to meet the needs of a modernised Irish society (Kirby, 1990: 250). He says that the dominant model of Church still in existence in this country is the Christendom model, one comparable with Inglis' model of 'legalistic religious observance':

> This is seen, for example, in the strong pastoral emphasis to maintain even a minimal Church allegiance among the majority through regular church-going. Thus the parish is still the primary locus of their faith for most Irish Catholics and only small numbers have been provided the opportunity to a more personalised and mature faith. The clergy still function as an élite, dominating power and decision-making within the Church (Kirby 1990: 250).

Kirby suggests that declining religious practice and growing State independence from the Church in recent years indicate that this model of Church is in severe crisis at present (Kirby 1990: 250). He says that the Church must become a Church of the people in order to survive, and he draws attention to two other models of Church which also thrive in Ireland but to a lesser extent. These are the 'faith commitment' model and the 'prophetic model of Church'. The former encourages a more personalised faith somewhat resembling Inglis' 'individually principled ethics'. It does so by means of special programmes such as Discovery and Search weekends and through small, and often select, gatherings such as the Charismatic Renewal groups. It centres on individual growth and development within small socially select groups.

The prophetic model of Church is illustrated in groups such as the Justice Commission of the Conference of

Major Religious Superiors, the Sisters for Justice and the Jesuit Faith and Justice Centre. It pursues both personal renewal and community renewal and social justice in a Christian context. Many groups of religious who uphold this model have moved into poorer urban areas in order to live with the poor and design pastoral ministries among them. These two models were encouraged by Vatican II (Kirby 1990: 251) but it would appear that the Irish hierarchy and diocesan clergy have not promoted them to a significant extent.

2.4.6 Formal Religious Observance:

Notwithstanding all of this, Ireland still has a strongly religious culture by comparison with the rest of western world, and that Irish people hold deeply religious private beliefs. O'Toole (1994) argues that:

> it remains true that Ireland is exceptionally religious by the standards of the western world. More people attend church once a week in Ireland (86 per cent of the overwhelmingly Catholic population) than in any other Judeo-Christian society in the world. Asked how important God is in their lives, the Irish come out far ahead of any nation in Europe. When it comes to belief in the existence of the soul, in life after death, in heaven, in prayer, the Irish score so much higher in surveys than the rest of the developed world as to seem not part of that world at all (O'Toole 1994: 124).

However, despite this image, there is also evidence of "a sharp decline in formal religious observance among the younger urbanised generation" (Lee 1989: 657), and at school level Looney refers to the "great religious 'switch off' in the RE class" (Looney 1991: 131). The practice of

faith among this generation reflects shallow belief and shallow religious roots rather than unbelief (Lee 1989: 657; O'Dwyer 1995: 273). It also indicates that the church is "suffering from spiritual malnutrition" (Lee 1989: 657). An explication of the 'need for faith' is given in Appendix B, Vol. 2, pages 203 to 204.

Numbers going to confession, now known as the sacrament of reconciliation, among all age groups have plummeted over the past 20 years (Inglis 1987: passim; Cosgrave 1997: 6; Fitzgerald 1997: 74; Flannery 1997: 5; Moloney 1997b: 4). As Moloney (1997b) puts it: "There is little doubt that confession is in a state of crisis today ... business in the box is slack indeed" (Moloney 1997b: 4). Going to confession is an exercise in which "moral problems for the laity are solved by confessing them to a priest and then, as a penance, actively engaging in some traditional, practice (Inglis 1987: 24). It can be a very intimate discipline between priest and penitent.

It is argued that one of the effects of the decline in going to confession is that priests and the Church "lose touch with the behaviour and needs of the laity" (Inglis 1987: 44). It is also mooted that a loss of interaction between priests and people in confession may accelerate dissatisfaction with the Church's official teaching among the laity:

> there is a distinction between the formal teaching of the Church as mediated by the pope and bishops, and its informal application through the priests in Confession. While the former may demand strict compliance to the Church's teachings, the latter may

interpret these more as general rules rather than specific regulations (Ryan 1979: 5).

Therefore, when people cease going to confession they are denied the possibility of the Church's minister approving a more informal, more personal and less strict application of the Church's formal rules, thus bridging a possible gap between the official dogma and the needs of the laity. But it is also true that as this process leads to a decrease in the status and power of priests among the people (Inglis 1987: 45).

2.4.7 Decline in Religious Vocations:

One of the most striking changes in Irish society since the 1960s is the continuing decline in numbers entering the priesthood and religious life. The shortage of vocations is one of the biggest challenges facing the church at present. It is "the end of an era" (Flannery 1992: 33). Moloney (1997d) expresses his concern: "There is no denying any more that religious life as we have come to know it in the West has had its day. It is dying and we can already hear its death rattle" (Moloney 1997d: 20).

In very recent times the numbers entering are seriously low (McCrory 1996: 421). In 1996 only 18 students entered Maynooth to train for diocesan priesthood - the lowest this century. Clonliffe, the Dublin arch-diocesan seminary, also had its lowest intake. In addition to diocesan seminaries which have recently closed Hayes (1998a) foresees the probable closure of more in the

near future. Referring to discussions during the national bishops' conference in 1998, he states that of the five colleges currently training young men for diocesan priesthood, it is likely that only two will be operational as seminaries in five years time (Hayes 1998a: 4).

Religious orders are also doing very badly. Their number of entrants has reduced to a trickle (Moloney 1997c: 20; Dempsey 1997: 23). In 1996, the year that the Christian Brothers celebrated the beatification of Edmund Rice, only one young man entered. Faced with falling numbers, few orders have been able to avoid the painful task of closing houses and withdrawing from traditional apostolates, a process which will accelerate in the years ahead.

The sea change began in 1966 when Vatican II enshrined the vocation of the laity in its documents. The message in Lumen Gentium and in other conciliar documents disposed of the idea that religious life was a higher and more perfect way of life than that of lay Christians, thus constituting a radical and silent revolution (Daly 1997: 229), and giving rise to a new interpretation of the term 'vocation' (Dempsey 1997: 23). Some of the major motives for entering religious life were removed. This, together with other changes in Irish life, helped the religious way of life to lose its appeal. New ways of expressing a sense of vocation were discovered by young people, as lay missionaries or by joining organisations such as Concern, bringing about a fundamental change in the climate

surrounding vocations (Dempsey 1997: 23). Therefore, the wish for spirituality and the hunger for meaning which exists in a very real way among many young people today (Moloney 1997d: 20) is met in other ways.

However, it is argued that there are other contributory factors such as the "deep sense of pessimism and of crisis among clergy and religious" (Moloney 1997d: 20), the "negative public perception of priests and the priest's life today" (Dempsey 1997: 23) and the clerical scandals of the 1990s which damaged the image and credibility of the priesthood and religious life. Moloney (1997d) outlines five factors which, in general, contribute to the decline in vocations. He says that:

1. Our attitudes have become more Western and secular. Service and sacrifice have become dirty words.

2. The bad press the church has received in recent years has had a negative effect on people's perceptions of it.

3. Celibacy is also an issue. For many young people growing up in today's world, it makes little sense. It is a concept they hardly understand.

4. The day is long gone when parents consider it a blessing to have a daughter a nun or a son in the priesthood or brotherhood. The reason for this are as much sociological and economic as religious - smaller family size etc.

5. Difficulty people have in making life commitments - whether to marriage, to priesthood, to religious life or to anything else. "We live in a culture today where the idea of life-long commitment to anyone or anything is a frightening prospect for young people. It puts them off. They don't feel able or ready to embrace such concepts as 'final' and 'forever'" (Moloney 1997d: 20-21).

Moloney also states that the impression which many, including young people, have of the Church is one which

appears to be predominantly concerned with structures, laws and regulations rather than with the Christian message and the lives of ordinary people with ordinary problems. He deems that homilies are often poor both in content and delivery, and do not seem to address the real lives of people and he fears that young people's experience of the Church is negative, presenting liturgies which appear "hurried and ill-prepared ... (and which seem) not very life-giving or fulfilling" (Moloney 1997d: 21). Poor levels of delivery and a negative image are off-putting in a culture used to high standards for advertising and positive presentation in almost all facets of life.

2.4.8 Recommendations for the Future:

Moloney advocated the way forward for the Church is to become more prophetic and more joy-filled, to share more with the laity and to encourage them to take over a greater part of the role traditionally associated with the priesthood. It must be "an agent of hope ... a Good News church, radiating a positive message of God's love for all" (Moloney 1997d: 22). In order to resuscitate the life of the Church, Kirby (1990) advocates major priorities which include:

a) The inclusion and active participation of the laity in Church life "with special emphasis on the role of women as full and equal participants";
b) The growth of small Christian communities;
c) New structures of social justice and concern for the poor;

d) The renewal of prayer and liturgy.

In the fourth of these he stresses the importance of "fostering of forms of prayer and liturgical celebrations which deepen and sustain the faith of ordinary people, especially the poor and marginalised" (Kirby 1990: 252).

Hegarty argues that the present ruling on mandatory clerical celibacy is discouraging many from entering the priesthood at present and therefore, it should be reviewed (Hegarty 1998). Bishop Commiskey also pleads for debate on this issue in the interest of curbing the decline in vocations (Irish Times, Sept. 4th 1998). Further to this, Robinson (1999) reveals that there is

> a prevailing culture of fear in the Catholic church particularly today after nearly 2,000 years of Christianity. Priests are afraid to express their deeply held views in public for fear of being criticised or indeed isolated by their colleagues, fear of their Bishop, or of losing promotion and so on. Even cardinals and bishops spend much of their time looking over their shoulders to Rome (Robinson 1999: 35).

At present, this way of life, charged with distrust and fear as it is, can only discourage vocations.

In schools the perception and effectiveness of religious education at second level, has for some time now, been a source of concern for many educationalists and teachers (Weafer and Hanley 1991: passim). Looney deplores the sad lack of support for religious educators from the parish community and from the Church (Looney 1991: 130-131). She advocated that handing on the faith should not be the sole responsibility of the religious

educators but that it should be that of the whole school community (Looney 1998: 81). Mooney laments the poor status of religious education in schools, adding that the present system not only denies subject teachers a role in faith development, "it also tends to rob the chaplain of one" (Mooney 1991: 143). He advocates the introduction of religious education as an examination subject arguing that:

> In an exam-based system, where the faith-life of the school would be seen as over and above the R.E. class, the chaplain's role becomes clearer because he/she becomes the central figure in guiding/directing the overall school community to enrich and deepen the quality of its faith life (Mooney 1991: 144).

Gallagher also says that developing new forms of Christian community is essential and that it will be the litmus test of Church credibility at the end of this century (Gallagher 1997: 397).

Murray sees danger in leaving religious education to schools alone since many students live in parishes far removed from the schools which they attend (Murray 1991: 158). Nevertheless, if religious education, faith development and spirituality are not nurtured in schools there is less hope of their continuing as a strong component of the life of the wider Catholic community.

Summary

This chapter outlined Inglis's explication of three forms of Christian religious practice, magical, legalistic and individually principled. The more uneducated and primitive society is the more it tends to adhere to the first two of these. As society becomes more urban and more enlightened it shows a tendency towards the third and most rational form. This is worth noting for those whose mission it is to encourage the practice of faith in modern Irish society and in Irish schools.

Irish society, has a long standing tradition of Catholicism which is deeply rooted in its history and strongly associated with its sense of identity. In the hundred, or so, years between the mid-nineteenth century until the mid-1960s, the Catholic Church became a hugely powerful force in Irish society, controlling political and private life to a remarkable and often oppressive degree. However, since the 1960s transformation took place in both society and in the Church. Economic expansion, increased prosperity and free education resulted in a more urban, opulent and self-determining society. Combined with the transformation in the mind-set of the laity, a sharp decline in vocations to the priesthood and religious life affected the Church. In addition to this, recent adverse publicity further diminished the power and influence of the hierarchy and clergy in Irish life.

Recognising the prime right of parents to educate their children, the Church sees the Catholic school as a locus where Catholic parents educate their children within a Christian milieu underpinned by a Catholic ethos. It is a place of evangelisation where the faith is nurtured. The Church regards its own role in education as vital, and that of the State as subservient. Therefore, through diocesan resources and religious communities, the Church has built and run most Irish secondary schools, albeit with State aid, and it has constantly guarded its role as custodian of Catholic education from secular influence.

Although Irish society still remains predominantly Catholic, the Church must now cope with fundamental changes that have affected its character. A new approach is needed to cope with a growing sense of secularism, consumerism and the impact of television, especially on the lives of young people. The Church must become a Church of the people again. It must encourage faith and Christian spirituality in order to counteract the burgeoning mores of consumerism and increasing secularism in today's society.

Chapter 3 will look at the importance of the ethos and climate of Catholic schools. It will explore the differences between them and the importance of each in the life of the school community.

Chapter 3

The Ethos and Climate of Catholic Secondary Schools

CHAPTER 3

THE ETHOS AND CLIMATE OF CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Given that a school's ethos can be quickly sensed by all those who share in the school's institutional life (Hogan 1985: 10), and in its everyday social interactions, the importance of ethos cannot be overlooked in the life of a school community. Peter and Osborn (1992) quote Almond & Verba (1963), Hess & Torney (1967), and Entwistle (1971) in asserting that "the general ethos of the school is as important as the propositional knowledge gained from classroom processes and the attitudes picked up from family ties" (Peter & Osborn 1992: 153). Pring (1986) says that in order to describe and analyse the ethos of a school

> it is necessary to examine the various procedures through which business is conducted towards individuals and their work, towards the community as a whole, and towards those outside the school (Pring 1986: 190).

The concept of ethos has been associated with words such as 'climate', 'atmosphere', 'ambience', 'spirit' and 'culture'. However, in this discussion, ethos is taken to

be the pervading spirit or character which animates a school's value system or what Hannon (1993), perhaps confusingly, refers to as "the moral climate of a school, expressed in characteristic value preferences and characteristic practices" (Hannon 1993: 591). In contrast, the climate of a school is that quality which gives it its 'feel' or social atmosphere. It is within the context of the climate or social atmosphere of the school, and in accordance with its ethos, that a pastoral care system is developed where all of the members of the school community can experience:

> the right to live one's life in a peaceful environment (with) a set of sensible rules ... to ensure that one's freedom is not infringed, ... an opportunity to feel that one belongs and thus to share in mutual concern for the well-being of one's fellow citizens. Pastoral control cannot be divorced from the creation of a caring community (Best et al. 1995: 14).

The ethos and the climate of a school are dealt with separately in this chapter. Ethos determines the value system of the school. Climate provides the social environment in which that value system can be nurtured. Both have an enduring effect on the lives of students.

Since the school chaplain may be a partner in generating and fostering both ethos and climate within the school community, the nature and quality of both are the focus of this chapter. The main emphasis, however, is on school ethos since this is a key distinguishing feature of Catholic education (Flynn 1993: 7).

In reviewing both school ethos and school climate, particularly in the context of the Irish Catholic

voluntary school, it is assumed that the school is a living community and a complex social reality. It is a theatre where the intricate dynamic of human interaction is constantly modifying and changing.

3.1 Evolving a Sense of School Community

"Community is based on bodies of shared feelings and values." (Wynne 1989: 248). Recognition of common goals and shared values in schools, interdependence of individuals, group structures and team spirit, all promote a sense of school community. Sergiovanni (1992) avows that communities are determined by their centres, and he quotes Shils (1961) in stating that these "are repositories of values, sentiments, and beliefs that provide the needed cement for uniting people in a common cause" (Sergiovanni 1992: 41). He also states that centres "govern the school values and provide norms that guide behaviour and give meaning to school community life." (ibid.) O'Keeffe (1998)cites Greeley (1990) who, in the light of his own (Greeley's) and Coleman's research, "confirms that 'it is precisely the community-forming component of Catholic education which makes [Catholic schools] effective" (O'Keeffe 1998: 42). One of the factors to which he attributes this phenomenon is school ethos (ibid.).

Wynne enumerates a number of strategies which foster commonality and loyalty and formally reinforce the sense of community in a school:

> assemblies, class opening ceremonies; memorial occasions; the celebration of holidays as part of a school's program (not simply through taking the day off); appropriate announcements via the public address system or in periodic publications for the staff, parents and families; giving prominence to symbols of the school, the community or the nation; various statements of purpose of philosophy, including school pledges frequently recited by pupils and faculty; processions; parades; festive occasions; homecomings; and dramatic and musical performances (Wynne 1989: 247).

Wynne also recommends additional informal ways of improving relationships and fostering a community spirit. He promotes the idea that, in the competitive spheres of school life, systems can be "designed so that there is a good likelihood of many competitors winning", and in social interaction he advocates that staff, in appropriate ways, should feel at ease in sharing some of their concerns with the students (Wynne 1989: 249). He concludes that these approaches, formal and informal,

> attain their effects by stimulating appropriate emotions among members of the school community (mutual affection and respect; collective pride and determination; a recognition of shared values; good humoured fun; and shared mourning and disappointment) (Wynne 1989: 248).

According to Hughes it does not necessarily follow that a good, happy climate will produce educational outcomes in terms of learning. However, he says that "many researchers stress the importance of noncognitive

educational objectives and regard concern for climate as a means of fostering their development" (Hughes 1993: 62).

In analysing the general well-being of the interpersonal relationships in an organisation Hoy et al. (1991) commend openness in a school's climate:

> Open ... schools are good places. People like each other and they like their schools. Trust, commitment, cooperation, loyalty, and teamwork are the hallmarks of such schools. Schools are transformed into educational communities where individuals come to respect each other and help each other (Hoy, et al. 1991: 206).

Openness, interpersonal trust and high morale are the hallmarks of the healthy school. Morale in this sense is a group concept: the sum of individual sentiments, centred around feelings of well-being and satisfaction as contrasted with feelings of discomfort and dissatisfaction. It would seem that such high morale levels are easier to attain against a background of affluent socioeconomic conditions than in poorer areas with high unemployment levels. Ideally, however, they are to be striven for in all schools.

Students' sense of well-being is described by Knuver and Brandsma as "the presence or absence of specific positive and/or negative attitudes and experiences vis-à-vis school and education," (Knuver and Brandsma 1989: 133) a constituent concept of the affective domain or the climate of the school. It encompasses several components:

> pupils' self-concept, attitudes towards school and learning, motivational aspects, social interactions with fellow pupils and teachers, and contentment with their position at school (Knuver and Brandsma 1989: 133).

School climate, therefore, encompasses a number of internal affective characteristics which distinguish one school from another and influences both the sense of well-being and the quality of relationships of its members. It is, therefore, an extremely important aspect of the life of the school community. In the interest of the well-being of that community a warm, open and positive climate of trust needs to be nurtured and maintained. It would be reasonable to suggest that it is the duty of all members of that community, particularly those with leadership roles and those who have roles in the pastoral care structure of the school, to work towards generating and maintaining such a climate.

3.2 School Climate as Distinct from School Ethos

In observing how schools contrast with each other, it is sometimes hard to interpret just what it is that makes them different. Cohen and Manion (1981) write that:

> Even the most casual observer of schools is aware of how much they differ ... It is easy enough to defend the 'reality' of such institutions. It is far more difficult, however, to define and to operationalize the concept to which they refer: 'tone', 'atmosphere', 'school climate' (Cohen and Manion 1981: 83).

To describe the metaphor of school climate as "the elusive nature of a school's atmosphere" (Strivens 1985: 55) is rather vague and inconclusive. In Strivens' view, school climate as an aspect of school life has been largely overlooked in educational research (Strivens 1985: 51). Therefore, perhaps it is not surprising that school ethos and school climate are often treated as one and the same and used as interchangeable terms. However, it is the contention of this author that they are two important but distinct elements which, nevertheless, are related to each other within the reality of school life.

In their seminal research on school climate, Halpin and Croft (1963) distinguished between a school's culture or ethos and a school's climate which includes its morale. They drew an analogy between a school's ethos and its 'character', and between the climate of a school and its 'personality'. In advancing the concept that, in addition to having a distinctive culture or ethos, schools also differ from each other in their "feel" or climate, Halpin (1966) asserted that schools, even though they are similar, differ palpably in climate:

> one finds that each appears to have a "personality" of its own. It is this "personality" that we describe here as the "Organisational Climate" of the school. Analogously, personality is to the individual what Organisational Climate is to the organisation (Halpin 1966: 131).

Hoy et al. also differentiate between ethos and climate. They see school ethos as being bound with the culture of the organisation, and school climate as being

associated with its affective traits. In their words, "the conceptual leap from shared assumptions (culture) to shared perceptions (climate) of a school is small, but it is real and meaningful." (Hoy et al. 1991: 7). Their construction of culture as "the underlying values and beliefs of an organisation" (Hoy et al. 1991: 7) concurs with that of Edmunds (1982). Edmunds (1982) writes that the strong culture of a successful school serves as a compass setting that guides people in a common direction, provides a set of norms that define what they should accomplish and how, and provides a source of meaning and significance for teachers, students, administrators, and others in their work. On the other hand he outlines a weak culture as resulting "in a malaise in schools characterized by a lack of understanding of what is to be accomplished and a lack of excitement for accomplishment itself" (Edmunds 1982: 10). In the same vein Purky and Smith use the concept of school culture as "a structure, process, and climate of values and norms that channel staff and students in the direction of successful teaching and learning (Purky and Smith 1982: 68). Treston (1992) describes it as "the collection of shared values and images which mark out one school's identity from another school's meaning system" (Treston 1992: 5).

While the character or ethos of an organization gives it identity and a sense of mission (Hoy et al. 1991: 7), its personality or "feel" imbues it with affective qualities. These are qualities that encourage expressive

development and are connected with trust or, perhaps, qualities that hinder expressive development and are, therefore, negatively related to trust. Furthermore, school climate

> emphasises the interrelationships of the norms and beliefs that characterise a school and the institutionalised patterns of relationships, groupings, stratifications and behaviour of the administrators, teachers and students in a school social system (Brookover 1982: 17).

However, not every writer distinguishes between school ethos and school climate. Hughes points out that "it is common in the United Kingdom to talk of ethos, tone, atmosphere, school climate, hidden curriculum and informal curriculum in the same breath" (Hughes 1993: 58). Concepts of 'atmosphere', 'climate' or 'ethos' in a school context are all described by Morris (1995) as the "general feel of the place" (Morris 1995: 67). Yet, since 'atmosphere' has a "physical and a mood sense" (Allder 1993: 68), it is affective and akin to the idea of climate. Dennis (1984) also, in suggesting how school ethos might be influenced, says that a school principal should "establish a climate of benevolence, tolerance, etc." (Dennis 1984: 8). Morris (1994) cites Clark and Round (1991) in describing ethos as that "intangible yet instantly recognisable: energy and affection which emanates from the very bricks of the place, generated from within rather than imposed from without" (Morris 1994: 85). However, this description is that of the affective characteristics of an institution and, therefore, is consistent more with the notion of climate rather than

that of ethos. Hughes assumes that "climate is the consequence of ethos or culture as experienced by the different members of the organisation" (Hughes 1993: 60). Ethos and climate, therefore, may be seen as related but distinct experiential elements of an organisation.

Wynne sums up the different elements that combine to form a school climate as

> the gratification different members of the community gain from being in the school; the industriousness they display while they are there; the efficiency with which they carry out their tasks, and the predictability of the school environment (Wynne 1989: 234).

Components of climate are also summed up by Finlayson as the "personal, structural, political and symbolic 'dimensions'" (Finlayson 1987: 171) which together create what parents, teachers, and visitors sense as the 'tone of the school' (Finlayson 1973: 19). Porteous and Kelleher (1987) also stress the interactive nature of climate and its important impact on the personal and social development of students. Strivens stresses that it is important to maintain a high degree of "social needs satisfaction and sense of task accomplishment ... by the members of an organisation" (Strivens 1985: 52). She says that this may be achieved through managerial measures which would include looking after the social aspects of the members' working conditions and ensuring "more sensitive interpersonal skills in conveying decisions and extracting agreement" (Strivens 1985: 52).

A problematic aspect to early research on school climate is that the experiences of students in school were not included. Finlayson (1973) recognised the value of student experience in assessing school climate. He found that, in the views of students, four factors emerged which affected school climate:

(a) Emotional Tone which reflects the degree to which pupils perceive their peers as deriving satisfaction from participation in school activities; e.g. pupils think a lot of this school.

(b) Task Orientation which indicates the degree to which pupils perceive their peers accepting and applying themselves to tasks set them by the school; e.g. pupils work here only because they have to.

(c) Teacher concern which reflects pupils' perception of teacher concern and sensitivity to both the task and socio/emotional needs of individual pupils; e.g. teachers go out of their way to help you.

(d) Social Control which refers to the pupils' perception of the imposition of expectations and the exercise of power by teachers; e.g. teachers soon lose their tempers here.

Strivens interprets these pupil perceptions as revealing the "twin tasks of social needs satisfaction and task accomplishment, as seen through the eyes of the junior members of the organization" (Strivens 1985: 50). Such tasks cannot be accomplished "other than in the context of good interpersonal relations" (ibid.). Therefore, the importance of a favourable school climate is clear.

Favourable school climate indicators include such elements as openness, community spirit, good interpersonal relationships, ceremonies and rituals which reinforce the

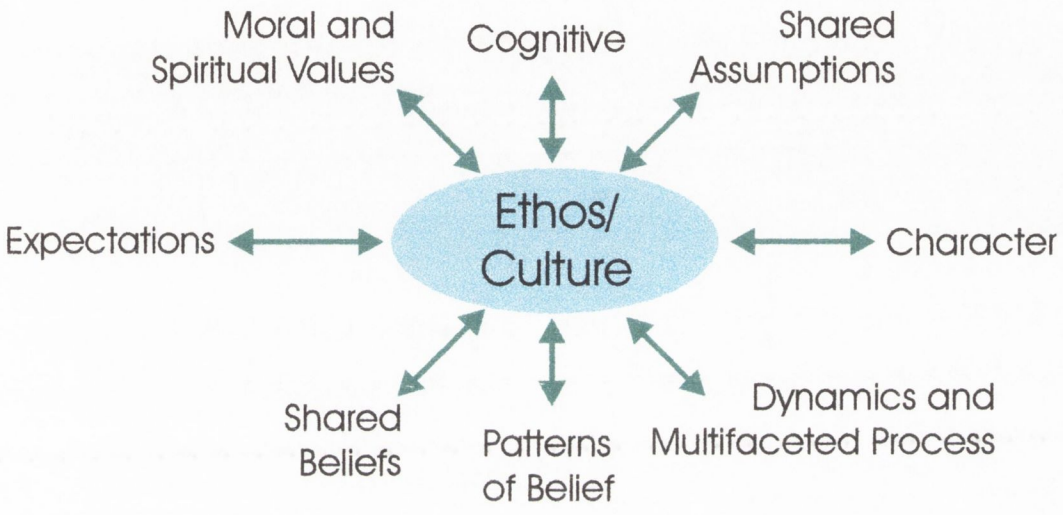
core values of the school (Hoy et al. 1991: 7). Mallery stressed the favourable effects of student-teacher rapport on school climate, "whether achieved in activities, guidance, clubs or individual conferences" (Mallery 1971: 332). Such extracurricular pursuits also add enjoyment and depth to the learning of students (Rudduck et al., 1994: 208). They also contribute towards building a sense of school community. Figure 3.1 illustrates the various factors which tend to comprise the ethos and culture as opposed to the climate of a school. It depicts how ethos/culture is more related to the cognitive, to shared values and to patterns of belief, while climate is more related to the affective, to shared perceptions and relationships within the organisation.

3.3 The Meaning of Ethos

The term 'climate' connotes the notion of the atmosphere or mood which continually pervades the establishment rather than with the unusual (Allder 1993: 68-69). It is to do with norms rather than exceptions. The frequent confusion of this term with 'ethos' serves to clarify that ethos is also connected with that which is normal and enduring in school life rather than with the unusual.

"No institution can escape an ethos" (Spooner 1981: 107). It is "the dominant pervading spirit or character

Ethos/Culture v. Climate



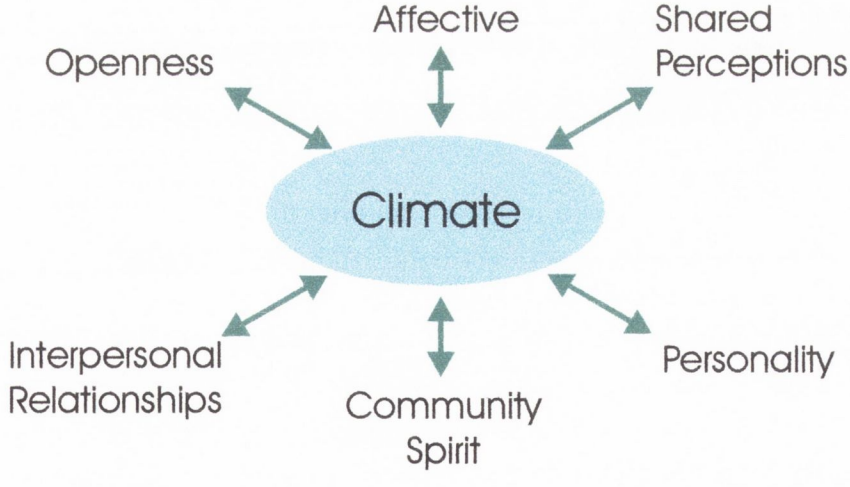


Figure 3.1: Distinctions between
Ethos/Culture and Climate

of a place or institution" (Williams 1992: 561). It is also, like school climate, essentially something which is experienced (Allder 1993: 68).

The notion of ethos is difficult to define exactly because of its complexity and intangibility. It has been defined by Fowler as "the characteristic spirit informing a nation, an age, a literature, an institution or any similar unit." (Fowler 1965: 171). However, the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles, Vol.I, gives two interpretations of the word 'ethos'. The first, after Aristotle, Rhet. II. xii-xiv, is "the prevalent tone of sentiment of a people or community; the genius of an institution or system". The second, following Greek Aesthetics and Rhetoric, means "character"; it also implies "ideal excellence" (Shorter Oxford Dictionary on Historical Principles 1973: 686).

In The Republic, Plato perceived ethos mainly as "the implementation of precept and the acquiescence of all in this event" (Hogan 1984: 698). In the platonic sense of ethos it is a cohesive force, building consensus within a group, a sense of unity around a cause. On the other hand, in the Aristotelian conception, it "arises spontaneously from natural habit, i.e. from what has become habitual, or second nature, in one's daily dealings with one's associates" (Hogan 1984: 700). Every organisation will inevitably develop an atmosphere which is generated by its daily course of events and by its members' daily interpersonal and intrapersonal lives.

Robinson (1982) cites Wyatt (1977) in an interpretation of 'atmosphere' in denominational schools as 'collegiality' which he [Wyatt] defines as 'an expression of the value system of an institution' (Robinson 1982: 33). This atmosphere will, in turn, be influential in fashioning opinions and in forging institutional norms and values. In other words, the organisation and its members are interactive, in an ongoing synergistic process, in forming its ethos.

3.4 School Ethos

The ethos of a school, therefore, can be taken to mean its 'tone of sentiment', its character and its ideals of excellence. Treston (1992) refers to school ethos as "the fundamental purpose of the school, its ultimate meaning and reference point for its value system" (Treston 1992: 5). In quoting Flynn (1989), he associates this concept closely with that of culture or "the core beliefs, values, traditions and symbols which provide meaning to the school community and which shape the lives of students, staff and parents (ibid.). School ethos is often "portrayed in symbols such as academic excellence, sporting achievement, community involvement or religious activities" (Flynn 1993: 6). Rutter et al. offer a description of it as "a set of values, attitudes and behaviours which will become characteristic of a school as

a whole" (Rutter et al. 1979: 179). A further, more comprehensive explication is given by Schremer:

> We see ethos as relating to a belief system, or to a set of deeply rooted and far-reaching values, that the school personnel live by, and identify with, both in their professional roles and in their private lives. It uniquely marks the individual identity of a school. ... The ethos is the binding force which ties the school's values to each other; it is reflected in the school's atmosphere, and creates the unique combination which identifies it. Within the school milieu, this ethos is taken for granted and underlies the plausibility structure of the subject curriculum (Schremer 1992: 152).

Therefore, it is a dominant approach to life which regulates the norms of a school. It upholds its system of values, the authority structure, the predominant instructional style and the aims and goals of the school. It is the invisible genius or spirit which permeates its enterprises and gives it moral direction. In an Irish context, it has been described as "the critical, intangible character ... which encompasses the collective attitudes, beliefs, values, traditions, aspirations and goals" (An Roinn Oideachais 1995: 9) of the school. It is the guiding principle which shapes the total pattern of life in the school (Hughes 1993: 59). Flynn (1983) avers that school ethos is a decisive influence on students' lives: "When lessons are forgotten and ... have long become distant memories, the ethos of the school attended often remains vividly in people's minds as part of the fabric of their being" (Flynn 1993: 6-7). A comparison may be drawn here with Ó Conaill's assertion about the

lasting effects of Catholic education in Chapter 2, page 95, or with Dunne's words:

> what is learned tacitly and unreflectively just by participation in a particular kind of situation or environment ... If one wants to know what the ethos of an institution is, then one should try to discover what is learned in this 'hidden' way through belonging to it, or participating in its life (Dunne 1991: 26).

School ethos suggests a way of life within the school community in which a set of mores are nurtured, in which values are imparted, in which a certain moral outlook is fostered and in which character formation takes place. Therefore, it informs, enlightens and inspires the school's philosophy, and it lies behind the school's policies and requirements.

3.5 Critical Components of School Ethos

School ethos is complex and is influenced by many factors within the fabric of the school community. Spooner believes that ethos is created by the head teacher (Spooner 1981: 115). However, he is very likely to be mistaken in this as ethos cannot be imposed (Hogan 1985: passim; Kilmann 1987: 91-92; Williams 1992: 562). It will always be rooted to some extent in the institution's history, the product of what has happened previously, in particular, with what has happened in the area of social interaction and human enterprise (Allder 1993: 68). In other words school ethos is firmly linked with school culture. Pelleschi (1985) cites Khan (1982) in defining

culture as "the system of shared meanings developed in a social and economic context which has a particular historical and political background" (Pelleschi 1985: 129). Similarly, Hughes (1993) also links ethos with culture:

> it could be assumed that ethos can be seen as the immediate 'here and now' concept, whilst culture is what develops from this concept over a longer time scale (Hughes 1993: 60).

Yet, he says that both terms are "inextricably linked and, in general, the terms are one and the same" (Hughes 1993: 59). Ethos, therefore, arises from the spirit of the ongoing present which is rooted in the past. It is dynamic and, therefore, cannot be a stereotyped process.

It can be positive or negative in character. Bernstein (1975) describes school life as having two coexisting orders, the instrumental and the expressive. The instrumental order applies to formal learning while, the expressive order pertains to the less obvious aspects of school life such as the transmission of moral values, the formation of character and the fostering of attitudes (Bernstein 1975: 39). Bernstein holds that, as the instrumental and expressive orders tend to be contradictory they can create inconsistency in the school environment and in its atmosphere or spirit. As the instrumental order may stimulate competitiveness in an examination and points dominated culture which encourages segregation within the learning community or "dividing practices" (Meadmore 1993: 59), at the same time the

expressive order may strive to nurture co-operativeness and unity. Wynne confirms that, in most European countries, schools are agents of divisiveness, that "individual competition is strong and the sharing of common but individualized goals is not particularly helpful for building school spirit." (Wynne 1989: 244). He also denigrates grading systems as having a similar adverse effect. Bernstein observes this contradiction of purpose in his analysis of school ethos:

> The more the instrumental order dominates ... the more examination-minded ... and the more divisive becomes their social organisation ... It is quite likely that some pupils who are only weakly involved in the instrumental order will be less receptive to the moral order transmitted through the expressive order. In this situation, children may turn to an expressive order which is pupil-based, and anti-school (Bernstein 1975: 39).

Therefore, conflicting elements may contribute to the complexity of a school's ethos. Certain key factors may counteract each other and result in tensions both in the school community and in the lives of the individuals in that community.

The expressive order may or may not incorporate the school's hidden curriculum or be consistent with it. Meighan (1981) cites Head (1974) in defining the hidden curriculum as follows:

> The hidden curriculum is what is taught by school, not by any teacher. However, enlightened the staff, however progressive the curriculum, however community oriented the school, something is coming across to the pupils which need never be spoken in the English lesson or prayed about in assembly. They are picking up an approach and an attitude in learning (Meighan 1981: 52).

Cullingford (1995) also explains the 'hidden curriculum' as a term used to describe two phenomena in schools:

> the informal learning that takes place as opposed to the subject matter being presented - expectations about behaviour, for example; (and)
>
> the actual message that the school is giving as opposed to its intended message - for example, that all teachers are committed to motivating individual children but the same children know no one has any time for them (Cullingford 1995: 105).

He also argues that the irony of the hidden curriculum is that it is not hidden at all; everyone knows what is really taking place.

Clearly, although Bernstein's concept of the expressive order is positive, perceptions of the hidden curriculum are often negative. Bulman and Jenkins, assert that: "one of the strong themes of the hidden curriculum is the possibility of a gap between institutional rhetoric and social reality". (Bulman and Jenkins 1988: 103). Best too points out that "it is not the structure which is crucial, but the activities and practices which go on within it" (Best 1989: 8).

As "a dynamic and multi-faceted process, the perceived nature of which varies according to both individual and collective perspectives" (Cusick 1973: 3), it is important to realize that the ethos of a school is affected by both its overt policies, however contradictory and also by its prevailing covert activities. In Tattum's view:

> To look beyond the pupil takes us into the school and classroom, and requires us to consider whether the nature of the organisation places constraints and

> controls on the pupil which are themselves problematic (Tattum 1985: p. 12).

This may point to a significant problem which, perhaps, can be addressed by shared dialogue with students. Cullingford maintains that "where the whole of the school community is engaged in talk, in open discussion, and in agreed policies, there is the basis for the effective school" (Cullingford 1995: 185). In delineating factors favourable to effective schooling and which generate a sense of purpose and achievement among students, he also forwards the view that:

> The 'ethos' of the school has a lot to do with having positive views of children ... and with their feeling part of the school, contributing to policies rather than only submitting to them (Cullingford 1995: 182).

In Ireland the 1994 the National Education Convention Secretariat also favoured recognition of the student as a party to the dialogue from which ethos can evolve. In its report it recommended the view of the Irish Commission for Justice and Peace (1994):

> Ethos is best expressed, helped to develop and enriched within the school community as a result of the continuing interaction between a **shared dialogue on the core values of the school,** embracing the patron, trustees, board, principal, staff, parents and students, and the **daily practice which endeavours to embody those values** (original emphases) (Coolahan 1994: 28).

This is consistent with Trafford's view that

> a school which shares power with its pupils may well avoid the problems which will inevitably come when authoritarianism becomes finally as unacceptable in schools as in the rest of society (Trafford 1993: 11).

The notion of student participation in decision making is relatively new in Irish schooling. However it may be within a chaplain's remit to encourage student engagement in constructive dialogue in areas which are under the chaplain's control in a school.

Understanding where a school stands in relation to its espoused values involves examining its values-in-use. These are values evidenced in practice and not simply adopted in theory. Such evidence provides a basis for a reflective analysis of the problems, dilemmas, and issues that confront the school and those who work in it. It may reveal gaps between a school's beliefs about where its values lie and its practices (Elliott 1994: 420).

Undoubtedly, the quality of the curriculum is important. It is a significant constituent of a school's ethos. However, so too is the quality of all the other components of the life of the school. They are crucial to the wholeness of the school's educational life and structure, to students' achievements and to their personal and social development. These extracurricular components of school life constitute significant elements of the school's value system or ethos.

3.6 The Importance of School Ethos

School ethos is critical to the effectiveness of a school (Purkey and Smith (1982: 64-69). Hughes (1993)

avers that most people believe that schools are more than academic institutions. Schools pursue a wide range of educational outcomes which are measured not only in academic terms but also in relation to social skills and values (Hughes 1993: 61-62). He also cites Torrington and Weighman (1989) who make the point that

> much of the emotional and intellectual development of pupils comes from the wholeness of the school in which they are set and that this wholeness is created and maintained by the ethos (Hughes 1993: 57).

In affirming the influence of a school's espoused ethos, John and Osborn say that:

> It has been argued that in preparing young people for citizenship, the general ethos of the school is as important as the propositional knowledge gained from classroom processes and the attitudes picked up from family ties. (John and Osborn 1992: 153)

Consistent with this sentiment is the argument that when much of what is learned in school is forgotten, such as differential calculus and irregular verbs,

> the ethos of the school we attended remains part of our consciousness. This is not surprising as the ethos of a school touches the quality of our lives and can constitute an important element in the fabric of our very identity (Williams 1992: 562).

Peters & Waterman's (1982) study, 'In Search of Excellence' was an endeavour which sought out the inspirational secret of successful organisations. The study revealed common factors in the lives of such organisations, significant among which was the development of cultures and enduring shared values within these organisations (Peters & Waterman 1992: 26). It was also stated that, "without exception, the dominance and coherence of

culture proved to be an essential quality" (Peters and Waterman 1982: 75). Although culture is " elusive, implicit, and taken for granted" (Wilson and Corcoran 1988: 21), such culture may be defined as patterns of beliefs and expectations shared by the members, which "powerfully shape the behaviour of individuals and groups in the organisation" (Schwartz and Davis 1981: 33). Similarly, culture is

> the distinct way of life which gives meaning and order to the particular group or community. Culture consists of beliefs, language and knowledge, within which and through which the members establish and maintain their sense of community (Beare et al. 1989: 177)

This notion of culture strongly reflects the idea of ethos as developed previously and, as stated earlier, ethos and culture, in this context, are one and the same. In focusing on schools as organisations and in seeking out their secret of excellence, the importance of the school's ethos or culture become manifest. In the words of Beare et al.:

> For a strong and co-ordinated culture, there needs to be a close correspondence between the intangible, foundational elements and the tangible, outward expressions and symbols, between the espoused values, philosophy and ideology on the one hand, and the actual manifestations and practices on the other (Beare et al. 1989: 174-175).

Sergiovanni (1984) found that culture is the most influential leadership force in schools, and is placed at the top of a hierarchical list of five. In ascending order these are:

1) technical;
2) human;
3) educational;
4) symbolic; and
5) cultural.

Culture appears as the prime force, which indicates its significance.

Wilson and Corcoran (1988) also state that school culture is a key factor in furthering educational excellence, and that its quality and character affect every aspect of school life. They used the term 'gestalt' to describe its overall pervasive effect and assert that it

> reinforces the notion that specific policies and practices may be less important than work norms or school culture, the 'ethos' that integrates policies and practices into a concerned and caring community (Wilson and Corcoran 1988: 20).

They also observed that effective schools are particularly distinguishable by their ethos. They noted that "a strong school culture provides a sense of social cohesion, of being special" (Wilson and Corcoran 1988: 21).

Rutter et al. (1979) accorded significance to the ethos of schools. Their findings concur with the theory that the synergistic effect of all the combined processes and forces in school life is powerful in its effect on school life and on student outlook, progress and outcome. They argue for the importance of school ethos and state that "individual actions or measures may combine to create a particular ethos, or set of values, attitudes and

behaviour which will become characteristic of the school as a whole" (Rutter et al. 1979: 179).

Furlong (1976) asserts that the type of learning environment in which children are placed is more important than the subjects which are taught to them, and he stated that the importance of the ethos or atmosphere in the school is crucial to that learning environment (Furlong 1976: 42-43). Hence, it is clear that a school's ethos is of paramount importance in shaping its effectiveness and in influencing the outcome to students.

3.7 Ethos of a Catholic School

Williams (1992) maintains that "on moral and educational grounds, it is perfectly legitimate for any school to promote a religious ethos" (Williams 1992: 563). It would seem logical, therefore, to expect to find a range of "distinctive values, attitudes and practices within a Catholic school which are rooted in the Catholic faith and reflect its world view to a greater or lesser extent" (Morris 1995: 69). Bishop Murray avows that "the ethos of a Catholic school derives from its living contact with a living community of faith" (Murray 1995: 6). Twenty years ago the CMRS addressed the ethos of religious owned Catholic schools. It advocated the exercise, realization and maintenance of a Christian vision for those schools

while managing forthcoming change in ownership and control:

> We are for the kind of education which affirms wholeness. Wholeness is personal and social. It is grounded in the essential dignity of the human person. This dignity however is not founded on the principle of individual rights but on the principle of solidarity with others in the quest for a just society.
>
> A dignity based on solidarity also implies an affirmation of the kind of education which is participative and collaborative ... We affirm the centrality of (the Christian tradition) in our ethos and our programmes. We affirm it despite the fear that, if we operationalize great concepts like 'Catholic ethos' or 'Gospel values', we may be forced to change concrete structures and practices (Molloy 1989: 127).

Williams contends that neither school life nor civil life can be either purely neutral or value-free, either in principle or in practice. He debates that some form of value system, either positive or negative, must prevail. Therefore, in arguing for the retention of the current religious ethos in schools, he asserts that: "if we were to eliminate religious ethos from our schools, we would have to determine the version of civic virtues which should replace it" (Williams 1992: 564).

Walsh stresses that:

> there is and should be something distinctive about the Catholic School - evident in the attention to the personal development of each student; in the relationship established between culture and the gospel: and in the illumination of all knowledge with the light of faith (Walsh 1992: 175).

That there is "something quite distinctive about the Catholic school" is usually summed up in terms of ethos, namely, the spirit that permeate the Catholic

school (Lane 1991: 18). Morris (1995) claims that in a Catholic school there will probably be "a strong sense of identity and solidarity". He argues that to promote a religious ethos schools must do more than teach about religion:

> The school community needs to behave as a religious body, worshipping and taking part in sacramental practices, holding the values of the particular faith and observing its norms of behaviour (Morris 1995: 81).

Morris also makes the deductive point that religious foundations, which are evident within the Catholic school, provide an important point of reference for teachers' attitudes to their professional tasks (Morris 1995: 81).

Another feature of the Catholic school is that there are high expectations of <u>all</u> students. A school outlook which should emerge from official Church documents in relation to education is a determination to cherish, support and affirm all students, with a particular emphasis on the 'poor' in every sense (Apostolicam Actuositatem 1965). Consistent with this point, Williams asserts that:

> As a repository of humane and civilising values, the school can ... act as a countervailing force to dehumanising influences within the wider society and can even serve as the conscience of that society. It can offer to pupils and staff an arena of human fellowship and mutual support, as well as of cultural enrichment (Williams 1992: 562).

In Britain and in the United States the quality of education and academic achievement in Roman Catholic schools has been observed to be superior when compared

in general with state-run schools (Morris 1994: 84). While the disparity can partly be attributed to the predominantly private nature of Catholic schools who cater for fee paying students, especially in the United States, it has recently been observed that the disadvantaged and those from minority backgrounds also enjoy higher achievement in Catholic schools (Morris 1994: 84). However, as Dancy points out, "exams, like profits in business, make a good criterion but a bad objective" (Dancy 1979: 31). The question may be asked, then, 'what is the objective in Catholic schools?'

In his review of 'Catholic Schools and the Common Good' Shivers (1994) examines what it is that makes Catholic schools so successful in meeting the general ends of education in the United States. He explains it by saying that:

> they help students succeed by stressing the moral dimension of education, by involving students in a shared community and mission, and by holding high academic expectations for all students. These three facets of life in Catholic schools - morality, community, and high academic expectations - combine synergistically to help Catholic schools rise above limited resources and ordinary pedagogy in order to educate their students successfully (Shivers 1994: 341).

Morris also gives examples of some of the religiously based components that could contribute to the distinctive Catholic ethos, for example "the Catholic understanding of the concept of right and wrong; of sin, repentance and forgiveness; of all humanity being children of God; may find expression in the formal and informal

staff-pupil relationships that operate within the school (Morris 1995: 69).

It would appear that the upholding of Christian moral values, academic expectations and a sense of community is intrinsic to the ethos of Catholic education and has a deep influence, reaching beyond the ordinary and expected, on the lives, experiences and achievements of students in religious run schools. Elliott states that "the school has an important role in promoting moral and spiritual values through students' experience of its 'culture' or 'ethos'" (Elliott 1994: 413).

3.8 Characteristics of Catholic School Ethos

Within Catholic schools there is likely to be a distinctive ethos characterised by:

* an attempt to develop God-given potential for the good of others;
* a recognition of the religious nature of the task of teaching;
* a recognition of Christ as the prime role model; and
* school documentation couched in religious terms (Morris 1994: 87).

Morris cites typical comments about the Catholic ethos of schools:

> Pupils here acquire knowledge and skills, while developing a sense of responsibility and a commitment to others and their faith;
>
> ... this school restored our faith in the essential goodness of human beings;

> [the] Christian message loud and clear;
>
> An exciting school with a Christian unity of purpose;
>
> ... rightly emphasises ... the religious dimension;
>
> a strong commitment to the weekly Eucharist;
>
> The RE programme is a matter of pride;
>
> Immense commitment to charity work (Morris 1994: 85).

Of such schools, Morris cites Clark and Round (1991) in noting that the head teacher is motivated by a firm Christian purpose which permeates all the activity" of the school, "sets aims of the school according to those of the Second Vatican Council ... (and) stressed the Christian basis of education" (Morris 1994: 86).

In the Catholic school community members also have a strong collective identity. They do not simply attend a Catholic school or teach in a Catholic school; they <u>are</u> the school, and they all have a stake in the success of the entire organisation (Shivers 1994: 343). This indicates an ethos of commitment and solidarity that would augur well for the school's educational outcome and for its welfare as a Christian community. However there has been a noticeable change in the staff personnel of Catholic school communities in recent decades which may or may not affect the strength and survival of such ethos.

3.9 Outcome of Demographic Trends in Religious Communities in Terms of their Schools' Ethos

Religious communities who run schools in Ireland have sustained a significant decline in the numerical strength of their members. This has had a decisive effect on educational administration and personnel in Irish voluntary secondary schools. Brown and Fairley observe that many religious communities:

> have had to withdraw from control and management of secondary schools, ... and to appoint lay Principals within their schools. Policy discussions are taking place within the Religious Orders themselves and their priorities in their role as educators are being questioned (Brown and Fairley 1993: 37).

In view of this rapid change towards secularisation in both management and teaching personnel in Catholic schools it is appropriate to ask what implications this may have for the ethos of these schools.

Hogan (1985) suggests that the most commonly held view of ethos in Ireland has been that of compliance with the officially sanctioned standards and requirements which reflected the values of a school's trustees or governing body. This outlook was traditionally associated with school ownership, mainly by Catholic religious communities who, through that ownership, assumed a custodial role in upholding and maintaining moral and ethical standards in society, which they achieved mainly through the medium of the strong Catholic ethos of their schools.

However, Morris, in quoting Garner (1987) and Owen (1991), avows that "there is something good about the Catholic school that is different" (Morris 1994: 85). It is not surprising, then, that trustees of religious run schools are still expected "to safeguard the enlivening religious ethos of their schools" (Murphy 1994: 9) and to guarantee their character.

Morris cites Baum (1988) in stating that the merit and reputation of Catholic schools "derives from the attempt to generate a community climate that is permeated by the Gospel-based values of freedom and love, centred in the person of Christ". Although there is no legally enforceable definition of "the gospel spirit of freedom and love" (Murray 1995: 6), that distinctive aim, it is argued, if realised in practice, should ensure that whenever anyone sets foot inside a Catholic school they will experience the feeling of warmth of a community and environment that is created by Christian faith (Morris 1994: 84-85).

Trustees have proved adamant that their schools should continue to aspire to these ideals. Indeed, in exceptional cases where the Board of Management is perceived to be either frustrating or counteracting the fundamental character, aims and ethos of the school the trustees reserve the right to disband the Board (Murphy 1994: 9).

Both Catholic and Church of Ireland bishops contend that any move to interfere with the ethos of schools would

be unconstitutional. It has been established that the ownership of schools is clear and is a matter of legal fact. In addition, the present system of providing State aid to denominational schools, which includes the provision for religious education, to be availed of by children at the discretion of their parents, is constitutional (The Irish Times, 19th Oct. 1993). Catholic bishops also insist that any threat to the future of ethos in religious run schools is to be vigorously resisted. In the Employment Equality Bill of 1997, their demand for the provision of discriminatory procedures in appointments to jobs in the public service, in hospitals and schools, is testament to this. This Bill makes an exception for religious run schools and hospitals "if job discrimination is essential for the maintenance of their ethos 'or is reasonable to avoid offending the religious sensitivities' of their members or clients" (Irish Times, 16th Jan. 1997).

Therefore, the question may be asked - will the reduction in the involvement of religious communities in the management of schools be a factor in causing the ethos of Catholic schools to undergo modification? In theory the answer may be that it should not. However, the reality may or may not be otherwise. While the Department of Education upholds the legitimate right of trustees, owners and governors in protecting their particular ethos (Irish Times, 19th Oct. 1993), it also recognises parents' rights as individuals to be consulted and informed on all

aspects of their children's education. It also upholds parents' rights to active participation in the education system at all levels (An Roinn Oideachais 1995: 8). A consequence of this is that the ethos of a school would no longer be derived solely from the views of religious communities or their successors, but would also grow from discourse between all interested parties and from the actual practices which are carried out in that school on a daily, weekly and yearly basis (Hogan 1985: 13).

This appreciation of ethos as dynamic and active is presented in the following passage from the submission by the Irish Commission of Justice and Peace to the Green Paper on Education (1992) and cited in the Report on the National Education Convention (1994):

> An ethos foreign to the lived experience and struggle of the school and its component groups, and for which they felt no responsibility, would exist at best on paper rather than in reality. ... Ethos is best expressed, helped to develop, and enriched within the school community as the result of the continuing interaction between shared dialogue on the core values of the school, embracing the patron, the trustees, board, principal, staff, parents, and students, and the daily practice which endeavours to embody those values (Report on the National Education Convention 1994: 28).

Both Hogan (1985) and Colgan (1994) favour the idea of ethos in education being based on dialogue which sees values and standards as being derived, not from traditions alone, not from the precepts of trustees, owners, patrons or governors, but also from the evolved thinking, practices and the everyday life of all the partners who are involved in the school. It is the idea of a truly

fraternal and consensual ethos and consistent with the concept of a community's collective identity as stated earlier (Hogan 1985: 14; Colgan 1994: 10).

The future of ethos in denominational schools, therefore, is a matter yet to be discovered.

Summary

School climate, the social atmosphere, feel or mood of the organisation, which is obvious to any visitor, is an important factor of school life. Although climate is often confused with school ethos they are two distinct but coexisting and interdependent elements of school life. It can be said that the climate of a school is rooted in its ethos.

Students' sense of well-being and status is affected by the level of openness, trust and morale throughout the school community. An open, trusting school climate encourages expressive development and esprit de corps. It is to be sensed primarily in the realm of the social interaction of members of the school, and recognised initially on an experiential rather than a cognitive level (Allder 1993: 69). The experience of such an environment tends to foster in students a love of their school and a perception of it as a community. It also encourages them to participate in and devote commitment to that community.

The ethos of a school is the unique, pervasive moral atmosphere brought about by the shared beliefs and values of all the parties involved in the life of the school. Every educational endeavour "attempts to generate an atmosphere which will reflect the key characteristics of the educational enterprise" (O'Flaherty 1994: 5). School ethos reflects a set of principles that underlie the norms, both attitudinal and behavioural, of school life. Abstract and intangible though it is, ethos is sensed in a school; it is significant in the institutional philosophy, especially in the Catholic School where the benefits of its special qualities have been observed internationally.

It can be said to be synonymous with the culture of the school and, therefore, is linked with its recent history. It is complex, embracing both the school's official policies while at the same time containing unofficial practices which may include the hidden curriculum.

School ethos is a matter of extreme importance. It can ensure excellence and wholeness in the education process and in affording order and meaning within the learning environment. It has a life long effect on students. Traditionally, the ethos of schools was a custodial one, specified by the trustees, but today the concept of ethos is moving towards a more participative approach, involving all parties, a transition from an authoritarian origin to a consensual foundation. If we

accept that the ethos of a school is essentially rooted in the dynamic, lived experience of the partners in the schooling endeavour, then the possibility exists for a much more creative debate about ways of developing and promoting that ethos (ASTIR 1994: 11).

Involving students in the dialogue concerning school ethos is an innovative idea that has also been posed in the interest of improving the nature of education and an innovative step towards creating a truly inclusive school community. It is acknowledged, however, that ethos, the lived value system of a school, evolves from the thinking and everyday practice of all the participants in the life of that school and as changes occur in that thinking and practice so will the ethos of the school evolve.

This chapter has explored school climate and school ethos. Since the fostering of the spiritual life of the school is central to the work of the school chaplain, Chapter 4 will explore spirituality as a human need and as a need in society. It will explore its worth in the holistic development of the person and its importance in the life of the school community.

Chapter 4

Spirituality in the Catholic Secondary School

CHAPTER 4

SPIRITUALITY IN THE CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

The rationale for this chapter arises from a statement of one of the principal school trustees asserting that spiritual formation is an integral component of the Catholic educational endeavour and that it is a function of chaplaincy (see Chapter 1, page 33). One of the main objectives of the school chaplain's role, therefore, is to promote and nurture the spiritual life of the school community. It may be seen as a major focus of his or her work. The idea of spirituality will be examined here, primarily in so far as it is relevant to the lives of those with whom the chaplain works, that is the students and staff of the school, and taking account of available literature on the subject of spirituality.

It is the function of this chapter, firstly, to examine spirituality as a human need and to analyse its meaning. The role of spirituality in the quest for human meaning is also considered. The frameworks of theistic and non-theistic concepts of spirituality are scrutinised.

Following this, the qualities of the spiritual person are listed and commented upon and the place of spirituality in the inner life of the person is discussed.

The 'Who am I?' question is looked at in the context of its importance in adolescence. Penultimately, what it means to be spiritual as a Christian is examined and lastly, the importance of spiritual growth in schools is discussed.

4.1 Spirituality: A Human Need

Man is the only being on earth which has the capability to reflect, analyse and reason abstractly. In this sense man is unique. Brunton wrote that as man emerged at the end of the evolution process he began to reflect on the significance of his own life, thus attaining metaphysical thought. As part of this reflective process he felt the "need to understand truth and turn away from error, to judge appearances and appreciate reality" (Brunton 1970: 36).

The ability to reason abstractly, understand truth, judge appearances and appreciate reality is a defining element of humankind. It is a need that has to be fulfilled in all human beings. As such, it is the fifth, and highest, need on Maslow's hierarchical scale of human need. Set in ascending order, these five needs are:

1) physical needs - requirements for food, water and rest;
2) the needs for safety - requirements of shelter and protection;
3) emotional needs - requirements of love and belonging;
4) esteem needs - requirements of self worth and respect from others;
5) the need for self-actualisation - requirements of identifying the inner meaning in life and self-transcendence. (Adair 1988: 36)

The first two needs relate to physical welfare. The second two relate to interaction with and dependency on other human beings. These four elemental needs are basic and essential. As Brunton states they "have always had to be satisfied before the cultural, religious, mystical or metaphysical needs" (Brunton 1970: 27).

The fifth human need on Maslow's scale is the need for self-actualization, a process which embraces a spiritual dimension or "a realm of conscious activity which seeks meaning outside the immediate demands of bodily survival and the satisfaction of lower order needs" (Greene 1997: 222-223). Maslow recognised the fundamental need for a spiritual dimension in the human condition. Although he was a "a determined naturalist ... unable to accept the idea of a supernatural deity" (Greene 1997: 224), he assigned great importance to "peak experiences, moments of heightened consciousness imbued with meaning, many of which have a religious content or experience" (Greene 1997: 224).

Fromm points out that it is essential to have a structured inner 'map' of one's life and of one's place

within a broader 'map' of the world. This inner map is that which gives direction to an individual's value system and purpose in life. In his words:

> Without a map of our natural and social world - a picture of the world and one's place within it that is structured and has inner cohesion - human beings would be confused and unable to act purposefully and consistently, for there would be no way of orienting oneself, of finding a fixed point that permits one to organise all the impressions that impinge upon each individual ... We need an object of total devotion, a focal point for all our strivings and the basis for all our effective - not our proclaimed - values (Fromm 1980: 137-138).

Fromm's distinction between our 'effective' and our 'proclaimed' values is noteworthy. It means that people's lives are sometimes directed by values of which they are not consciously aware. They may even deny being guided by them, for example values such as survival, market interests or, perhaps, hedonism. When this is the case, such denial does not alter the need to re-evaluate one's frame of reference or what Fromm termed, one's 'object of total devotion'.

The significant idea expressed by Fromm is that a human being cannot exist without a means of structuring his or her living, that is, without a focus of meaning in life. This focus of meaning gives life a special dimension without which humankind cannot live. This may manifest itself in simple pursuits. Brunton notes that the

> craving for the countryside's green beauty and healing peace which expresses itself in week-end runs out of town, or in a little garden surrounding a house, is at bottom a spiritual one (Brunton 1970: 23).

However, the need for spirituality may also lead to more complex pursuits. That the search for spiritual nourishment has led a large number of Irish people to take up Transcendental Meditation, Yoga, Zen and numerous Eastern philosophies of centering prayer testifies to the depth of hunger for spirituality (Maher 1985: 30; Pollard 1999: 138; Ruane 1999), a hunger which also manifests itself whenever apparitions or other phenomena are reported (O'Donoghue 1993: 73).

At whatever level of complexity, the search is always there. One, therefore, needs a cohesive, focused, autonomous area in one's life which acts as a frame of reference for living. Almost thirty years ago Brunton deplored the dearth of spirituality in the modern way of life in a world which has become too busy. He commented that:

> The real tragedy of our time lies not so much in the unprecedented external events themselves as in the unprecedented ethical destitution and spiritual infirmity which they glaringly reveal (Brunton 1970: 8).

It may be appropriate, therefore, to revisit the field of spirituality both in general life and in life at school.

4.2 The Meaning of Spirituality

A variety of different interpretations exist in attempting to define spirituality. For instance, the Shorter Oxford Dictionary of Historical Principles list

nine different, though similar, interpretations. Six of the nine interpretations imply that spirituality connotes belief in a divinity which leads to involvement in religious practice and moral goodness. One example is, "of, pertaining to, affecting or concerning, the spirit or higher moral qualities, especially as regarded in a religious aspect" However, three interpretations give a secular or non-religious meaning, for instance, "of, or pertaining to, emanating from the intellect or higher faculties of the mind" and "characterised by a high degree of refinement of thought or feeling" (The Shorter Oxford Dictionary on Historical Principles 1973: 2079).

Some of these interpretations include a religious dimension while others do not. It should be noted that spirituality need not necessarily incorporate a religious dimension. However, while every authentic religion is strongly spiritual, not all that is spiritual is religious (Wegscheider Cruse 1989: 40; Moore 1985: 40; Priestly 1985: 31). For instance, spirituality can be seen as an emphasis on "experience, emotion and contemplative reflection" (Haldane 1997: 6). Beelsey (1993) writes of spirituality as

> living mindfully with the ultimate questions and issues of our existence, and discovering, no matter how unclearly, the focus, source, inspiration, foundation or authority for our life-direction our beliefs, values, attitudes and actions, and perhaps our ultimate destiny (Beesley 1993: 27).

Grimmitt describes it as the human capacity for self-transcendence. He says it is a movement towards a state

of awareness in which "the limitations of human finite identity are challenged by the exercise of the creative imagination" (Grimmitt 1987: 125). Baldwin, likewise, takes it to be the sphere of meaning and experience which arises from the abstract, non-corporeal, immaterial identity of people. It may be "manifest in the soul, the muse, God or intuition" (Baldwin 1996: 207).

Macquarrie's elucidation of spirituality is that it has to do with becoming a person in the fullest sense. It is a capacity for going out of oneself and beyond oneself. It is an ability to transcend oneself. It is an openness, a freedom, a creativity that enables one to go beyond any given state in which one finds one's self. It makes possible self-consciousness and self-criticism, understanding, responsibility and the pursuit of knowledge. It allows one to pursue a sense of beauty and a quest for good. It inspires "the formation of community, the outreach of love and whatever else belongs to the amazing richness of what we call 'the life of the spirit'" (Macquarrie 1972: 42).

Hull (1999) also states that spiritual education seeks to inspire children and young people to live for others (Hull 1999: 295) and Sherry (1977) considers that spirituality is to be understood as self-transformation of the whole person, not simply as an isolated individual but as a member of a community. He is also clear in his view that spirituality is concerned with commitment to a way of life which is believed to lead to some goal of life, and

derives from some conception of human nature in relation to the total environment of human life, for example: "descriptions of spiritual transformations are loaded with ontological implications - what William James called 'over-beliefs'" (Sherry 1977: 131). He also links spirituality with religion: "the things which we are seeking to understand are the ways of life in which men seek spiritual renewal and the systems of belief which accompany them" (Sherry 1977: 131).

Hardy (1979) stresses the awareness aspects of a complex phenomenon when he describes it as

> the spiritual nature of man meaning that side of his make-up which, if not always leading him to have what he might call religious feelings, may at least give him a love of the non-material things of life such as natural beauty, art, music, or moral value (Hardy 1979: 131).

Moore focuses on self-awareness as the basis of all spirituality. He states that self-awareness is self-believing and self-affirming (Moore 1985: 11). He stresses the importance of belief in oneself and of having a good image of oneself, and he points out that "most of our problems come from <u>not</u> believing in ourself, having a poor idea of ourselves (and) most therapy is addressed to our poor self-image, even our self-hatred" (Moore 1985: 11). By self-awareness he means "having myself as the <u>subject</u> of awareness" and not as "the <u>object</u> of my awareness" (Moore 1985: 10). In his words: "Self-awareness is something I bring, and have to bring, to every act of thought or feeling or decision. It is my

end, the me-end of everything I do" (Moore 1985: 10). He compares "thinking with myself", which is self-awareness, with "thinking of myself", which is reflective self-awareness and is coloured by societal expectations and roles among other things, and he claims that ordinary consciousness is a confused mixture of both the subjective and objective awareness of oneself. Moore asserts that awareness is self-awareness, that the self, aware, is self-aware. Therefore, "a person is self-aware all the time except for periods of deep dreamless sleep. Whatever you are aware of, you are aware. This is self-awareness" (Moore 1985: 10). Quinlan cites Anthony de Mello, who also stressed the significance of 'awareness' - "an awareness that embraces an openness and attentiveness to the divine at the heart of our life experiences" (Quinlan 1996a: 31).

Spirituality may therefore be seen as "a realm of conscious activity which seeks meaning outside the immediate demands of bodily survival and the satisfaction of lower order needs" (Greene 1997: 222). Greene (1997) cites the Jungian view of personal goals as being "for personal integration, self-understanding and transcendence of the ego as the motivating forces in a person's journey towards selfhood," and insisted on understanding these processes in their own terms, not as sublimations or projections of baser instincts or desires (Greene 1997: 223). However, Webster argues that theories such as those of Freud, Jung, Dukheim, Skinner, Piaget and Kohlberg only

take a partial solution to the problem of the self while concluding that it is the whole answer. He maintains that their view of the human self is altogether too restricted, that, in fact, "the human self bears within it a mystery greater that itself" (Webster 1985: 16).

Greene also sees "beliefs and experiences of a divinity as one expression of the spiritual capacity of human beings, overlapping but not co-terminous with spirituality" (Greene 1997: 222). Finally Hopkinson sees in spirituality:

> a search for meaning and significance by contemplation and reflection on the totality of human experience and in relation to the whole world which is experienced, also to the life which is lived (Hopkinson 1985: 51).

A common element throughout these interpretations is the awareness of an aspect of humanity which lies beyond rational ability to comprehend it. There is an emphasis on concern for the non-material, on a dimension of existence which shapes the sense of personal meaning and provides both an origin and a goal in the overall direction of life. It is a vague and broad concept which Rodger claims, "will be understood, not by those who regard it only as a subject for study, but by those who go beyond that and know it as a discipline to follow" (Rodger 1996: 54). It "is revealed not so much by the theories we propose as by the way we act and react ... it represents a truth that is lived" (Dorr 1983: 758). In short "our spirituality is an expression of who we are" (Thayer 1985: 31). It is a way of life.

4.3 Spirituality as a Quest for Meaning

Souper cites Batten (1967) in noting that spirituality has three features always present in relation to one another:

1) the aim - "the search for meaning and significance;"
2) the method - "contemplation and reflection;"
3) the fruit or expression - "the life which is lived and may mature" (Souper 1985: 21).

If this is true, then spirituality is a search for meaning and significance by way of contemplation and reflection on the entirety of human experience. This is done in relation to the whole world which a person experiences. It is also effected in relation to the life which a person lives, and which may mature as that search for meaning proceeds.

Human beings are essentially creatures who have the power to experience meanings. "Distinctively human existence consists in a pattern of meanings" (Phenix 1964: 5). Lealman (1966) also relates spirituality to the search for meaning and states that there is a connection between spirituality, morality and mystery in life (Lealman 1966: 66). King (1989) cites Jung in stating:

> In Carl Jung's words, people are 'in search of a soul', in search for something that will give them wholeness, a sense of meaning and a purpose which can direct their thoughts and actions (King 1989: 5).

Spirituality, therefore, impels humankind to find it "impossible to relinquish the insistent search for

meaning, value and purpose in life" (Rodger 1996: 45). It is a dimension of experience which exists as part of all cultures and religions (Thayer 1985: 71; Souper 1985: 16). Grimmitt sees the spiritual dimension in life as an awareness which a people have of the inner feelings and beliefs that affect the way they see themselves, and which sheds light on the purpose and meaning of life for them (Grimmitt 1987: 393). It is difficult, if not almost impossible to describe such awareness in ordinary, every-day language. Priestly maintains that, in the society in which we live, most people have experience of some power beyond themselves, of the transcendent, but are afraid to admit it, thinking that they are alone. He says that experiences which used to be encountered in private, but expressed in public, are now not only confronted in private but are also kept private. He also asserts that most people no longer recognise any link between these experiences and what goes on in churches. They are something separate and, because religious institutions no longer provide the vocabulary, people have no way of expressing their spiritual experiences. "There is no institutional form, no language, so they feel trapped in a conceptual prison, as it were, on their own" (Priestly 1985: 33).

Priestly compares spiritual experience to the experience of falling in love:

> in fact the imagery of falling in love is there all the way through. Try and explain it to your friends the next morning and what you get is laughter. It's

> the same with the basic spiritual experience (Priestly 1985: 33).

Therefore, spiritual experience, the quest for meaning in life, may be illustrated, not so much by the use of logical explanation or argument as it is by means of "symbol, story, parable, poem, allegory, sound, gesture, movement or form (Webster 1985: 13). The spiritual, therefore, brings recognition to "what is invisible but not illusory, to what is powerful but not explicable, and to what is non-rational but not meaningless" (Webster 1985: 13).

4.4 **Theistic and Non-Theistic Ideas of Spirituality**

Spiritual awareness may be set in either of two frameworks. It may stem from a meaningful sense of the Divine or God and, thus, be theistic in essence. This concept is what Otto (1950) termed the "numinous". It refers to the non-rational element within religious experience. He described it as a feeling which was "sui generis and irreducible to any other ... it cannot be defined" (Otto 1950: 21). On the other hand spirituality may exist as a non-theistic personal dimension. This was described by James (1977) as the "mystical".

The term 'numinous' was coined by Otto to denote the central core of 'Holiness' or 'mysterium tremendum et

fascinans' which lies at the heart of theistic religions. It is a concept which evokes four kinds of response:

1) 'awfulness' - being filled with fear of the majesty of the Holy;
2) 'overpoweringness' - combination of "absolute unapproachability" and a consciousness of "creaturehood" and total dependence;
3) "energy" - felt as a "force that knows not stint nor stay, which is urgent, active, compelling and alive"; and
4) the "wholly other" - the essence of the mysterium and "that which is quite beyond the sphere of the usual, the intelligible and the familiar, which therefore falls quite outside the limits of the 'canny' and is contrasted with it, filling the mind with blank wonder and amazement" (Otto 1950: 13-30).

Paffard (1973) cited the following description from Otto to depict the mysterium tremendum:

> The feeling of it may at times come sweeping like a gentle tide, pervading the mind with a tranquil mood of deepest worship. It may pass over into a more set and lasting attitude of the soul, continuing as it were, thrillingly vibrant and resonant until at last it dies away and the soul resumes its "profane" non-religious mood of every day experience. It may burst in sudden eruption up from the depths of the soul with spasms and convulsions, or lead to the strangest excitements, to intoxicated frenzy, to transport, and to ecstasy. It has its wild and demonic forms ... . It may become the hushed, trembling and speechless humility of the creature in the presence of whom or what? In the presence of that which is a mystery inexpressible and above all creatures (Paffard 1973: 30).

The concept of the numinous, therefore arises from an awesome sense of being in the presence of, or under the power of one who is wholly other, one who is a Supreme or Divine Being. It expresses acknowledgement of a deity or of the existence of God.

For those whose spiritual awareness or experiences are not embedded in a sense of God may find their 'mysterium tremendum' in what James (1977) described as the "mystical". James asserts that there are four characteristics which may justify an experience being described as "mystical", and, therefore, spiritual:

1) Ineffability:

It defies expression; it is unutterable and impossible to give an adequate account of its content in words. It cannot be transferred to others. It follows, therefore, that its quality must be directly experienced. Therefore, mystical states are more like states of feeling than cognitive states. One cannot convey clearly the quality or worth of a certain feeling to someone who has not experienced that feeling (James 1977: 367).

2) Noetic quality:

By this James means that although the experience is very similar to a state of feeling it is also a state of knowledge. He describes such experiences as

> states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect ... illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain; and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for aftertime (James 1977: 367).

3) Transiency:

James maintains that such experiences are usually of short duration, of not more than one or two hours at most and more commonly lasting for only minutes or seconds.

4) Passivity:

By this he means that the subject, although he or she may have prepared himself or herself mentally and physically by particular spiritual practices, usually experiences a sense of givenness or being held by a force outside the self and beyond his or her control.

Spirituality can, therefore, exist without being expressed in terms of the religious. Moore asks, "What is the relationship between spirituality and religious faith?" (Moore 1985: 40). His answer is that, while spirituality is almost indispensable to a living faith they are not the same thing. Spirituality may be expressed in the absence of religious faith. Whether it will be so expressed is a matter of free choice for the individual. He or she may choose, free from the constraints of social evaluation, to enjoy and develop his or her own spiritual situation. Moore says that the alternative is that

> I may interpret the situation religiously. I may say 'Yes' to whatever it is that is 'choosing' me, and to the longing that I feel. I may allow my longing to become consent to the mysterious 'call' or 'choosing' (Moore 1985: 40).

Therefore, one may respond to either of the two frameworks of spirituality, the theistic and non-theistic, the mysterium tremens or the mystical.

However, another way of regarding spirituality is to be found in Beck's choice, that is to describe the

qualities of the spiritual person in general rather that the notion of spirituality itself.

4.5 Qualities of the Spiritual Person

Beck (1990) argues that it is easier to describe the personal qualities which characterise the spiritual person than to define the concept of spirituality itself. He outlines these qualities and claims that all or most of them, to a greater or lesser extent, are necessary to spirituality:

a) Awareness. In various religions, the spiritual person is describes as 'awake', 'enlightened', open to 'the light'. This does not imply an overly intellectual emphasis, since even the most humble and unschooled person may be 'awake' in this sense.

b) Breadth of outlook. Spiritual people see things in perspective ... they are aware of and take into account the wide range of consideration that bear on their daily life.

c) A holistic outlook. A spiritual person is aware of the interconnectedness of things, the unity within the diversity, patterns within the whole.

d) Integration. Spiritual people are integrated in body, mind and spirit; and in the various dimensions and commitments of their life, including societal ones.

e) Wonder. The spiritual person has a due sense of awe, of mystery, of the transcendent in life ...

f) Gratitude. Sometimes ... implies the existence of a divine 'person' to whom we are grateful. However, such a belief is not essential ...

g) Hope. Even without belief in 'providence', a certain degree of hopefulness or optimism would seem to be justified, and indeed necessary for every day living.

h) Courage. Plato in 'The Republic' spoke of the need for a courageous, spirited approach to life. Courage is as basic and important as hope.

i) Energy. Spiritual people ... their awareness provides a basis for motivation and their integrated life leads to synergy of body, mind and spirit such that they in fact have a high degree of energy.

j) Detachment. The approach of 'going with the flow' does not imply lack of concern but rather a skilful working with the currents of life in order to achieve spiritual goals. It is sometimes called 'active inaction'.

k) Acceptance. Even in popular, non-religlous parlance one is encouraged to accept the inevitable 'with good humour' and 'in good grace'. This, of course, is only a virtue in relation to the inevitable and not where one could and should attempt to modify what takes place.

l) Love. To many, love is the paramount characteristic of the spiritual person ...

m) Gentleness. This characteristic brings together several of the others noted: awareness, detachment, acceptance, love. It involves a sensitive, thoughtful, caring approach to other people, to one's own needs and to the cosmos in general. It is the opposite of a ruthless, exploitative, careless approach to life. It does not imply weakness or indecisiveness, but rather a willingness 'to go with the flow', to act firmly but with kindness and a due sense of what is possible and needed (Beck 1990: 163-164).

Acceptance of these qualities as being spiritual, confirms assertions of spirituality being grounded more in the affective rather than the cognitive domain, which concurs with the ideas of both James and Priestly. Priestly also contends that, while the intellect may subsequently analyse feeling, "it is our feelings that express our values, not just the detached intellect alone" (Priestly 1985: 35). Therefore, spiritual qualities are an intricate blend of personal characteristics. They are "a complex of valuable personal traits which have a distinctively strong reference to our inner being or spirit" (Beck 1990: 165).

The importance of feeling is shown in particular in the senses of awe, wonder, courage, hope and love. Webster maintains that both awe and wonder are beyond analytical thought. He says that they are uplifting and that their effect is "not a fear that paralyses but a joy and curiosity which can lead to wisdom (Webster 1982: 75). A major characteristics of the spiritual is that it professes a fundamental optimism. For example it holds that everyone is equally "worthy of love and respect and that the evils and pathologies of our world can be healed" (Plunkett 1985: 4).

Although spiritual traits transcend our empirical world they do not entirely separate us from it. Being spiritual "does not point to an emphasis on the spirit to the neglect of other aspects of the person, but rather to a full integration of inner and outer life" (Beck 1990: 165). Qualities such as awareness, holistic outlook, integration and acceptance (of reality) all require one to understand and to embrace, to a greater or lesser extent, the connectedness between the inner self, the community and the ecosystem in which we live. In other words, they give us a sound world view. They "plant one solidly in the world and in the cosmos" (Beck 1990: 165). Beck says that this concept of spirituality can be accommodated in either a religious or a non-religious environment, and that while there is a real difference between the two it is often exaggerated. He argues that those who profess a religious faith must recognise that they are spiritual

only if they possess a number of evident virtues. People who portray qualities such as constant selfishness, brutality and unreflectiveness can hardly be deemed to be spiritual, "no matter how much they claim to be in touch with a supernatural realm or indwelt by a divine spirit ... (or how much they) focus on creeds (and) rituals" (Beck 1990: 166). He also asserts that, on the other hand, non-religious people must realise that

> many of the values of interiority and profound experience that religions have emphasized over the millennia are crucial to 'the good life', whether one is religious or not. ... Further, non-religious people must acknowledge that there will always be phenomena that lie beyond current theories, and ideals that lie beyond current goals. Insofar as the spiritual has to do with imaginings and aspirations that surpass the actual and that nourish human growth, this too must be accepted" (Beck 1990: 166).

Therefore, in Beck's view, spirituality is the presence of a number of virtuous traits characterising the person. It may have a religious dimension or not. It is complex and without it a person cannot be deemed to be whole. Its development is an important aspect of the development of the whole person, which includes one's identity through one's inner feelings.

4.6 The Inner Life

The discovery of an individual's identity, and especially his or her true inner self, can be viewed as a spiritual journey. That interior world is the source of one's motivation, or enthusiasm and response to life

(Grimmitt 1987: 79). This is the motivator that makes us function as persons, and this includes our assumptions and beliefs. In Grimmitt's words:

> Indeed, it is by way of our interior world (sometimes called the 'life-world') that the claims and counter-claims of the exterior world - the 'things', the 'facts', the 'beliefs', the 'values', etc. - are both perceived and assessed as significant and meaningful or otherwise (Grimmitt 1987: 79).

A spiritual way of life regards 'inwardness' as important. It rejects superficiality. However, it need not altogether eschew the world of 'getting and spending' since this also a real, and often necessary, dimension of life. Spirituality does not just consist of inactivity; it includes much activity (Souper 1985: 15). In Souper's words, it is not "something 'up there', removed from the graft and grind of everyday life". It is

> to be found right in the heart of that which grinds us into the earth. It is to be found there if it is to be found anywhere, not in the marvellous imaginings and day-dreams. All of us can generate glorious notions of celestial beauty and of God knows what, and they may be very beautiful; but they are not likely to be very true" (Souper 1985: 22).

While the spiritual may be roughly contrasted with the physical and the material, it may also be expressed through them. This was referred to earlier in quoting Beck (1990) on pages 164 and 165. To describe spirituality as concerned only with the immaterial and wholly otherworldly may be inappropriate and a reversion to times when to be spiritual was deemed to be ascetic (Bausch 1984: 65-66). This notion is no longer popular.

It is a 'flight from the world' which belongs to the ascetic monasticism of the past (Pacana 1969: 355).

However, the discovery and nurturing of the inner self is of crucial importance in the quest for wholeness. Webster writes of the importance of a person's "enshrining within his own life that which he most completely is" (Webster 1982: 87). On the other hand, Bates suggests that the true individuality of a person has to be "forged" (Bates 1982: 34), which is consistent with Beck's assertion that spirituality must have a strong directional component as well as a procedural dimension, which "carry one towards sound ends and well-being" (Beck 1990: 165). However, despite different emphases, there is some agreement that to ask the question "Who am I?" and to help children and young people answer it is a way of helping them to find their true self, their inner voice, their spirituality (King 1985: 137).

4.7 **Tackling the 'Who am I?' question with Adolescents**

Grimmitt (1987) is in agreement with Wall (1977) in emphasising that the time of adolescence is one ripe for consideration of the question, 'who am I?' He cites Wall in suggesting that five selves emerge at adolescence and lead to adult identity:

1) the physical self;
2) the sexual self;
3) the vocational self;

4) the social self; and

5) the philosophical self.

The fifth adolescent self, that in search of a philosophic self, pursues a set of ideas, ideals, principles and interpretations of life which will guide action under various circumstances:

> This philosophic self may be quite rudimentary, of the 'bother you Jack, I'm all right' kind: it may be political, religious, social or a highly elaborate amalgam of some or all of these; but it is the personal self or identity - the thread of unity between the highly other-dependent self images of the child ... It is the unifying principle which brings the other selves into a more or less harmonious relation to each other (Grimmitt 1987: 96).

In coming to terms with the 'who am I' question, one is beginning to experience and know one's inner world or the central element of personhood. One of the main points made by Grimmitt is that our 'interior world' is formed largely by the circumstances of our early lives. But in adolescence we need to begin to scrutinise our inner selves, our interior power, in order to make some sense of our own identity. This scrutiny is started by examining the script of our lives, or of our 'stories' as Grimmitt calls our lives (Grimmitt 1987: 78, 80). He contends that much of each person's story has been written by others. Among those who have been influential in creating the 'scripts' are parents, the wider family and close friends. In saying that our stories are, therefore, largely written by others, Grimmitt draws an analogy between the human story and that of the turtle. He maintains that our stories have been written by others just as the turtle's

story has been written by the genetic coding of its species. "But unlike the turtle we as human beings can make our stories our own; we can transform our 'biographies' into 'autobiographies' and in so doing become the author of our personhood" (Grimmitt 1987: 80). Implicit in looking at our stories, and changing them, consistent with Grimmit's analogy, is to scrutinise the assumptions and beliefs that make us what we are. We can then take control of our inner lives and, if necessary, redirect them to follow our own preferred course, that of our own choice.

Young people show a strong desire for spirituality in their lives. Beck (1990) avows that "children may show spirit by acting according to forces deep within rather than norms of typical or required behaviour" (Beck 1990: 165).

> Young people have a strong desire to discover meaning and purpose in their lives. Their interest in spirituality can manifest itself in questioning their own identity and that of the school, college or church and other faith communities to which they belong. There are many different value systems which young people are exposed to and there can often be a tension, or even conflict, between Christian faith and modern culture (Bishops Conference of England and Wales 1996: 9).

Kealy seems to be in agreement with Macquarrie (1982), and to some extent with the Association of Catholic Chaplains (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1996) in making the point that "the young, in particular, should be introduced to the spiritual experiences and heritage of their ancestors in the light of the modern understanding

of the Gospel" (Kealy 1983: 15), which, to some extent, echoes Haldane's contention that "the goal ... of spiritual development is union with God" (Haldane 1997: 11).

4.8 Christian Spirituality

Since Christianity is value-laden, linking spirituality with it inevitably gives spirituality a values dimension which is consistent with Christian principles. Values are referred to by Webster, who said that the notion of spirituality was "understood as the realm of ultimate meaning and valuing which a person locates within his living and around which he structures his life (Webster 1980: 132). Starkings (1987) also defines spirituality as "the quest for values, for their conception in an appropriate imagery and their embodiment in an understanding of life" (Starkings 1987: 55). In a Christian environment it may be expected that spirituality would be seen as incorporating values cherished and professed by Christian beliefs.

Souper contrasts Sartre's view of spirituality that "the only meaning that there can be is the meaning which I individually create for myself" (Souper 1985: 8) with the Christian view that "genuine insight is not gained in isolation from one's fellows" (Souper 1985: 14). He also quotes Brian Wicker, who says that Christian faith

> is not in the first place some interior, hidden, personal relationship to God, or even to Christ. It is the life of the Christian community <u>in</u> which I share. Since the Christian community's life is structured by the presence of Christ, my life in that community is a life "in Christ". It is true that this truth is only intelligible to faith; but then faith itself is something which goes on "in Christ" (Souper 1985: 14).

The definition of Christian spirituality which is given in the first issue of the Catholic periodical titled 'Spirituality', published in August 1995, is as follows:

> Christian spirituality is life in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, being conformed to the person of Christ and being united in communion with God and with others (Downey 1995: 23).

Both Wicker and Downey emphasise the importance of the two central concepts of Christianity: 'life <u>in</u> Christ' and '<u>membership</u> of a community which itself lives <u>in</u> Christ'. Life in Christ means following the example of Christ and abiding by the teaching of Christ as told in the gospels.

Christian spirituality is also explained as

> not the theological thoughts one has in one's head or the prayer practices one has adopted. Rather it is a much broader reality. It is the religious and moral outlook, attitudes and values that shape and motivate one, from and by which one acts and reacts to other people, to society, to the created world, to the Church and to God (Cosgrave 1995: 502).

Spirituality is a quality which is difficult to measure. "True spirituality is as hard to measure as real holiness" (Hillman 1991: 204), "It embraces both the human search for God in the everyday events of life and the experience of God's constant reaching out in love to us especially through his Son Jesus" (Quinlan 1996a :31). While

"Christians ... believe in a spiritual realm where they acknowledge the lordship of Jesus Christ outside any dimension of time" (Plunkett 1985: 3), Christian spirituality may, nevertheless, retain some concepts from the Old Testament, relating to justice, love and an awareness of God's presence. Both Dorr (1983) and Hillman (1991) quote the following passage from the Old Testament to epitomise Christian spirituality:

> This is what Yahweh asks of you, only this:
> That you act justly,
> That you love tenderly,
> That you walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8).

The first of these three criteria denoting spirituality is predominantly a moral one. It demands striving towards justice and equality for all. It calls for effort to bring those who are on the margins into the mainstream of society. It means that minorities, such as the travelling people or refugees, should not suffer discrimination either in law or in practice. It demands equality of treatment for women, and that the poor are given a fair chance to better their circumstances and lessen the gap between themselves and the rich. It also requires commitment towards giving the children of the poor equal opportunity in the education system so that they may aspire to better employment and higher living standards in their future. In short it means "working to build a society that is intrinsically just, a society whose <u>structures</u> are just" (Dorr 1983: 763).

The second criterion, 'to love tenderly', is concerned with relationships with other people. These include family, friends, acquaintances and community. A commitment which is asked for here is to show openness and compassion towards others. The ability to really listen to others is essential.

> Really to listen to a person is already to affirm that person in a deep way. It allows the person to 'feel heard' and accepted rather than judged. Mostly that is the kind of affirmation that people need and want (Dorr 1983: 762).

Such listening is at the heart of school chaplaincy, since the chaplain is one who allocates part of his or her time to listen to students and staff. Downey advocates looking at the way the gospel portrays Jesus' relationship with others. He says that here are "the hallmarks of a rightly ordered relationship: mercy, forgiveness, compassion, truth, justice ... nothing to do with domination or control." (Downey 1995: 24).

Thirdly, Christian spirituality reiterates the command of the Old Testament that "you walk humbly with your God". This is clearly theistic. It requires belief in God who love and accepts us fully, is transcendent, wholly caring, merciful, forgiving and loving.

> One of the most distinctive features of the Christian faith, as compared with other religions, is that it gives a very explicit expression to this sense of the love and care of God (Dorr 1983: 760).

However, Dorr quotes Karl Rahner in stating that those who have "a winter experience" of faith may also be spiritual in a Christian sense. These are people who may, for a

time, have reservations about the extent of God's love and intervention in their lives. In sharp contrast with the authenticity of such 'winter experience' is the attitude of some enthusiastic Christians "who speak of God as though he were constantly at their disposal, like a 'Mr. Fixit'" (Dorr 1984: 760). However, the true Christian stance is that God remains transcendent, beyond human comprehension, mysterious. Therefore the Christian thinks of God with a "child's sense of wonder and humility" (Dorr 1983: 761).

4.9 The Importance of Spiritual Growth in Schools

Priestly contends that "the 'spiritual' is ... amoral; it needs to be educated" (Priestly 1985: 39). He says that, although spirits may be either good or evil, "when we develop 'spirit' into 'spiritual' we are, of course, already attributing a certain amount of moral approval to the term" (Priestly 1985: 39). However, 'spirit', with all its ambivalence, is nonetheless, present and in need of guidance. Both Haldane (1997) and Tartarkowski (1997) stress that there is a real need to nurture spiritual development in schools. Haldane referred to it as "a deep human need - the need to be united in love with an unfailing companion. This is the role of spirituality in education" (Haldane 1999: 205). Tartarkowski asserts that it should be possible to plan an education for spirituality which is useful and relevant,

and that professionals should be active in helping young people to develop critical thinking which is integral to the development of spirituality (Tartarkowski 1997: 25).

Beelsey (1993) advocates that opportunity should be provided at school for students

> to share quiet times of focused reflection so that their learning can be assimilated and fitted into the patterns ... of sense or meaning which they are making in response to the spiritual questions at the heart of their lives (Beesley 1993: 24).

He goes on to stress that they should be able

> to stop their busy-ness and activity and have an opportunity to worship; that is, to see their daily activities in the wider context of reflection on those things which are considered to be of the greatest worth in the human experience of living with and responding to the fundamental question of existence (Beesley 1993: 24).

It would seem, therefore, that it is important that time should be found within the school curriculum and during the school day to allow students to explore and nurture their spirituality.

This requires planning in an age when "the curriculum has become the focal point of attention and the framework of reference, (and) not education" (Priestly 1985: 30). Education is greater than the curriculum. It encompasses the whole of the learning process in school, which includes the hidden curriculum, as previously discussed in Chapter 3 on school ethos. However, the current emphasis on the curriculum neglects other activities in the school day which are important to the educational process. Moreover, as Duffy warns, there may be a danger

that the competitive spirit of the examination system and the supreme goal of third level entry "tend to de-emphasise the spiritual dimension of young people" (Duffy 1996: 49). A Christian philosophy of education must regard all aspects of human development, including the spiritual, as equally valid (McCormack 1997: 27).

Souper asks the question,

> How do we so run a school, and by school I mean all educational activities, that the spiritual dimension is not only recognised, but the possibility of entering into it, of seeing how things really fit, can actually work? (Souper 1985: 23).

Best (1996) also enquires:

> If the conventional school curriculum lacks a spiritual dimension, can it be genuinely educational? In what ways might education be more holistically conceived so that the spiritual is given its rightful place ..." (Best 1996: 5).

Souper points out that schools are noisy, aggressive and busy places, where pupils' attention is seldom expected to focus on a single issue for long. Yet, "the perception of the spiritual dimension requires a stillness, a peacefulness, a wholeness of being" (Souper 1985: 23). This important aspect of education in school life will not exist unless it is consciously provided for through relevant and suitable activities. Maher accords importance to any activity which encourages awareness, helps the 'inner journey', fosters insight into growth and is ultimately spiritual. He says that such should be actively pursued since he perceives a need in schools for

"a fuller, more human education, for 'roundness'" (Maher 1985: 32).

Despite extensive search of literature and of computerised library records this author found little material related to the process of spiritual development in young people, and so concluded that this topic has not yet been studied to any significant extent and that, therefore, it is not as well understood or documented as are other forms of development such as the development of faith or moral development. However, this does not prevent the inclusion of a spiritual dimension in school life.

The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), who are the overall custodial body for policy and ethos of Catholic schools in Northern Ireland, recognise the importance of spiritual growth when they state that "at the core of our system is the nurturing of each person's spiritual and personal development - pupils and staff alike" (CCMS 1996: 7). The Council of Managers of Catholic Secondary Schools (CMCSS), who control policy and ethos in Catholic schools in the Republic of Ireland, also insist that "Catholic education ... is not only "religion class" but an overall, pervasive Christian atmosphere, evident in all disciplines and in all relationships" (CMCSS 1991: 6). This echoes both Beck's and McLaughlin's assertions that "religious and spiritual issues must be grappled with throughout the life of the school" (Beck 1990: 168), and, "faith is the way we understand the

meaning of human life, its significance, its dignity and its purpose" (Mclaughlin et al. 1996: 285).

It is the aim, therefore, of the trustees and governors of Catholic schools throughout the whole of Ireland that Christian values and what they term 'the message of the Gospels' should be integral to the whole life of the school. Beck (1990) argues that education in spirituality should be provided for in schools because "spiritual virtues are a major sub-category of values and so should be studied and fostered" (Beck 1990: 167). Therefore, since the "religious dimension constitutes the distinctive nature of a Catholic school" (CCMS 1996: 5), as shown in the discourse on ethos in Chapter 3, it must be expected that spirituality in these schools is fostered in the light of Christian values from a Catholic perspective. In nurturing the spiritual growth of young people, it is necessary to promote a sense of community within the school. Souper quotes Temple in saying that "the spiritual side of human nature, the capacity for friendship and devotion, is best trained by the life of membership in a society. No instruction or study can take the place of this" (Souper 1985: 24). Being a member of a community is, therefore, important.

Providing for the spiritual needs of students within the confines of the religious education (RE) class alone is not enough. As Nye and Hay (1996) point out,

> The volume of material which teachers are now expected to cover in religious education and the very small amount of time devoted to this subject in most schools make a more broadly based, cross-curricular approach

> to spirituality necessary if the schools are to make a significant contribution to this dimension of development (Nye and Hay 1996: 151).

This echoes Devitt's (1992) view that to expect the religious education team alone to cater for the spiritual needs of students is to place too great a burden on them. He urges that it should also be the concern of the whole staff and particularly that of the pastoral team. Ideally,

> such a team typically has access to a prayer room or retreat centre or chaplain's office, and it is within these contexts rather than within the classroom that explicit help is given to the spiritual and liturgical life of the pupils (Devitt 1992: 118).

Whitaker (1995) also offers the view that spiritual education should be distinct from religious education. He argues that students should be given the opportunity to explore the spiritual aspects of their lives by:

1. Accepting and acknowledging that inner experiences do not always have rational explanations.
2. Accepting that intense inner feelings in response to experience are a valid and vital part of being.
3. Finding effective ways for pupils to explore and share these experiences with each other.
4. Expressing something of our own spirituality by disclosing our own sense of awe and wonder at phenomena and our particular ways of celebrating it (Whitaker 1995: 188).

How this may be achieved at present may be somewhat vague because of the many cultural influences to which people, and particularly young people, are exposed, the "widening interest in alternative spiritualities" (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales 1996: 9), New Age spirituality in response to a cultural and spiritual

crisis (Collins 1998: 92) and the growing interest in the traditions of other religions, particularly those of the East (Ryder 1983: 64). "Their spiritual hunger is, faute de mieux, often answered by the attractions of the occult which increasingly permeate the sub-culture of 'drugs'n sex'n rock'n roll' so prevalent today" (Bull 1997: 22). Such attractions may be dangerous and are undesirable.

Crawford and Rossiter (1996) suggest that such occurrences and other spiritual and moral issues should be examined with young people at school. Such issues should be evaluated as:

* Why do people join sects, cults and new spiritual movements?
* What spiritual and personal needs are met by such groups?
* Are there implications to be considered for the Church?
* How do film and television influence moral decision-making and value formation?
* How does the culture of contemporary music contribute to the personal development of young people?

They should also be asked to explore the role that education can play in fostering spiritual and moral development and the extent to which it can be critical and evaluative.

> This type of study can help young people stand back and look critically at what is happening in their culture and at the elements that are having a spiritual influence (Crawford and Rossiter 1996: 138).

If spiritual growth is important, then it must be seen to be important in the education system (Tartarkowski 1997: 27). Schools have a clear responsibility, there-

fore, to enable young people to recognise and acknowledge the possibilities of the spiritual dimension in their lives. They have a duty to foster the spiritual dimension in the life of the school community and to prepare young people for life in society as adults. The spiritual well-being of society depends on students being given the necessary means and processes for growth in this area. How this may be effected is a difficult question. Finding time and commitment among staff at present, in an age where the process of education is overshadowed by a materialism, where the points' system is paramount and the emphasis in school life is concentrated on products of the curriculum which may be exchanged for worldly wealth, is not a simple matter. How this may be done may pose a question for school authorities, particularly those who are concerned for the spiritual welfare of students. Examining the role of chaplains in secondary schools may or may not show a way forward.

Summary

Spirituality is essential to human fulfilment, whether it springs from religious beliefs or non-religious aspiration. The requirement for a spiritual dimension concurs with Maslow's fifth and highest point on the scale of human needs, the need for self-actualisation. Spirituality is a concern for more than corporeal and material needs. It is an awareness of constant inquiry and of a

quest for truth and meaning in life. It is the establishment of inner identity associated with what is valued in life. It enables each of us to become a person in the fullest sense. For each, it gives life a focus of meaning which may range from the simple to the complex. It provides a frame of reference for living.

Spirituality may be numinous, theistic or faith based and admit to the existence of God or gods. On the other hand it may be non-theistic in nature and deny existence of a Divine being. However, while spirituality is almost always a requirement of faith, faith is not necessarily a a prerequisite for a spiritual life.

The qualities of the spiritual person, as outlined by Beck (1990), indicate that the spiritual has more to do with the affective rather than the cognitive domain. Yet, the cognitive, or the 'noetic' quality of spirituality is also important, as James (1977) claims, and it may enable us to analyse our motives, and thus, enhance spiritual life. Also, while spirituality causes us to be concerned more with the non-material than the material in life, it does not require us to neglect all that is worldly. Spirituality may be exercised through the empirical and the material necessities in life. It is possible to blend our inner and our outer needs.

Adolescence is an opportune time to address inner identity. The 'philosophical self', which is the fifth self to emerge in adolescence, is a questioning life stage. It is a phase in which the young person seeks to

come to terms with his or her essential identity. Since this identity is still being formed, the opportunity presents itself to learn how to take control of that self and of its formation. It is a time to learn self-development. It is, as Grimmitt says, a chance to turn a biography of one's life into an autobiography, a chance to take control of the self and of its direction. Young people clearly show a desire for spirituality. Adolescents, therefore, should be empowered to develop a spiritual self.

In a Christian society it may be expected that spirituality will follow Christian beliefs and principles. This means espousing the teaching and example of Christ. It means embracing the messages of justice, tolerance, love and forgiveness as is described and advocated in the gospels. This is described as 'living <u>in</u> Christ'. Active and conscious membership of a Christian community is central to the Christian understanding of spiritual growth. It is vital that both this community and each member within it should 'live <u>in</u> Christ'.

Since education is one of the major carriers of meaning in society (Healy and Reynolds: 1986: 8) it needs a vision. "Such a vision will take seriously the dimension of the spiritual" (Webster 1985: 19). It is argued that the growth and nurturing of spirituality should be a crucial element of both the curriculum and of school life in the Christian school. Amid the busy-ness and bustle of present day school life there should be

opportunity for spiritual moments, for times of peace, quiet and tranquillity to listen to one's own inner self and ponder about the directional components of one's life. It is not enough that this should be left to the teachers of religious education to effect. Their burden is already heavy. Authorities of Catholic schools assert that it should be the remit of the whole staff. This may well be ideal. Yet, at a time when the emphasis in education and in school is so much on academic achievement in a world of staggering technological advancement it is difficult to know if this can be a realistic aspiration.

That young people should be asked to critically examine their life within their broader world, and consider how they may achieve real fulfilment, is extremely important. How this can be realistically done within the present scenario of the school environment is a huge question. Looking at the time spent by chaplains and at the work they do in schools may or may not suggest a way.

Chapter 5 will examine the training programme for second level school chaplains and its implications for chaplaincy in schools.

Chapter 5

Training Programme for School Chaplains in Mater Dei Institute of Education

CHAPTER 5

TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOL CHAPLAINS IN MATER DEI INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

McKeone (1993) deplores the dearth of specific chaplaincy training in Britain and elsewhere. She says that it is "haphazard across countries and denominations and status in life" (McKeone 1993: 31). She stresses the need for training stating that, without adequate training, school chaplains may lack clear aims in their work. Without clear aims and chaplaincy focus she fears that "the needs are so pressing around us in school that it is very easy to fill one's time simply responding to these" (McKeone 1993: 31). In observing the need for developed chaplaincy courses in 1993 she stated that: "Ireland, as far as I know, is the only country offering a full year course specifically for Secondary School Chaplains" (McKeone 1993: 31). This chapter examines the chaplaincy training course in Mater Dei Institute in Dublin which is now nine years in existence.

5.1 The Training Programme

In 1990, the Catholic archdiocese of Dublin, in consultation with Mater Dei Institute of Education, initiated a training programme or course of studies for the purpose of training school chaplains and accrediting them with certification of post-graduate status. The archbishop then delegated its full management, running and accreditation to the Institute. Since 1990, therefore, courses leading to a post-graduate Diploma in Chaplaincy Studies are conducted in the Mater Dei Institute of Education, Clonliffe Road, Dublin. The Diploma is awarded by the Pontifical University at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

Focused solely on chaplaincy theory and practice in second level schools, it is also the only programme of its kind in Ireland. Although its focus is on Catholic school chaplaincy, it also admits a small number of chaplaincy students of other Christian denominations. At first, all of its courses were conducted on a full-time basis. However, in 1994, a part-time programme, to cater for participants in full-time employment who can attend in the evenings only, was introduced. A core team of instructors comprises five or six members. Additional guest instructors are also invited periodically to deal with specialist topics in their own respective fields of expertise. The present director and co-ordinator of the course is Fr. Patrick Greene S.J.

In the Mater Dei Institute, the course year lasts from early October until early April and is divided into two semesters of ten weeks each. Each week is sub-divided from Monday evening until Friday morning (see Appendix E, Vol. 2, page 296 to 306). Full-time participants are also expected to attend personal development sessions every second Friday morning and two weekends towards the end of the year. For those in part-time attendance, the personal development sessions are arranged by agreement with the course co-ordinators.

5.1.1 The Objectives of the Programme:

The primary objective of the programme is to train men and women to become competent, effective chaplains in the schools in which they work. It aims to render them capable and proficient in dealing with both adolescents and adults, so that they may nurture and uphold the Christian ethos of their schools and foster a spirit of teamwork with others in the performance of their duties. It also aims to develop a maturity of outlook in matters of social justice, particularly in the world of young people, and it aspires to engender a commitment and an enthusiasm to strive for justice within the school environment and in the school community.

5.1.2 The Participants:

Applicants are subjected to strict screening prior to acceptance as trainee chaplains. Four specified conditions must be fulfilled before one is eligible to apply for the course. The course is open to:

1. Those with a degree or equivalent professional qualification who wish to prepare to be full-time chaplains;
2. Existing chaplains, full or part-time, who wish to obtain a professional qualification in their area;
3. Religion teachers who wish to obtain a further qualification in related areas; and
4. Others with a degree or equivalent professional qualification who want to build up a caring Christian community in the school.

Obviously some experience of current directions in human and spiritual development would be beneficial. (Mater Dei Institute of Education, Appendix E, Vol. 2, page 301). Ordination is regarded as an equivalent professional qualification to a university degree.

An applicant, having satisfied the above requirements, is requested to fill an application form and supply the names of two referees who will vouch for him or her. Applicants who are deemed suitable, from this procedure, are than submitted to individual and exacting interviews which last approximately half an hour each. During these interviews, applicants are required to justify their reasons for taking the chaplaincy studies course. They are also asked to discuss their views on matters such as religion, faith and morals, how they

relate to other members of staff, and their outlook on young people and pastoral care in schools.

On enquiry into the success rate of applicants, the researcher was informed that it was quite restricted. "Many have been turned down on the basis of unsuitability. We are very concerned that only suitable people are chosen" (Greene, 1999).

Interviews are held on dates at the end of April or beginning of May each year. Successful applicants are notified and offered places on the course after those dates.

5.1.3 The Programme Structure:

Structurally, the course or programme is modular. It consists of six modules or elements, each dealing with a distinct aspect of the course as a whole, and each associated with an assignment of a number of credits. In the current and in recent brochures, it is explained that "One credit equals one hour's contact per week for a semester" (Appendix E, Vol. 2, page 297, 'Chaplaincy Studies, 1999-2000'). This means that one credit is attained for every 10 hour's attendance at a module during a semester. A thirty hour module, therefore, would yield 3 credits in one semester.

The modules are:

1. Chaplaincy Skills: 6 credits;
2. Counselling Skills: 6 credits;
3. Adolescent Psychology: 3 credits;

4. Personal Development: 3 credits;
5. Contemporary Issues in Religion and Education: 4 credits; and
6. School Placement: 8 credits.

On full and satisfactory completion of the entire course 30 credits are assigned.

5.1.4 Underlying Philosophy of the Course:

Fundamental to the philosophy of the chaplaincy studies course is the value of giving experience of religious faith to young people in the formative environment of the school. It is regarded that instruction alone, in the content of faith, which is the brief of religious education teachers, is not enough. Regular experience and practice of the faith is also necessary. If opportunities for such experience and practice are provided, as a matter of course, involving the young people in schools, it is more likely that the young will continue in the beliefs and practices of their faith into adulthood and throughout their lives.

The critical importance of pastoral care in the context of school is also central to the philosophy of the chaplaincy studies course. In the chaplaincy skills area of the course, in addition to dealing with prayer and young people, emphasis is placed on concern for the emotional welfare of students, especially when they are distressed, for example, as a result of bereavement, family difficulties, substance abuse or sexual abuse.

In addition to endorsing the value of pastoral care, the philosophy of the chaplaincy studies course strongly upholds the idea of justice in the school community. In a community mainly consisting of young people and in which the formation of values is a significant process, fairness, respect and equality of opportunity for all are the most significant issues concerning justice. The course promotes the idea that chaplains should endeavour to seek justice on this basis in the school environment. However, it would seem that the Church itself holds an anomalous position on equal opportunity for all in so far as that it prohibits the admission of women to its ordained membership. It is a matter which may pose problems to chaplains in promoting justice in the name of the Church.

Bullying is now recognised as a form of injustice, causing intense suffering and humiliation to students (O'Moore and Hillery 1991: 56; Cartwright 1995: passim). It occurs in most schools. Chaplains are urged to be aware of this. They are asked to look for the telltale signs in students and also to liaise with teachers in so doing, in order to provide or seek help for the victims and to co-ordinate with staff to eliminate bullying altogether from the school environment.

A less well acknowledged form of injustice is the policy of streaming which is established in a range of schools. According to the director of the chaplaincy studies course this detrimental policy adversely affects

the lives of many students, particularly those who are assigned to low grade classes. These students are deemed deficient, and labelled so, at a young age. Frequently, they resent that. "When given a chance to talk about it, they express such deep anger at the sheer injustice of it" (Greene, 1999). The philosophy of the chaplaincy studies course rejects the notion of streaming as does CORI (CORI 1997: 23). Therefore, chaplains are exhorted to oppose its practice in schools in whatever way they can. Decisions, which may impinge on the lives of students with varying effects, may be arrived at by consensus at staff meetings. It is deemed important that the chaplain is present to effect whatever influence he or she can in the interest of justice for the students. As the course director stated, "chaplains should attend staff meetings on behalf of the students" (Greene, 1999).

A school discipline system may also allow unfair procedures, albeit unwittingly. It may, under scrutiny, prove to be too severe, deny a student a proper hearing and/or permit a hasty and harsh judgement, for example an undeserved suspension. The prevailing view in the chaplaincy studies programme is that students should be adequately listened to and their case put fairly when the need arises. If the only advocate available to a student is the chaplain, then the chaplain should act in this capacity in the interest of seeking just solutions.

5.2 Chaplaincy Skills and Issues

In the module on chaplaincy skills, student chaplains study methods of dealing with prayer and young people. They develop deeper understanding of how to devise prayer sessions and services, youth liturgies and meditation sessions with special appeal for students. Other features in this module include guiding young people through traumatic events which affect them, such as bereavement, family breakdown, substance abuse etc.

In the words of the Chaplaincy Skills Director, "The most important role a chaplain has in school is to lead the school in worship, prayer and ritual" (Neary 1999). Giving young people praying skills and practice is considered to be fundamental to the role of the chaplain. Therefore, developing a range of skills to lead liturgies and prayer sessions and services is an essential component of the chaplaincy studies course. Through the medium of lectures, workshops and practical sessions in the Institute student chaplains are taught how to lead meditation and eucharistic and non-eucharistic services with adolescents in schools.

A wide range of issues, which deal mainly with the lives of young people, are part of the course curriculum each year. Most of these are concerned with contemporary matters and problematic situations in the world of today's teenagers. Each year, the range of issues listed in the course prospectus is subject to alteration. This depends

mainly on prevailing needs, but other factors are also influential. At the beginning of the year the director of the Chaplaincy Skills module agrees with the student chaplains on the topics that are to be studied throughout the course of that year. As he explained:

> "Many of them (the student chaplains) would have done other courses elsewhere prior to coming here and would be familiar with some of these topics already, 'Child Abuse' for example. So, we look at topics they may have already covered. If most of them are already familiar with a subject or issue, then we don't spend time on it" (Neary, 1999).

In this way, some variation may occur in the course from year to year. However, certain themes are included in the course every year mainly because of their centrality to school chaplaincy and the improbability of their being previously studied in sufficient depth. Adolescent faith and the spiritual guidance of young people are among these, matters which have already been discussed in Chapter 4. Other issues which are deemed too important to omit are discussed in this section.

5.2.1 Alcohol and Substance Abuse

"Some 75 per cent of 12 - 18-year-olds are using alcohol, and among teenagers alcohol and drug abuse are interlinked" (Irish Times, September 29th 1997). This constitutes a serious problem among young people, and is partly due to the role which alcohol plays in Irish society and culture coupled with the broad availability of drugs at present. Loftus is highly critical of the

overuse of alcohol in particular, and he calls for more alcohol education in schools. "In 1989, the last year for which figures are available, there were, according to the Central Statistics Office, 7,000 admissions to psychiatric hospitals due to alcohol" (Loftus 1997: 9). Ffrench O'Carroll is quoted as saying that "taken together, alcohol and drug abuse is the major medico-social problem in this country today" (Irish Times, September 29th 1997).

Excessive consumption of alcohol among adolescents is

> related to family conflicts, inadequate parenting (poor supervision, low expectations and few rewards) and heavy parental drinking. It is also connected to an adolescent's peer group abuse of alcohol, particularly if they are older adolescents. Adolescents who are easily bored and who want immediate gratification are particularly at risk. (Nicolson and Ayers 1997: 82)

School chaplains are in a position to help students who either come from 'addictive families' themselves, or who are in the habit of taking alcohol or illicit drugs. Therefore, intervention techniques and skills of problem detection and/or of helping young people and their families to overcome such difficulties are important in chaplaincy.

General chaplaincy skills are also called upon to offer guidance to school students. Drawing young people towards a greater understanding of value and meaning in their lives is regarded as a somewhat preventative measure from entering the culture of alcohol and substance abuse. To cite the words of Dr. Marie Murray:

> It could be that at a time of great uncertainty that there isn't a specific value system to attach themselves to or a specific behavioural code, there is a strong sense among young people of being rudderless, of them not being able to envisage a future for themselves (Irish Times, November 8th 1997).

Part of the aim of school chaplaincy is to counteract a sense of rudderlessness in young people and to "help them acquire a sense of values, a sense of their spirituality and a sense of their own worth and destiny as Christian children of God" (Greene 1999).

5.2.2 Bereavement and Loss:

"Death and bereavement, above all, are the circumstances most likely to make demands on the chaplain as a faith presence" (Monahan and Renehan 1998: 68). In most cases, where a school has a chaplain, it is usually he or she who is expected to lead the school's response to a young person's loss through the death of a parent, carer, sibling, or other significant person in his or her life. If the need arises in school to break news of the death, sudden or anticipated, of a family member or close friend to a student, is the chaplain who is expected to perform this very difficult task. It also falls within the chaplain's brief subsequently to offer support to the bereaved, to encourage him or her to talk about the loss, and to offer understanding and comfort to the young person. Therefore, chaplains need to develop social, parental and familial programmes to deal with death and grief. As Corr (1991) states, "In coping with grief and

the impact of death, adolescents are often well served by assistance from respected adults ... (who) are prepared, sensitive to needs, and willing to help" (Corr 1991: 46). The practical approaches which student chaplains are encouraged to employ in response to bereavement are similar to those discussed in Chapter 7, Vol. 1, pages 275 to 276.

5.2.3 Depression and Suicide:

It is considered important that chaplains should ensure, as far as possible, that they are approachable by school students who are depressed and/or suicidal, or by the peers of these students. It is acknowledged that:

> Increasing numbers of teenagers struggle with overwhelming levels of stress and depression. Some of these teenagers feel unable to get the support they need and begin to think of suicide as a way out. However, most of them very much want to live. Many will tell another person of their suicidal thoughts and intentions. This is often a way to start to talk about their problems. The person they usually tell first is not their parents or any other adult. It is another teenager, someone in their school (Curran, 1987: 187).

Non-judgemental and sympathetic adults need to be at hand to initiate and effect the healing process in such cases. Student chaplains are encouraged to take up this role in schools, "to be there for the students" (Neary 1999) and to know when referral to professional counselling services is appropriate.

In the case of actual suicide by a student the chaplain needs to be at hand to offer support to the family and to fellow students. Cosgrave points out that:

> Nowadays, it is clearly recognised that in most cases the person who commits or attempts to commit suicide does so only or largely because he/she is in a state of utter hopelessness or despair (Cosgrave 1998: 8).

In the case of suicide the chaplain needs to be professionally competent to visit the family, to inform peers and arrange counselling for them if necessary, and to engage the school's presence in the funeral procedures. Subsequently he or she should also be able to organise prayer sessions and reflection periods for students and staff at appropriate times.

5.2.4 Marital or Family Breakdown:

Marital discord and breakdown affects the lives and performance of young people. Now that divorce is permitted by law in Ireland, it may be an added dimension to the perceived growing problem of marital conflict in the lives of young people, and at times "may result in an adolescent experiencing a severe depression" (Nicolson and Ayers 1997: 75). Chaplains, therefore, need preparation to confront these issues. When school students encounter this problem in their home lives they need to be treated with sensitivity and compassion in school. How chaplains deal with this is later discussed in Chapter 7, pages 288 to 289.

5.2.5 School Retreats:

During school retreats young people are accorded valuable time for reflection and for prayer in the course of a busy school year. They are given the opportunity to contemplate on their faith and on the meaning of life, and to reflect on their sense of self and their own worth. School retreats are times for spiritual renewal. They also offer opportunities for the renewal of the meaning of community in the school environment. Guidelines for chaplains on the organisation and running of school retreats, as issued by the Mater Dei Institute, are in Appendix E, Vol. 2, pages 313 to 315.

5.2.6 Personal and Spiritual Development:

Neary agrees with Shelton that a chaplain needs to be more than a role model for students; that he or she needs to demonstrate "an inner acceptance for his or her own inner journey for personal meaning" (Shelton 1983: 19). The approach to personal and spiritual development is based on the premise that the adult who is both aware of his or her personal limitations and comfortable with them can be a helpful figure for adolescents. In this way it is deemed that the chaplain endeavours to encourage in the adolescent the effort at competency and the mastering of coping behaviours that are necessary for the adult world (Neary, 1999). Chaplains, therefore, need to understand the process of their own development in order to help young people to growth to maturity. Since

unreflecting adults tend to transmit to young people lessons learned in their own youth, particularly those related to emotional states such as love, trust, guilt, fear and/or ambition, chaplains need to identify their own negative lessons, if any, and avoid transmitting these to students.

Student chaplains are encouraged to use the Enneagram and the Myers/Briggs and Keirsey/Bates assessments to identify their own personality and temperament indicators. In turn this is is intended to help chaplains to improve the management of relationships with others.

To prepare young people to learn about, come to terms with, and develop their own personalities student chaplains are also taught how to administer the Myers Briggs' Personality test with students in schools.

5.3 Gender Issues

Gender issues in chaplaincy are not dealt with in the Mater Dei chaplaincy studies programme. The benefits or disadvantages of male or female chaplains in boys', girls' and co-educational schools are not considered. Chaplains are trained without regard to the gender of the chaplain or that of the students to whom they will minister in schools. Neither are gender issues or differences referred to in Monahan and Renehan's book,

'The Chaplain, a faith presence in the school community' (1998).

As regards differences between men and women's spirituality, O'Leary (1999) points to the marginalisation of women within the Church. He adverts to the patriarchal bias and male domination of the Church, and he avows that:

> men's spiritual experience has been regarded as normative. Women's spiritual experience has thereby been diminished, pushed to the margins, ignored or dismissed as irrelevant (O'Leary 1999: 220-221).

He advocated the recognition of women's spiritual experience since women's ways of knowing and experiencing are different from those of men. "God reveals Godself to women in modes that are inaccessible to men - and of course vice versa" (O'Leary 1999: 221).

Therefore, lack of regard for gender differences in the Chaplaincy Studies Course seems to be a serious omission on the part of the course directors.

5.4 Views on Good Chaplaincy Practice

Fr. Donal Neary expressed the following views on what constitutes good chaplaincy practice for full-time chaplains in schools:

1. Chaplains should teach. Contact with classes, especially in first year, enables chaplains to get to know the school's students better. If the chaplain is given at least one period a week with the first year classes the chaplain and the students become

familiar with each other at the outset of the students' time in school. Otherwise some students might progress through their school years without ever having a real encounter with the chaplain or getting to know him or her. They may also not see the chaplain as a real member of the staff. They may equate him or her with ancillary staff and, therefore, not to be taken as seriously as teachers would be. Having the opportunity to teach first year students gives the chaplain a better chance of educating the young people at the outset about his or her role in the school, the purpose of chaplaincy and how and when students may avail of the chaplaincy service.

2. Chaplains should not be heads of religious departments in schools. The chaplain "is not there to take over, but should be in a supportive role to the religious education team" (Neary, 1999). The expressed view was that the chaplain and the religious education teachers have distinct roles in the school and that these roles should not be confused. If a chaplain were to be perceived as being in charge of the religious department he or she could then be looked upon as head of the RE team, a position seen to be undesirable.

3. Holding any disciplinary role in school is also regarded as contradictory and, therefore, injurious to the caring image of school chaplaincy. Apart from the need to keep order in class while teaching, it is considered that chastisement and dispensing of punishment is inappropriate practice for a chaplain. Therefore, chaplains should not be given or accept any role in school which involves the disciplining of students.

4. Neither should chaplains accept supervisory roles in examination centres, whether during house examinations or State examinations. "The chaplain

should be the one outside the exam. hall, 'holding the student's hand', and offering encouragement and comfort" (Neary, 1999). An examination supervisor's role is considered to be too stern and unsympathetic for the image which a chaplain should cultivate.

5.5 Mode of Assessment of the Programme

The chaplaincy studies course is designed as a learning programme for adults with emphasis on continuous assessment and satisfactory participation. Initially, a written examination was drawn up to assess participants at the end of the year. However, on reflection, it was found that this proved to be counterproductive to the process of adult learning and skills development. Participants tended to concentrate on preparation for the examination instead. Personal development, regarded as essential to the programme, did not get the required consideration. It was also felt that, since participants would not have taken a written examination for a substantially period of time prior to the chaplaincy course, they had acquired a certain fear of such. Consequently, anxiety became a component of the programme. On reflection, it was decided to abolish written examination and replace it with continuous assessment and credit awards for satisfactory participation in the modules.

Students on the chaplaincy programme are now subject to continuous assessment on the basis of suitable

and active participation in the various modules. Throughout much of the course they work in small groups under strict supervision. Participation is of the essence in such work. They are expected periodically to be actively involved in exercises and discussions. Included in their studies is Gerard Egan's 'Exercises in Helping Skills', from which they are required to complete a series of exercises in the form of homework.

In each module they are assigned essays, from time to time, related to the subject of the module, the topics of which are chosen by mutual arrangement between instructors and students. These essays are awarded marks by the instructors. In the chaplaincy skills module it is necessary for each student to compile a file of material based on the subject matter of lectures. Finally, credits are awarded on a combination of adequate marks attained for essays and cumulative assessment of the standard of participation in the modules. There is no written examination at any stage.

Students who have attained thirty credits throughout the course are deemed worthy of the diploma. The diploma is awarded by the Pontifical University at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

5.6 Evaluation of the Programme

Integration days are set aside over two weekends towards the end of each academic year for the purpose of evaluation. The course is essentially evaluated by the students. To date, as a result of student critique and assessment of the course content, minor points only have been found in need of change. This was described as "fine tuning" (Greene, 1999). Students have asked for some refinement in the area of moral theology. They have also sought more precise delineation of the legal position of chaplains in schools and their rights in juxtaposition with those of parents and school authorities.

Another minor change effected to the course was the reduction of credits for the school placement module, from 9 to 8, and a corresponding increase in the credits for module on adolescent psychology, from 2 to 3. The reasons given for these are that "adolescent psychology deserved three credits instead of two because of the amount of work which it entails" (Neary, 1999).

Summary

The Chaplaincy Studies Programme is a training course exclusively for school chaplains in second level schools. It appears to be the only course of its kind in the British Isles. Having strict entry requirements, it

concentrates on preparing chaplains to work with both young people and adults. It is a one year full-time or two year part-time course and it consists of 6 modules on which accreditation is based. At present the Diploma in Religious Studies (Chaplaincy Studies) is awarded by the Pontifical University at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

The philosophy of the course concentrates on the value of religious experiences for young people, pastoral care in schools and justice in the school community. It therefore, underpins young people's development in faith, encouraging respect for self and others amid a caring environment. However, gender issues are absent from the Chaplaincy Studies Programme.

Chaplains are encouraged to teach a minimum number of classes, especially first years, in order to become more familiar with students and establish a working relationship with them.

A wide range of relevant issues are addressed throughout the duration of the course, in the interest of building chaplaincy skills. They deal mainly with both the common and less common problems and concerns which young people encounter. The chaplain's own personal development and self knowledge are also integral to the programme

Evaluation of the programme takes place through 'integration days' towards the end of the academic year. Essentially, the student chaplains are asked to make an assessment of their progress during the course and, if

necessary, to recommend alterations to the course. To date these evaluation sessions have resulted in little fundamental change.

The next chapter will present an explication of the methodology and design of the research and will explain the instrumentation used its underlying rationale.

Chapter 6

Design and Methodology of the Research

CHAPTER 6

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The design of the research and the methodological approach to it are presented in this chapter.

To begin with, the rationale for the research design is explained, followed by a descriptive account of the choice of instruments and their suitability to a qualitative inquiry such as this. Procedural aspects of the research are then described. Internal and external research validity as applied to this study are explained, and finally, the methods of data analysis of the research are outlined.

6.1 Rationale for the Research Design

A description of the research population and of participants in the research is already given in Chapter 1, section 1.2 entitled 'Participants in the Research', Vol. 1, pages 21 to 22. The manner in which those

participants were engaged in the research will be discussed under the following headings:

(i) Objectives of the Research;
(ii) The Design of the Research.

6.1.1 Objectives of the Research:

In accordance with the focus of the study, as stated in Chapter 1, Section 1.1, the researcher set out to ascertain the work load, the experiences, the views of chaplains and their feelings in relation to their work, in the following specific areas:

(a) the system of appointment with regard to chaplaincy in secondary schools;

(b) the aims and objectives of school chaplaincy;

(c) the functions of school chaplaincy and the range of services offered by school chaplains;

(d) the quality of interactive relationships with staff, students and parents which chaplains experience in schools;

(e) the extent to which chaplains experience stress, satisfaction or dissatisfaction in their school ministry;

(e) school chaplains' vision for the future of chaplaincy in the secondary school system.

These objectives were decided upon having obtained preliminary data from two sources:

a) guidelines issued on the role of the school chaplain by the Education Secretariat of the Archdiocese of Dublin (Appendix C, Vol. 2, pages 210 to 215); and

b) a survey of the Irish hierarchy's expectations of school chaplains (Appendix C, Vol. 2, pages 206 to 209).

With these objectives in mind, the emergent research design took on a focus which would have been difficult to find otherwise on account of the scarcity of literature on the specific subject of school chaplaincy.

6.1.2 Design of the Research:

In order to obtain the information outlined above, the research design chosen was that of a naturalistic or qualitative inquiry in the form of a study of chaplaincy in the Ecclesiastical Province of Dublin, one of the four ecclesiastical provinces of Ireland, as outlined in the Irish Catholic Directory. The inquiry mainly took the form of focus group discussions and individual interviews with chaplains. A questionnaire was also used as a verification instrument which supplied quantitative data and as a means of providing effective triangulation to the research.

Choosing a technique of inquiry is a matter of preference according to the subject of that inquiry. Hichcock and Hughes argue that "there is 'no best method' in this respect and we should suit the method to the issue or topic being explored" (Hichcock and Hughes, 1989: 42). A major difference between quantitative and qualitative methods is that between breadth and depth (Quinn Patton 1990: 165). In the case of the present study a mainly

qualitative inquiry was preferred rather than quantitative research for the following reasons:

The quantitative or scientific paradigm is based on the idea that reality is singular, convergent and fragmentable; the researcher/subject relationship is not interactive; the approach is nomothetic (i.e. involving large numbers); the analysis is descriptive; and the results are generalizable.

Conversely, the qualitative model assumes that reality is multiple, divergent and interrelated; the researcher-subject relationship is interactive; the approach is ideographic (i.e. concerned with individuals); and that truth statements involve working hypotheses, idiographic statements, and a focus on difference (Guba and Lincoln, 1981: 17). In a qualitative study the analysis is interpretative; and the results do not always involve generalization. However, they may be used to advocate change in certain circumstances. As Clark (1990) suggests;

> While most reports of qualitative inquiry steer clear of making priscriptions for specific action, people can and have been moved to take spsecific action, advocate change, and make consequential decisions inspired or influenced by reports of qualitative inquiry (Clark 1990: 338).

In determining how chaplaincy should be studied a number of theories were considered. Schon (1983) argues that the assumptions of the qualitative investigation are more appropriate when examining processes in institutions which are characterised by principles, complexity, values

and conflict of values. Naturalistic or qualitative inquiry is mainly concerned with processes, rather than outcomes or products; with how people interpret and make sense of their worlds; and with the meaning embedded in their own subjective experiences. It concentrates on "words and observations to express reality and attempts to describe people in natural situations" (Krueger, 1994: 27). It is demanding and labour intensive (Miles and Huberman (1984: 15). In a qualitative study the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and the study will usually involve fieldwork (Merriam, 1988: 17-19). In such a study as this, the information sought from the participants is not subject to truth or falsity but can be subject to scrutiny on the grounds of credibility (Kenny and Grotelueschen, 1980: 4).

Jones (1984) states that the primary rule in a qualitative study is that:

> the work is intended to be intensive and illuminative, and will not lay claim to being representative and generalizable, ... the main requirement in qualitative research design is to give oneself the chance to be enlightened, and to avoid a research situation which rules out exploration and open-mindedness (Jones, 1984: p.).

In summary,

> ...the approach denies the applicability of so-called 'scientific' methods of inquiry, as exemplified for instance in experimental or quasi-experimental research designs. It rests on the belief that the innovation to be examined cannot be treated simply as a set of objectives, or as a variable or variables to be measured... The 'reality' to be investigated, then, is a complex social reality of everyday life in institutional settings (Atkinson and Delamont, 1986: 239).

In the light of the questions set out as the objectives of the study, and given the above explanatory accounts of qualitative research, it would seem that this is the most effective way of researching school chaplaincy in the context of secondary education. It involves exploring the meaning that chaplains attach to various aspects of their ministry. It allows that their perceived realities are divergent and inter-related. All of these are qualitative research characteristics. The desired product is not a resolution of their (potentially different) perspectives, but an account of them within the context of their ministry in an educational setting. Finally, there may well be value conflicts among chaplains and between chaplains and school personnel or students, as well as different opinions about the purpose of chaplaincy. This study will not only allow for such conflicts if they become manifest, it will also focus on them.

Although the nature of this research presupposes a qualitative inquiry, a quantitative dimension was added for the dual purpose of

a) providing triangulation in the study, and
b) strengthening the design of the research.

Krueger (1994) observes that researchers are increasingly "recognising the benefits of combining qualitative and quantitative procedures, resulting in greater methodological mixes that strengthen the research design" (Krueger, 1994: 29). The quantitative dimension was added

in the form of a questionnaire. The value of using the latter is further expanded upon in section 6.2.4, entitled 'Use of a questionnaire'. Analysis of the questionnaire was effected with the use of 'Data Desk', a statistical analysis computer programme. Many of the statistical results are presented in Appendices F, G, H and I, Vol. 2, pages 318 to 382.

6.2 Instrumentation

According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) a wide variety of data collection methods are available in social research, not all of which are suitable for research in education. However, they assert that qualitative methods are appropriate, and that these must include both oral and documentary data collection as essential ingredients to that technique (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989: 42). Bell also states that it is an underlying assumption of any qualitative research procedure that interrogation is used as a data collection instrument (Bell 1993: 43).

Three instruments were used in this study:

(a) a series of semi-structured interviews or discussions with four focus groups of school chaplains in which views and perceptions were elicited on preselected themes;

(b) semi-structured interviews with twenty nine individual school chaplains chosen at random; and

(c) a questionnaire sent to 80 school chaplains.

It is important that a researcher is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the instruments used in a study, and also of potential problems which may be associated with the particular techniques which he or she may consider (Hichcock and Hughes, 1989: 43).

Therefore, the research instrumentation used in this study is discussed under the following headings:

(1) The Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviewing;
(2) Focus Group Interviews;
(3) The Limitations of Focus Groups and the Value of Complementary Individual Interviews;
(4) The Use of a Questionnaire.

6.2.1 The Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviewing:

In the area of qualitative research the interview can yield very rich material. It is also flexible and allows depth to be achieved by providing opportunity for the interviewer to probe and explore the interviewee's responses (Bell, 1993; Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993). It affords room for negotiation, discussion and expansion of the interviewee's statements and assertions in order to reveal the complex factors which shape his or her personal and social world. In skilful interviewing ideas can be followed up, motives and feelings can be investigated, a process which other instruments such as the questionnaire cannot attempt.

Phillips (1990) writes that "what is crucial for the objectivity of any inquiry - whether it is qualitative

or quantitative - is the critical spirit in which it has been carried out" (Phillips (1990): 35). However, maintaining complete objectivity throughout the entire course of interaction with respondents is a difficult task for an interviewer. In presenting this weakness of the interview in qualitative research, Cohen and Manion say that "no matter how hard an interviewer may try to be systematic and objective, the constraints of everyday life will be a part of whatever interpersonal transactions she initiates." (Cohen and Manion 1994: 275). Interviewing is a highly subjective technique and, therefore, there is always the danger of bias. Although Wolcott (1990) claims that subjectivity is a strength of qualitative approaches (Wolcott 1990: 131), Bell advises that it is easier to acknowledge "that bias can creep in than to eliminate it altogether" (Bell 1993: 95; Griffin, 1986). Therefore, while interviewing techniques are a means of gathering rich and varied information, it must be acknowledged that, while every effort will be made to assure and maintain objectivity, total objectivity cannot be guaranteed.

6.2.2 Focus Group Interviews:

In the past thirty years focus group interviewing gained credibility and popularity in market research where its aim has been to understand the thinking, as opposed to the actions, of consumers (Krueger, 1994; Vaughan, Shay Schumm and Sinagub, 1996). Market researchers discovered that "the focus group interview could provide insights

into why persons felt the way they did, not simply the number of individuals who felt a particular way" (Calder, 1977; Cox, Higgenbotham, & Burton, 1976). The reason why its use became widespread in this field of research is that it was thought that focus group interviews produce believable results at a reasonable cost. Krueger also states that focus group interviews are "a particularly appropriate procedure to use when the goal is to explain how people regard an experience, idea or event." (Krueger, 1994: 8).

In terms of its size, composition, purpose and procedures, a focus group is a special type of group which is deployed to yield information of a special nature during a research process. Ideally, a focus group is a homogenous group of six to ten participants discussing matters on which they share commonality rather than diversity of interests, but its size can range from as few as four to as many as twelve (Krueger 1994: 17-18), with an interviewer or moderator present to keep the group's discussion focused on the topic(s) in question. It is small enough to give each person an opportunity to share his or her views and yet sufficiently large to yield differences of perspective. Holding a series of such discussions with multiple groups in an easy and permissive environment that nurtures different perceptions and points of view enables groups to "produce qualitative data that provide insights into the attitudes, perceptions, and opinions of participants" (Krueger 1994: 19).

In interviewing a focus group it is important that the researcher understands the aim of his or her role as interviewer or moderator with the group. Krueger (1994) stresses the interviewer's role as follows:

> The researcher creates a permissive environment in the focus group that nurtures different perceptions and points of view, without pressurising participants to vote, plan, or reach consensus. The group discussion is conducted several times with similar types of participants to identify trends and patterns in perceptions. Careful analysis of the discussions provide clues and insights as to how a product, service, or opportunity is perceived (Krueger, 1994: 6).

Therefore, although the topic presented to the group for discussion must be preselected, specific and focused, the interviewing technique is non-directive. Its open-ended approaches allow subjects ample opportunity to comment, to explain and to share experiences and attitudes and to engage in dynamic group interaction.

Although it is not designed to produce projectable statistical results respondents must be "carefully selected from an identified population of relevance to the research question" (Stewart and Shamdasani 1990: 67). Krueger argues that focus groups are dynamic in nature. Group interaction can often relax inhibitions and "the more natural environment prompts increased candour by respondents" (Krueger 1994: 34-35). He also points out that focus group interviews can be used either as a sole means of data collection or in conjunction with other forms such as individual interviews and questionnaires (Krueger 1994: 29-30).

In the course of the present study this was the case. The main thrust of the focus group discussions was to identify trends and patterns in thinking and perception and to diagnose the prevalent issues which were of concern to school chaplains in their ministry. Other interviewing techniques and a questionnaire were deployed to acquire fuller data relating to chaplaincy.

6.2.3 The Limitations of Focus Groups and the Value of Complementary Individual Interviews:

In common with all techniques for data gathering, focus group discussions can have limitations. However, when one is alert to these, they can be minimised by the facilitator or moderator. Vaughan, Shay Schumm and Sinagub (1996) assert that

> a common misunderstanding about the conduct of focus groups is that they are "loose" and not precise in the way they are conducted. Although the interview often gives the impression of being casual and "informal" conversation, it is actually the result of a highly planned session with clearly identified objectives and carefully composed questions (Vaughan, Shay Schumm and Sinagub, 1996: 151).

Participants may influence and interact with each other, raise irrelevant topic areas, and possibly reduce the researcher's control over both the direction and scope of the discussions (Krueger 1994: 36). Another factor to be aware of is that although subjects may be more open about a topic with the support of a group, the pull for socially desirable responses cannot be ignored (Vaughan, Shay Schumm and Sinagub, 1996: 152), and participants may give

answers which, in their belief, conform to what they may judge as being socially acceptable to their peers.

Another caveat which Vaughan, Shay Schumm and Sinagub point to is the infusion of bias during the interviews if the researcher is not sufficiently vigilant.

> The moderator, a strong participant, or the dynamic of the group may introduce a particular perspective that inhibits active participation from participants who are less powerful or less vocal (Vaughan, Shay Schumm and Sinagub, 1996: 152-153).

They also caution against the assumption that

> individuals do not necessarily come to the interviews with well-defined, unalterable opinions on topics, that participants may actually shape their opinions during the interview, and that the primary intent of the interviews must not be to coerce or intimidate participants into espousing a particular point of view (Vaughan, Shay Schumm and Sinagub, 1996: 153).

The careful researcher or moderator at focus group discussions, therefore, will be mindful of these dangers and take precautions to prevent them, counteract them or at least minimise their effects.

Such possible limitations may be countered by interviewing a number of individual participants who have already taken part in the focus group discussions. In this way the researcher may find it easier to avoid distracting issues and gain deeper insight into the relevant topic areas since the individual participants may give expression to his or her views and feelings in another setting, unimpeded by influences which may be unavoidable during focus group discussions.

6.2.4 The Use of a Questionnaire:

There are two principal reasons for issuing a questionnaire in addition to conducting interviews in this qualitative research. The first is to provides for the triangulation of data within the research by using more than one instrument to collect data, thus enhancing the validity of the research (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993: 400). The second is that variables from questionnaire may be correlated in order to draw further inferences about chaplaincy as it operates under different circumstances.

In relation to the first of these reasons, it is true that interviews yield richness of data. As de Vaus states,

> in general, personal interviews provide the greatest flexibility in terms of question design and, other things being equal, is the best method when dealing with complex research topics (de Vaus, 1993:109).

Nevertheless, interviews have some drawbacks, one of which is that the anonymity of the respondents is very difficult to maintain. During the focus group discussions and the individual interviews the chaplains' identities were known to the researcher as well as the schools in which they ministered. There was also the possibility that, as de Vaus points out, "in long interviews either tiredness or impatience can affect the quality of answers as the interview progresses" (de Vaus, 1993: 109). While the researcher did not perceive this to have happened, it still was seen as desirable that data should be collected from chaplains using another instrument in the form of a

written questionnaire. Each set of data from these instruments could then be compared to find if they corroborate each other.

Objectivity and a lack of bias are qualities which cannot be fully guaranteed in qualitative interviewing procedures. However, they are claimed as strengths of the quantitative tradition to which the documented questionnaire belongs since the presence of the researcher is unnecessary in supervising its completion. Other advantages of its use, enumerated by Munn and Drever (1990) are that it:

(a) enables a wide sample of views to be taken;
(b) is cost-effective in terms of time;
(c) reduces the possibility of interview bias;
(d) preserves anonymity (for the respondent);
(e) provides standardised questions.

In collecting information by means of a questionnaire assurance of anonymity and confidentiality may be of importance. "Questionnaires provide the possibility for anonymity that few other research techniques offer (Munn and Drever, 1990: 4), thus perhaps giving respondents more confidence in expressing their views freely and to be utterly honest. Answering a questionnaire could also ensure that the possible tedium which might creep into a long interview, as de Vaus suggested, would not affect responses, since chaplains could complete questionnaires in their own time without constraint. Nevertheless, questionnaires should be "as short as possible, partly for ease of evaluation, but

particularly to maintain the interest and co-operation of the respondents" (Preece 1994: 111).

The second reason for using a questionnaire in addition to interviews is that a correlational method of analysis may also be used where several variables, either singly or in combination, may have a bearing on a particular pattern of behaviour. This method of analysis is useful in the behavioural sciences (Borg and Gall, 1989: 576).

Notwithstanding these benefits, however, the questionnaire has two main limitations if used as the sole instrument in research:

- descriptive information only is collected; it does not tend to explain why things are as they are;
- the data can be superficial (Munn and Drever 1990: 5).

Other limitations of using an impersonal survey are that "circumstances where one may depend wholly on statistical inferences are rare" (Struening and Guttentag 1975: 55), and the poor response rate which, in turn, raises questions about the sampling bias present in the returns. Fraenkel and Wallen suggest that:

> researchers who lose over 10 per cent of the originally selected sample would be well advised to acknowledge this limitation and qualify their conclusions accordingly (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993: 94).

However, Hoinville and Jowell (1978) have shown that response levels to surveys are not invariably less than those obtained by interview procedures. Certain factors

have been identified as conducive to securing a good response rate in a survey. These are that

(a) it should be clear and unambiguous;

(b) it has to engage the respondents' interest and encourage their cooperation;

(c) its design must eliminate potential errors from respondents; and

(d) it has to elicit answers as close to the truth as possible (Cohen and Manion, 1980: 80).

The questionnaire issued to chaplains was infused with these elements.

Using multiple instruments in a study overcomes the disadvantages of relying on one method only by drawing from the different strengths of each. Combined qualitative and quantitative approaches can yield complementary data, a process which is central to a triangulated research design and ensures internal validity in the study.

6.3 Procedural Aspects of the Research

This section provides a description of the procedural details of the study as follows:

(1) Preparatory Considerations;
(2) Conducting the Interviews;
(3) Questionnaire Administration;
(4) The Questions;
(5) The Pilot Study.

6.3.1 Preparatory Considerations:

"All social research is governed by questions of access to people, information and settings" (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989: 58). As the researcher was also the vice-principal of a voluntary secondary school run by a religious congregation, the research work enjoyed the following advantages:

(a) The principal of the school welcomed the idea of research in this field by a member of her staff, and she readily facilitated the researcher with time flexibility at work in order to arrange meetings with chaplains during school hours when such meetings could not otherwise be arranged;

(b) Access to the research population was facilitated by the cooperation of other school principals and by a number of chaplains whose time at school was reasonably flexible and who could attend both focus group interviews and individual interviews;

However, the amount of time devoted to the research during school hours was kept to an absolute minimum for both administrative and educational reasons. The research was conducted almost entirely outside school hours and during days of school closure whenever possible. Care was also taken to ensure that good will and generosity on the part of school principals was not abused at any time.

However, a number of minor difficulties arose. In meeting chaplains the researcher inevitably had to travel

distances which were sometimes long, and often late in the evenings. In most cases this was not a problem and meetings were successfully held. In two instances, however, a meeting was not held at the appointed time and had to be re-scheduled because the chaplains had been called away without notice. In each of these two case the chaplain was a priest whose parish duties, e.g. calls to the sick and dying, could force the cancellation of other appointments without notice. Such incidents also served to highlight some of the difficulties which such chaplains experience in meeting their commitment to their schools.

6.3.2 Conducting the Interviews:

The primary instruments used in this study were the focus group interviews and the individual interviews. Every interview was prefaced by a statement explaining to chaplains the nature of the research. The chaplains were informed of the paucity of investigation into perspectives on their work, views and experiences in a secondary school context. It was pointed out that most published works and literature on schooling and school experiences relate to the work and views of teachers, educationalists parents, government officials, religious leaders in education and others with a vested interest in the school environment, but that the chaplain's work, voice and views remain largely unrecorded. This particular research project was an opportunity for them as school chaplains to give voice to their own perspective on the value of their ministry in

schools, and to their experiences among staff, students, parents and other school related personnel.

Assurance of the non-attributable nature of any information was given. At the end of each interview an opportunity was given to chaplains to offer comments, views or reflections on any point which might not have been touched upon previously, if they so wished.

Location and spatial arrangements were considered for the purpose of generating a relaxed atmosphere. It was important that interviewees should feel comfortable with the surroundings. In the case of the focus groups, a room was usually chosen where the group could sit with the researcher in a circle. Krueger points out the importance of room arrangement to the effectiveness of the focus group interaction. He says that "eye contact among all the participants is vital, and having participants equally spaced around a table is preferred" (Krueger, 1994: 48). Such a setting allows participants to interact with one another in an easy manner and be less self-conscious about themselves, thus leading to more involvement in the discussion. Individual interviews were also held where chaplains felt comfortable and at ease.

Audio-recording of the interviews was considered. Simons (1981) cites the important benefits of tape recording to the interviewer. She states that, with the aid of a tape recorder, the interviewer can listen, respond and observe the interviewees more attentively and that it makes it easier to quote statements verbatim

(Simons 1981: 45). Although the researcher would have liked to have used a tape recorder at all meetings circumstances did not permit this. However, a recorder was used in a small minority of interviews when it was feasible. Some chaplains readily consented to the tape recording of their interviews and when this was so a small recorder was used discreetly.

In all cases extensive coded notes were jotted down during the interviews. These recorded statements, views and sentiments expressed during the discussions and interviews. They also described facial expressions, demeanour, attitudes and any body language displayed by the chaplains who were either contributing or responding to a discussion, and also of chaplains who might be taking a passive or active role at any one time in a discussion. Immediately following each session, the researcher wrote much fuller notes about the events of the interview.

6.3.3 The Interview Questions:

The interview questions are given in full in Appendix D, Vol. 2, pages 237 to 243. In accordance with guidelines outlined by Rogers and Badham (1992), these questions were unstructured, seeking both factual responses and value judgements. They were designed to lead the chaplains into considering particular issues to which extended answers could be given. In promoting the

benefits of such questions for the purpose of eliciting qualitative information Rogers and Badham state that:

> These have the advantage of allowing respondents the freedom to mention whatever they feel is appropriate and they are not restricted by the preconceptions of the evaluator. They are more valuable in an interview situation where the interviewer can probe more deeply to clarify the initial response (Rogers and Badham 1992: 43).

The focus of the questions is already described in Section 6.1.1, pages 211 to 212, entitled 'Objectives of the Research'. Questions used in the focus groups and individual interviews are given in Appendix D, Vol. 2, pages 237 to 243. Guidelines for these questions are also presented in Appendix D, Vol. 2, pages 233 and 234.

6.3.4 Questions in the Questionnaire:

As Munn and Drever (1990) state, "hypotheses about things usually come from reading, thinking, experience and intuition" (Munn and Drever, 1990: 8). It is normal to begin a study with a hypothesis. However, as this study is qualitative and exploratory this was not necessary. A hypothesis can evolve as the study progresses. Therefore, the questionnaire is based on the prevalent issues which concern chaplains as expressed by them during the focus group discussions and at the individual interviews.

The focus groups generated a number of themes which underlie all aspects of chaplaincy. These themes were then used to design questions which were put to chaplains in individual interviews. The subject basis of the

questions in the questionnaire was subsequently derived from the outcome of both focus groups and individual interviews. The purpose of this strategy was to test the strength and validity of these interviews. In this manner a cross-check could be made to find out to what extent chaplains' statements at the interviews were either frank or unduly biased.

In formulating the questions, a combination of both closed and open formats was used. The questions in section 1, the System of School Chaplaincy, require the respondent to make a simple choice by ticking an appropriate space. In the other sections the questions are based on a likert-style scale, ranging from "agree fully" to "disagree fully". Most of these opinion seeking questions have an added part, as advocated by Munn and Drever (1990), "a catch-all category, 'other' so that idiosyncratic views get an airing" (Munn and Drever, 1990: 23). A rational for the questionnaire is presented in Appendix D, Vol. 2, pages 244 to 272. The questionnaire itself and a covering letter to chaplains are also shown in Appendix D, Vol. 2, pages 273 to 289.

6.3.5 Questionnaire Administration:

The questionnaire was administered by post to a stratified sample of eighty chaplains chosen at random from schools of varying sizes throughout the province of Dublin. In its introductory section both anonymity and confidentiality were assured. Chaplains were not requested

to give their names on the questionnaire returns. In order to allow sufficient time for completion of the questionnaire, but not so much as to risk their being forgotten about, chaplains were asked to complete and return the questionnaire within two weeks if possible.

6.3.6 The Pilot Study:

A pilot study is a small-scale trial of the proposed procedures. Its purpose is to detect problems and remedy them before progressing with the research proper. When an interview schedule is created, it is important that it passes two tests. Wragg recommends that certain steps be taken:

(a) it should be submitted to experienced people for comment, and

(b) one or more pilot interviews should be carried out with typical respondents (Wragg 1984: 189).

De Vaus also recommends this procedure when using questionnaires (De Vaus 1991: 103). In the present study these steps were taken as follows:

(i) All questions were submitted to qualified university personnel for approval;

(ii) Two groups of four chaplains were randomly chosen and

(iii) A pilot test on the questionnaire was carried out on a small sample of school chaplains. This test was repeated five weeks later and results

compared. The results of the second pilot test concurred with those of the first.

As a result of the pilot interviews only a very minor modification was necessitated in one question; and this was in the quality of phraseology rather than in content.

The pilot study of the questionnaire was undertaken in April 1997. It was conducted in secondary schools outside the province. Ten schools were chosen which ranged in size from having less than three hundred students to having an enrolment of over nine hundred. Nine schools responded out of the ten, two of whom did not have a chaplain. The remaining seven returned the questionnaire completed by their chaplains. Two were completed by full-time chaplains and four by part-time visiting priest chaplains.

An additional section included in the questionnaire for the pilot study asked chaplains what they thought of the questionnaire and how, in their view, it could have been improved. Most of the respondents completed this section, and it was obvious from their remarks that they had no difficulty with the questionnaire. They described it as being very thorough and comprehensive, "well put together" and "easy to respond to", and they said they "welcomed the interest" in chaplaincy.

As a result of this response the questionnaire did not need re-drafting. It was issued to eighty schools in the province of Dublin at the end of April 1997.

6.4 Schools Involved in the Research

A total of 120 schools were randomly chosen from within five classifications of the 162 secondary schools in the province according to size of school:

SCHOOLS IN THE PROVINCE

		Metropolitan			Rural		
Size of School:		Boys	Girls	Co-ed	Boys	Girls	Co-ed
1	Less than 300	4	4	4	3	1	2
2	300 - 499	10	17	6	7	6	5
3	400 - 699	14	14	4	7	5	6
4	700 - 899	9	12	1	2	7	4
5	900 or more	1	4	1	0	1	1
	Totals:	38	51	16	19	20	18

SCHOOLS IN THE STUDY

		Metropolitan			Rural		
Size of School:		Boys	Girls	Co-ed	Boys	Girls	Co-ed
1	Less than 300	2	2	4	2	1	1
2	300 - 499	6	14	4	6	5	4
3	400 - 699	14	10	2	6	4	6
4	700 - 899	6	7	1	1	5	2
5	900 or more	1	2	0	0	1	1
	Totals:	29	35	11	15	16	14

6.5 **Methodological Concerns of Validity and Reliability**

A number of methodological concerns arise in the case of qualitative research. This section looks at these. It examines internal validity, external validity and reliability as related to this research study. It also considers triangulation as a means of ensuring validity.

6.5.1 Internal Validity:

In a broader sense validity is described as the extent to which a research instrument "measures or describes what it purports to measure or describe" (Wragg 1984: 191: Kirk and Miller 1990: 19). Borg and Gall state that qualitative research methods have always been criticised for weak internal validity. This is "the degree to which the research findings can be distorted by extraneous variables" (Borg and Gall 1989: 405). Internal validity can be threatened by a number of factors described by Fraenkel and Wallen, but those deemed most relevant to the present study were:

- Loss of Subjects (Mortality Threat):

No matter how carefully subjects for a study are chosen, it is common to "loose" some of them in the course of the study. These drop out due to illness, family relocation or for other reasons. Subjects may be absent during collection of data; they may fail to turn up for

interview or to complete a questionnaire. Such loss can introduce bias to the results, only if these subjects would have answered differently to those who were present. Fraenkel and Wallen state that this is often the case since those who do not respond often do so for a reason. Subject loss can also limit the generalizability of a study. It is, according to Fraenkel and Wallen, "the most difficult of all threats to internal validity to control" (Fraenkel and Wallen 1993: 223). They also point to the common misconception that the threat can be eliminated simply by replacing the lost subjects:

> No matter how this is done - even if they are replaced by new subjects selected randomly - researchers can never be sure that the replacement subjects respond as those who dropped out would have. It is more likely, in fact that they would <u>not</u>. Since those who drop out have done so for a reason, their replacements would be different at least in this respect; thus, they may see things differently or feel differently, and their responses may accordingly be different (Fraenkel and Wallen 1993: 223).

The common advice given to counteract this threat is uninspiring. "When all is said and done, the best solution to the problem of mortality is to do one's best to prevent or minimise the loss of subjects" (Fraenkel and Wallen 1993: 224);

- <u>Location Threat</u>

Physical and spatial conditions, lighting, noise levels and the familiarity of a location, may influence the performance or responses of subjects in a study. A researcher should keep the location and its circumstances constant if possible, or at least ensure that if different

locations have to be used they are similar in nature and "do not systematically favour the hypothesis" (Fraenkel and Wallen 1993: 225). This did not pose a problem as meetings with chaplain were held either in a chaplain's room in school or in a presbytery, both locations having ideal conditions for meetings or interviews and free from distraction.

- Instrumentation

If the nature of an instrument is changed in any way during the course of research, this is known as instrument decay and it can lead to data distortion. The occurrence of fatigue during lengthy data collecting sessions or very long scoring procedures could result in changed judgement levels or perceptions by the data collector. The way to avoid this is to schedule data collection or scoring so maintain consistency in instrumentation (Fraenkel and Wallen 1993: 223-225).

Fraenkel and Wallen also describe a number of strategies which can be employed to ensure validity. Those relevant to the present study are:

- standardised conditions under which the study occurs. These help control for location and instrumentation threats.
- obtaining more information on the subject of study, that is on the characteristics of the subjects. This may help control for loss of subjects (Fraenkel and Wallen 1993: 231).

Other strategies are advocated by Wolcott (1990) as a means of ensuring validity as is relevant to qualitative methodological principles. These are;

(a) talk a little, listen a lot;
(b) record accurately;
(c) begin writing soon;
(d) let readers 'see' for themselves by including the subjects' own words as much as possible in the final report;
(e) report fully;
(f) be candid;
(g) try to achieve balance;
(h) write accurately (Wolcott, 1990: 127-135).

In order to ensure that the rigours of internal validity were maintained in this study, Wolcott's strategies and guidelines as outlined above were closely followed.

6.5.2 External Validity:

> Researchers generalize when they apply the findings of a particular study to people or settings that go beyond the particular people or settings used in the study. ... The extent to which the results of a study can be generalized determines the **external validity** of the study (Fraenkel and Wallen 1993: 92-93).

Ward Schofield (1990) contests the view of Krathwohl (1985) who maintained that replicability is the essence of external validity; that results should be "reproducible in those target instances to which one intends to generalize - the population, situation, time, treatment form or format, measures, study designs and procedures" (Ward Schofield 1990: 203). Ward Schofield maintains that the goal is not to construct a standardized set of results

such as would have been produced by another careful researcher in the same situation, studying the same issue. Rather, he contends that "the goal is to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with detailed study of that situation" (Ward Schofield 1990: 203).

The particular configuration of perceptions, motivation, goals and values of chaplains and the situations in which they find themselves in schools - that is, some of the subjects of this study - might, one could assume, vary very much from school to school. The possible uniqueness, or non-representativeness, of each chaplain's position may raise doubts about the extent to which this study's results may be generalizable - that is, that it will have external validity.

To assess external validity, Cohen and Manion ask, "How do we know that the results of this one piece of research are applicable to other situations?" (Cohen and Manion 1994: 111). While generalisations are made on the basis of data derived from specific situations, how those generalisations apply to or operate in other particular contexts depends on the unique or dynamic aspects of these contexts or areas of study which are omitted by virtue of the principle of generalisation.

On the other hand, while the theory of generalizability is often suitably applied to large scale studies and to quantitative methods, Lincoln and Guba's

notion of 'transferability' may be more appropriate to smaller scale qualitative studies (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 298). In this case "findings are not generalized, but rather transferred from a sending context to a receiving context" (Anderson, Herr and Nihlen 1994: 33). Anderson et al. quote Lincoln and Guba's idea in explaining this:

> if there is to be transferability, the burden of proof lies less with the original investigator than with the person seeking to make an application elsewhere. The original inquirer cannot know the sites to which transferability might be sought, but the appliers can and do. The best advice to give to anyone seeking to make a transfer is to accumulate empirical evidence about contextual similarity: the responsibility of the original investigator ends in providing sufficient descriptive data to make similarity judgements possible (Anderson, Herr and Nihlen 1994: 33).

Wilson (1979) describes reader or user generalizability, which involves leaving the extent to which a study's findings apply to other situations up to the people in those situations (Wilson, 1979: 454). Also, Becker (1990), referring to how varying circumstances can affect the outcome of a process, argues that

> generalisations are not about how all ... are just the same, but about a process, the same no matter where it occurs, in which variations in conditions create variations in results. That's actually a classier form of generalization anyway (Becker, 1990: 240).

All of these theorists acknowledge the possible use of research in specific settings. They allow for flexibility in order to generalise the findings.

On the other hand, flexibility of interpretation is at open to the reader, and the theory of transferability may have greater appeal in applying the findings to other

comparable settings. Either way the external validity of the study is not threatened.

6.5.3 Reliability:

Research reliability is the extent to which one's findings can be replicated or "the extent to which a measurement procedure yields the same answer however and whenever it is carried out" (Kirk and Miller 1990: 19). This study was concerned with human perceptions and interaction, which may be dynamic in nature, and which the interviewing process, as shown earlier, may influence. The intention in the present study was not so much to be able to replicate the findings so much as to gather data that reflected as accurately as possible the participants' views, experiences and perceptions at a particular time, and in presenting those data and and interpretation of them so that they might stand as an objective record which can be analysed by others for consistency and dependability (Merriam, 1988: 172).

Merriam cites a number of techniques described by others to ensure reliability:

1. The researcher should explain the assumptions and theory behind the study, his or her position vis-a-vis the group being studied, the basis for selecting informants and a description of them and the social context from which the data were collected (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984: 214-215);

2. Especially in terms of using multiple methods of data collection and analysis, triangulation strengthens reliability as well as internal validity;

3. Just as an auditor authenticates the accounts of a business, independent judges can authenticate the findings of a study by following the trail of the researcher. In order for an audit to take place, the investigator must describe in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry. Essentially researchers should present their methods in such detail that other researchers can use the original report as an operation manual by which to replicate the study (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984: 216).

These recommendations were incorporated as far as it was possible into this research design.

6.5.4 Triangulation:

Triangulation of research means that the correct data are gathered by comparison of the results of two or more methods. According to Cohen and Manion triangulation may be defined as "the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour" (Cohen and Manion 1994: 233). The term derives from the process of triangulation in navigation, in which the correct position of a ship or aeroplane can be obtained by comparing its position with the position of two known

navigational points (Bailey, 1982: 273). Borg and Gall say that it "is simply a form of replication that contributes greatly to our confidence in the research findings regardless of whether qualitative or quantitative methods have been used" (Borg and Gall 1989: 393).

They specify a number of principal types of triangulation which may be used in research (Borg and Gall 1989: 236), two of which are employed in this study:

1) Combined levels of triangulation, using more than one level of analysis: the interactive (group) level and the individual level. During the study, qualitative data was gathered from chaplains in focus groups, and separately from a sample of chaplains, some of whom were originally members of the focus groups, through the medium of semi-structured interviews.

2) Methodological triangulation, using different methods on the same object of study. This process involved gathering quantitative data from a questionnaire administered to a sample of eighty chaplains from the total population.

These two techniques are part of an integrated research design in which they are interdependent upon one another; the data acquired from each will inform and be informed by data from the other. Cohen and Manion (1980) describe this interactive process as between-method triangulation. Within-method triangulation, or using the

data from one interview to inform and validate the data from other interviews, was also used.

In this way the limitations of each individual approach may be compensated for by the other, and the internal validity, external validity and reliability of the design will become more assured.

Triangulation techniques aim at verifying the credibility of a researcher's study by using more than one method of investigation or by employing different instruments of data collection. In social research "exclusive reliance on one method ... may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality she is investigating" (Borg and Gall 1989: 393). In this inquiry it was deemed necessary to exploit the benefits of the multiple method approach in order to avoid any undue distortion or bias in the final results.

6.6 Methods of Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data presents the problem of dealing with open-ended answers. In discussing the process of analysis, Hitchcock and Hughes state:

> Qualitative analysis, underpinned as it is by a commitment to explain individual actions in terms of actor's definitions and interpretations of the situation, focuses primarily on identifying the meanings of social situations and the organization of the activities in question (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989: 73).

Ely et al. (1997) write that to analyse is to

> lift an element out of the whole to inspect it more closely. In analysis for qualitative research, we try to discern the smallest elements into which something can be reduced and still retain meaning if lifted out of immediate context, and then to discover relationships between the elements (Ely et al. 1997: 161).

In the light of this, the analysis of data for this study is considered under the following headings:

(1) Analysis of Qualitative Data;

(2) Data Reduction;

(3) Data Display;

(4) Conclusion Drawing/Verification.

6.6.1 Analysis of Qualitative Data:

Feldman assumes that

> analysis is just one stage in the process of research. It is preceded by data gathering and succeeded by a process of relating one's interpretations to the questions one is trying to answer and to existing theories (Feldman, 1995: 64).

He cautions against overlapping or merging the stages of gathering and analysing data, a temptation which is present while operating in the qualitative tradition (Feldman, 1995: 64).

Miles and Huberman (1984) state that the analysis of qualitative data consists of three concurrent flows of activity. These three activities are:

(1) Data Reduction;

(2) Data Display; and

(3) Conclusion Drawing/Verification (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 21).

Qualitative data is gathered in words rather than numbers. The data concerned may have been collected in a variety of ways - focus group interviews, individual interviews and extracts from questionnaires. The data is then usually 'processed' somewhat before it can be used. This processing may be carried out by means of dictation, writing or typing up, editing, or transcription. Nevertheless, the data remains in the form of words, usually organized into an extended text (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 21).

6.6.2 Data Reduction:

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstraction, and transforming the 'raw' data that appear written up in field notes. Data reduction occurs continuously throughout the life of any qualitatively oriented study. Anticipatory data reduction is already occurring as the researcher decides which conceptual framework, which sites, which research questions, or which data collection approaches to choose. This may well be without full awareness on the part of the researcher that the process has already begun, or even before any data is actually collected. As data collection proceeds, there are further episodes of data reduction. These can include summaries, coding, the teasing out of

themes, making clusters, making partitions, writing memos, and so on. In this case it meant examining, sorting and coding the data initially, and as Hitchcock and Hughes put it, noting "what features and issues consistently crop up, what topics appear more than others, and discovering what the researcher has little data on" (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989: 74). Even after fieldwork is finished the data-reduction/transforming process continues until a final report is complete (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 21).

Data reduction is not separate from analysis, it is part of analysis. The researcher's choices in respect of the material to be used and of the manner or form in which it will be used are all analytic choices. Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organises data in such a way that 'final' conclusions can be drawn and verified (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 21).

Sometimes quantification may form part of the process but, because qualitative data can be reduced and transformed in a variety of way, quantification is not necessarily part of it (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 21).

Following these and other guidelines (Cohen and Manion 1994: 209-210; Wragg 1984: 191), the process consisted of:

(a) Grouping responses according to similarity;

(b) Classifying the groupings into twelve broad categories;

(c) Developing emergent themes.

This way of organising the information allowed the results to be structured to a certain degree without losing the variety of responses given by the chaplains.

Fundamental therefore to qualitative analysis is that of discovering significant classes of items.

6.6.3 Data display:

'Display' is defined in this context as an organised assembly of information that permits the drawing of conclusions and taking of actions. Looking at displays can help to understand what is happening and to do something, for instance, follow a certain course of action based on that understanding (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 21).

The most frequent form of display for qualitative data in the past has been narrative text. But this can be cumbersome, perhaps running to hundreds of pages. In such a case the sheer volume of the narrative text would overload the capacity to assimilate the relevant information (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 21). Methods of presenting such information in a 'digestible' form are required. Data displays can include different types of matrices, graphs, networks, and charts. All are designed to assemble organised information in an immediately accessible compact form, so that the analyst can see what is happening and either draw justified conclusions or move

on to the next step in the analysis the display suggests may be useful (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 21).

As with data reduction, the creation and use of displays is not something which is set apart from analysis, is a part of analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 22). Data display is also considered to begin early in the Data Collection Process. In examining material during both the preliminary research and the literary review, comparisons are continually being made across the information which is being gathered and examined. One method of data display is the making of comparative tables between different sets of material. These are shown in the various tables, chapters and appendices of this research.

6.6.4 Conclusion drawing/Verification:

From the time at which data collection starts, the qualitative analyst will immediately decides what things mean. He or she will note regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions. The competent researcher will hold these early conclusions lightly, deliberately maintaining both openness and scepticism. Nevertheless, the conclusions will still be there, vague at first, but then increasingly explicit and grounded. 'Final' conclusions cannot appear until data collection is completed. This will depend on the extent of the field notes, coding, storage and retrieval methods used, the sophistication of the

researcher, and perhaps the demands of a sponsoring agency if one exists. Nevertheless, the conclusions will often have been prefigured from the beginning even though a researcher claims to have been proceeding 'inductively' (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 22).

Conclusion-drawing is only half of a paired configuration. Conclusions are also 'verified' as the analyst proceeds. That verification may be as brief as a fleeting 'second thought' crossing the analyst's mind during writing, with a short excursion back to the field notes. On the other hand it may be thoroughgoing and elaborate, with lengthy argumentation and review among colleagues to develop 'intersubjective consensus'. Indeed it may go so far as making extensive efforts to replicate a finding in another data set. Meanings emerging from the data have to be tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, and their 'confirmability', that is, their validity. Otherwise we are left with some interesting stories about what happened that are of unknown truth and utility (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 22).

In this sense, qualitative data analysis is a continuous, iterative enterprise. Issues of data reduction, of display, and of conclusion drawing and/or verification come to figure successively as each analysis episode follows the other. However, regardless of which of the three is under active consideration at any one time, the other two issues are always part of the analysis process (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 23).

Summary

The nature of the research question dictated a mainly qualitative inquiry. The focus of the study was confined to full-time and part-time chaplains throughout the ecclesiastical province of Dublin comprising four dioceses.

A triangulated design of focus group interviews, individual interviews and written responses in the form of questionnaires produced data which was analysed and compared for verification. The concept of data validity was addressed by Wragg when he wrote that a researcher must ask if interviews measure or describe what they purport to measure or describe. He suggests that one of the ways in which to test validity is to compare the information collected at an interview with data gained from other sources of evidence, such as a questionnaire (Wragg 1984: 191). The internal validity, external validity and reliability of the research were discussed in full.

Piloting of individual interviews and of the questionnaire took place among chaplains mainly outside the province with both full-time and part-time chaplains.

Chapter 7 will present the initial findings of the research, showing how chaplaincy 'status' distinguishes school based chaplains from parish based chaplains.

Chapter 7

Status of Chaplains in Voluntary Secondary Schools

CHAPTER 7

STATUS OF CHAPLAINS IN VOLUNTARY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

In this chapter the term 'status' is determined according to the amount of time that chaplains spend on chaplaincy work in schools. Both the focus group discussions and the individual interviews emphatically revealed that chaplains were unequivocal in their views on the amount and quality of chaplaincy work which could be achieved on the basis of the time which they could devote to work in school. Some chaplains are deployed in schools in full-time positions and more are working on a part-time basis. Chaplains who hold full-time positions generally spend four hours or more per day in school, while those who are in part-time positions devote less time than that. In fact many part-time chaplains are not in a position to spend time in schools on a daily basis at all.

Chaplains who said they had part-time positions in schools were in the majority both in the focus groups and among the interviewees. However, although it was the avowed wish of all chaplains to contribute in some way to

the spiritual and religious life of schools, differences became clearly apparent between those who spend a substantial amount of time in schools and those who cannot do so. In varying ways and to varying degrees, full-time school chaplains and those who are in part-time positions but who spend three hours per day or more in school, differed appreciably from chaplains who could devote less than three hours per day to school chaplaincy. The latter consisted almost entirely of priests whose time is occupied mainly with parish duties and, therefore, who are not free to give much time to school chaplaincy. On this basis it was decided to categorise all of the chaplains into two divisions, giving them the status of:

a) School-based chaplains (SBCs): comprising those chaplains who spend at least three hours per day on chaplaincy work in schools; and

b) Parish-based chaplains (PBCs): consisting of chaplains who spend less than three hours per day in schools.

Consequently, throughout the rest of this chapter these two divisions of chaplaincy status in schools will be referred to as either SBCs or PBCs.

SBCs fulfilled many more duties, felt a greater sense of belonging in their schools, and also felt that they contributed more to the spiritual and pastoral life of their schools than did PBCs.

> "It's only logical that if you are working full-time you can be there all the time. You know the school and its routine just the same as any other member of staff would. You get to know the students well. You get to know their needs and the needs of the school.

You're part of the place" (Participant in Focus Group 3).

"Although I'm not officially full-time I can spend at least three, and sometimes four, hours a day in the school. That's nearly the same as full-time teachers. I know the school very well. I'm seen as a member of staff and I participate in the life of the school very fully" (Participant in Focus Group 4).

Also, in analysing the questionnaire results the variable which proved to be by far the most decisive in determining the amount of chaplaincy work done and chaplains' sense of being part of school life in different ways, was the chaplains' status in the school, based on the three hour time threshold. In correlating data from the questionnaire, both cross-tabulation of variables and average scores revealed a substantial variety of differences between SBCs and PBCs. These are shown in Tables F.1 to F.26, Appendix F, Vol. 2, pages 318 to 334. Tables F.1 to Table F.19 display the number of chaplains who are in certain categories or who chose specific answers from multiple choice questions. Tables F. 20 to F.26 indicate chaplains' average scoring from Likert type scales ranging from 5 (high) to 1 (low). In displaying these it is taken that scores above 3 indicate a positive average response, showing general agreement with a statement, and scores below 3 a negative average indicating general disagreement with a statement.

The most noted differences between SBCs and PBCs occurred in the areas of:

1. Gender and Religious Distinction;
2. Method of Appointment to School Chaplaincy;

3. Willingness to accept the Post of Chaplain;
4. Time Spent on Chaplaincy Work in School;
5. Training in Chaplaincy and Other Qualifications;
6. Chaplains' Views on Chaplaincy Training;
7. In-Service for School Chaplains;
8. Chaplains' Sense of Competence;
9. Remuneration;
10. Functions of School Chaplains;
11. Perceived Responses of Students and Staff to the Work of the School Chaplain;
12. Chaplains' Sense of Belonging and Sense of Influence in the School;
13. Problems Presented to the Chaplain by Students in Search of Help;
14. Areas of Stress for the School Chaplain;
15. Sense of Achievement for the School Chaplain.

The views of chaplains on young people's knowledge and acceptance of Church teaching and religious observance were also sought, but the results proved inconsequential. Therefore, this question is not pursued further here.

It is the purpose of this chapter to investigate the prevalent findings which pertain to chaplains regarding their status as SBCs or PBCs, as defined here, in secondary schools using the above fifteen subject matters. All responses to the relevant sections of the questionnaire are shown in Tables F.1 to F.26, Appendix F, Vol. 2, pages 318 to 334. Where significant differences occur between SBCs and PBCs in these tables, they will be emphasised by attaching the chi-square value to each particular contingency table as derived from the computerised data.

7.1 Gender and Religious Distinction

Since male chaplains greatly outnumber female chaplains in schools, men were in the majority in the focus groups and individual interviews. However, most of the women chaplains interviewed in this study held full-time positions in their schools and most of the men were deployed in part-time positions. Proportionately, therefore, women had greater representation among the SBCs, and men were more typical among the PBCs. This was also the case among respondents to the questionnaire as is illustrated in Table F.1, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 318. In this table it is seen that 48 (78.7%) of the sample of chaplains were men and 13 (21.3%) were women. However, it is also clear that, of the 13 women, 10 (76.9%) of them were SBCs and only 3 (38.5%) were PBCs. Conversely, of the 48 men, only 16 (33.3%) were SBCs and 32 (66.7%) were PBCs.

These gender differences are presumably linked with the religious distinction of both the men and women chaplains. Most male chaplains are priests and most female chaplains are members of religious communities. In Table F.2 and F.3, Vol. 2, pages 318 and 319, it is clearly beyond doubt that the great majority of the men, 45 of the 48, are priests, and that the number of ordained PBCs is twice that of SBCs. In contrast, all of the women respondents are members of religious orders. An explanation of this distinction may be found in the

present Church ruling which forbids the ordination of women. Size of school does not seem to show any appreciable differences between SBCs and PBCs as is illustrated in Table F.4, Appendix F, Vol, 2, page 319.

7.2 Method of Appointment to School Chaplaincy

Chaplains are assigned to schools in several ways. However, of the focus group members and interviewees, no one filled out an application form for a school chaplaincy position. They were either asked if they would take up the position or simply told by a superior that they were assigned to it. On the whole, SBCs, most of whom belonged to religious orders, said they were appointed by their provincial superiors. However, a number said that they were jointly appointed by the bishop of the diocese and their provincial superior. In a substantial number of cases the Board of Management and/or the school principal was involved in the appointment.

Responses to the questionnaire which show the means by which chaplains are appointed appear in Tables F.5 and F.6, Appendix F, Vol. 2, pages 320 and 321. Table F.6 is a derivative of Table F.5 and it shows the extent to which various authorities are involved in the appointment of chaplains as a whole. Table F.5 shows that the hierarchy and school principals were each instrumental in 27 appointments, or 44% of the total number. It also

indicates that the schools' internal authorities, principal, Board of Management and superior of the congregation, were substantially involved in the appointment of school chaplains.

Also derived from Table F.5 is Table F.7 which is set out to illustrate the involvement of the different agents, both external and internal to school management, in the appointment of SBCs and PBCs. In Table F.7 it is interesting to note that the hierarchy and/or parish priests, who are usually external agents with regard to the direct governance and running of voluntary secondary schools, are involved in the appointment of only 34.6% of SBCs and a total of 71.4% of PBCs. In stark contrast to this, the trustees, boards of management and/or principals, who are internal authorities in the directing, managing, and running of such schools, are involved in 76.9% of SBC appointments and only 28.6% of PBC assignations. It is clear, therefore, that the internal authorities mostly appoint those chaplains who can spent more time in schools, while the hierarchy appoint those whose time in school will be minimal.

All SBCs and most PBCs were of the opinion that the system of appointment in their case was effective enough and they had been willing to take up chaplaincy work. However, some priests, who felt that their time was already over-taxed with parish work, were unhappy with the system of selection or appointment. They felt they had no choice in the matter and resented being assigned work

which they did not want to undertake. The following statement typifies the feelings of those who disagreed with the method of appointment in their own case:

> "One of our curates was transferred some time ago and he wasn't replaced. I already had a very full work-load in the parish. Nevertheless, when Fr. ... left, I was then accorded the title of chaplain to ... [school], which he had held up to that. I had no say whatever in the matter and, to be honest, I can't reach on the work at all. ... it is not a good way to appoint a chaplain. It creates many problems" (Interviewee no. 23).

Table F.8, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 322, shows how chaplains represented their views in the questionnaire. From the percentages shown it is apparent that 72.2% of all chaplains SBCs and PBCs, think that the method of appointment is effective or very effective. In contrast, 27.9% are either uncertain or think it is ineffective. It is noteworthy that no SBC found the method ineffective while 8 PBCs (22.9%) found it so.

7.3 Willingness to Accept the Post of Chaplain

Most of the SBCs expressed that they were quite willing to accept their posts in schools. They said it afforded them an opportunity to work with young people and this was an area in which they were interested. A minority of PBCs stated that they had been unwilling to accept the post because of pressure of other work, shortage of time or lack of interest or confidence in their ability to work in schools.

Table F.9, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 322, shows the degree of willingness by SBCs and PBCs to accept their posts in schools. In this table, cross-tabulation of status with the degree of willingness to accept a post as school chaplain revealed that over 69% of SBCs were 'very willing' to take up chaplaincy as against 25.7% of PBCs. All of the SBCs (100%) were in either the 'very willing' and 'willing' categories and none was in the 'unwilling'. On the other hand, 22.9% of the PBCs said they were 'unwilling' to take up the post of school chaplaincy, revealing a significant difference between SBCs and PBCs in this area.

7.4 Time Spent on Chaplaincy Work in Schools

As would be expected, SBCs spend considerably more time in school than do PBCs. Many SBCs said they are on the premises from nine o'clock, or before, every day and many also made known that they regularly remained on in school until five or six o'clock in the evening.

> "If some students want to stay on after school to talk to me I make a point of making myself available. Occasionally, the odd parent will want to meet me after school and I make sure I'm also available to them. It's not altogether unusual for me to be in school until nine o'clock at night" (Interviewee no. 21).

By contrast, PBCs spent very little time on school chaplaincy work. Their hours in school were often irregular and time scheduled for school sometimes had to

be postponed or cancelled on account of other urgent calls. One PBC, a priest, stated that his chaplaincy work was regularly interrupted because "funerals, sick calls and accidents have to take priority over going down to the school" (Participant in focus group 4).

Consistent with this, Table F.10, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 323, depicts the amount of time that SBCs and PBCs spend on chaplaincy work in their schools. This table indicates that all of the 26 SBCs spend at least 3-4 hours daily on chaplaincy work and 14 (53.84%) of them devote at least 5 hours daily to it. On the other hand the evidence points to much less time spent by PBCs. Of the 35 PBCs, only 3 (8.57%) are engaged on a daily basis of 1-2 hrs. per day; 15 (42.85%) are engaged for less than one hour per week; and 4 (11.42%) serve for 2 hours per month at most.

7.5 **Training in Chaplaincy and Other Qualifications**

Differences were apparent in the levels of training of SBCs and PBCs. It became clear during the focus group discussion and individual interviews that a number of SBCs had attended a chaplaincy training course. Of those who did, the majority attended the course in the Mater Dei Institute in Dublin and are now deployed as SBCs. Two SBCs were trained on courses held abroad. By contrast,

very few PBCs said they received any training at all in chaplaincy.

Tables F.11 and F.12, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 324,express the result from the questionnaire on the number of SBCs and PBCs who received training. Training either before or after appointment was received by 12 (46.2%) SBCs and 5 (14.3%) PBCs. Over 85% of PBCs, as opposed to 53.8% of SBCs, received no training at all.

A majority of SBCs had also studied adolescent development and psychology and a minority of PBCs had done so. These studies took place mainly through the medium of attending courses in pastoral care, youth ministry and/or teacher training either in Ireland or abroad. A number of chaplains, both SBCs and PBCs, said they were retired teachers. As one SBC asserted confidently:

> "I attended a few courses to help me in my work as chaplain and they helped me enormously. I'm not a trained chaplain as such, but I have the 'Diploma in Pastoral Care' from Marino. That course was really excellent. I also did a very good course in youth ministry in the U.S. and I have certification in that. So, ... I feel quite well qualified to be a chaplain" (Interviewee no. 10).

Evidence in Tables F.13 and F.14, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 325, points to the fact that all SBCs hold some qualification relevant to the pastoral and/or spiritual care of young people. By contrast, 57.1% of PBCs are without such qualification.

7.6 Chaplains' Views on Chaplaincy Training

On the whole, there was much criticism of the training course in Mater Dei Institute. Most chaplains who had attended this course expressed disappointment with it or had "strong reservations about it" (Participant in Focus Group 4), finding much of it unsatisfactory and parts of it wholly unsatisfactory. They said that it left them insufficiently equipped to deal with the practicalities and the problems which are encountered daily in schools. A comment passed was,

> "It was too theoretical. We talked mostly about hypothetical situations rather than real life experiences such as you encounter every day in school. It would have been more helpful to discuss real problems" (Participant in Focus Group 2).

It was described as being an incomplete preparation for life as a school chaplain. A number of chaplains said they thought the training in counselling skills was "very poor" (Participants in Focus Group 3). It was described as "the weakest area of the course ... very weak indeed." (Interviewee no. 14). One chaplain said that it was too loosely structured altogether with too few practical guidelines given as to how to deal with adolescents experiencing personal and developmental difficulties. She was also of the opinion that students on the chaplaincy training course in Mater Dei were not well-informed about the use of referral, and especially about when and how to go about it. Consequently, referral sometimes was resorted to unnecessarily, inappropriately or under the

wrong circumstances. She (the chaplain) gave an example from her own experience of dealing with a female student who had a serious personal difficulty and was a suffering from bulimia. The student's story alarmed her so much that she reacted too quickly and without proper procedure. She immediately rang the local health board without the girl's consent or that of her parents. The ensuing enquiry was distressing for the girl and for her family and very embarrassing for the chaplain herself. This chaplain commented:

> When I heard this girl's story I panicked. I acted far too hastily and caused a lot of unnecessary bother. I feel that had I been better informed on the training course I would have known to have taken my time and done things differently. However, it was a lesson I'll never forget. I won't make that mistake again. (Interviewee no. 12).

Other chaplains also referred to the course in general as 'too loose', 'inadequate', 'incomplete', 'disappointing', 'not structured enough', 'unsatisfactory' and 'not conducted according to the prospectus'. One of these chaplains said that, having enrolled on the course a couple of years ago, his first reaction was that of disappointment. According to the prospectus lectures were to have been from six o'clock to nine o'clock in the evening, with a short break half way through. On arrival he found was that lectures had been rescheduled without notice and were to take place from six thirty to nine o'clock. He also said that the break lasted each evening for half an hour, reducing the time scale on the prospectus from almost three hours per evening to two. In

his words, "I think this is sloppy organisation showing a lack of commitment to standards from the start ... and the content of the course also reflected this" (Participant in Focus Group 2).

The PBCs who attended a training course in Mater Dei Institute said that it was more or less adequate for their needs. The following statement typified their views:

> "Well, the training course, for what it was, was OK for me. I don't think I was deprived of the knowledge that I need to do the job that I do, since I can't spend that much time in school anyhow" (Participant in focus group 4).

This seems to be an indictment of the course since its content facilitated only those with a minimal contact with school life and engaged in small amounts of chaplaincy work. It does not seem to meet the needs of chaplains who lead a full professional life in school and who have a wider spectrum of association with students and other members of the school community.

7.7 In-Service for School Chaplains

All SBCs interviewed said they had attended at least one in-service course and found it to be of benefit to their work. Most had attended two or more and they favoured the provision of more and regular in-service training for chaplains. At present, they said, there are a number of in-service courses run, but on an infrequent

and irregular basis. They attested that those they had attended were both helpful and inspirational. It was the prevailing view that these courses are conducted mostly by the Association of School Chaplains, of which most of the SBCs were members. Most PBCs, on the other hand, did not have the experience of in-service and many said they were unaware of the existence of either the Association of School Chaplains or of any in-service courses for school chaplains.

The value of training courses, further education and in-service courses was commented upon. SBCs attended courses in pastoral care and in youth ministry from time to time. Some attended such courses not only in Ireland but also in the United States. In the words of one SBC, "I found those courses extremely good. They helped me to find ideas and ways of dealing with young people. As a result, I feel I am much more effective in my mission. They also increased my sense of competence as a chaplain" (Participant in Focus Group 4).

Table F.15 and F.16, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 326, disclose the number of SBCs and PBCs who attended in-service courses. A perusal of Table F.15 reveals that 19 (73.1%) of the SBCs and only 7 (20.%) of the PBCs attended between 1 and 4 in-service courses altogether. Table F.16 shows that only 5 (19.2%) of the SBCs and 28 (80%) of the PBCs did not avail of any in-service courses at all.

7.8 Chaplains' Sense of Competence

SBCs, on the whole, said they had a quite a good sense of competence. This was attributed to a number of factors:

* their years and long hours of experience in schools and the wisdom derived from this;
* skills acquired through courses in pastoral care, youth ministry and/or teaching practice;
* training in chaplaincy skills on courses abroad;
* the renewal of skills through in-service; and
* their own reading and prayer.

It should be noted that it was not attributed to any significant degree to the main chaplaincy training course attended in Dublin.

In contrast, most PBCs expressed a sense of competence to a far lesser degree. This was attributed to a variety of causes:

* lack of training in chaplaincy skills;
* lack of knowledge of pastoral care or ministry among school going young people;
* little or no attendance at in-service courses;
* scant and irregular time spent at school among students;
* not knowing the staff or the students of the school very well; and
* lack of knowledge of the environment or the routine life of the school itself.

Tables F.17 and F.18, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 327, show a significant difference between SBCs and PBCs in portraying their levels of feeling competent as chaplains. The chi-square value of Table F.16 shows that there is a

significant difference here. As seen from Table F.18, which is derived from Table F.17, more than 84% of SBCs feel at least 'competent' as opposed to less than 35% of PBCs. In contrast to this, over 65% of PBCs feel less than competent as chaplains while only 15.4% of SBCs feel so.

7.9 Remuneration

All focus group members and interviewees were unanimous in their view of the matter of financial remuneration for their work as school chaplains. Most asserted that, in terms of current public demand for adequate income, their remuneration for chaplaincy work was "utterly derisory if you were to regard it as a salary" (Interviewee no. 15). However, they also asserted that financial reward was not their prime concern under their present circumstances. As one SBC put it,

> "It would be unrealistic to expect anyone, who is not in religious life, to work for the money I receive. I work, as a member of my community, for the love of Jesus Christ and for the love of my faith. However, given my circumstances, as a member of an order, I have to say that I consider the money to be adequate for my needs" (Participant in Focus Group 1).

For members of religious orders whose communities support them, remuneration is, at best, adequate and at worst, very inadequate. PBCs are mostly in receipt of either very inadequate remuneration or none at all for this work. In a few cases the school gives an honorarium of between

two and three hundred pounds annually to the chaplain. In a very small number of cases the school makes a payment directly to the religious order in question for the chaplain's services.

Views were put forward about the fact that such payment terms could succeed only under conditions where clergy and/or members of religious orders were willing to work in a truly vocational sense without regard for realistic payment. Opinions were also expressed about the way in which remuneration must change if lay people are to take up future chaplaincy positions in secondary schools. These views accord with those given later in Chapter 13, 'Chaplains' Perceptions for the need for Chaplaincy in Schools and their Vision for the Future', Vol. 2, page 66 to 91.

Table F.19, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 328, illustrates the remuneration levels of SBCs and PBCs. It can be seen that just over a third, 38.5% of SBCs consider remuneration to be adequate and the remaining 61.5% are in receipt of either sparse financial reward or none. 25.7% of PBCs assessed their payment as adequate. However, the most obvious distinction between SBCs and PBCs in this table is that 68.6% of PBCs are in receipt of no payment as opposed to 34.6% of SBCs.

7.10 Functions of School Chaplains

Discussions revealed that the functions of chaplaincy in schools were many and varied. Functions performed by SBCs, differed greatly from those performed by PBCs. Ordained chaplains tended to have the role of celebrating Mass in the school. SBCs tended to do this on either a daily or fairly frequent basis, while PBCs did so far less often. Priest chaplains also provide the sacrament of reconciliation for both staff and students approximately once a term. Those not ordained arrange for this to be done by a visiting priest, also once a term.

7.10.1 Attending RE Classes:

Attending religious education (RE) classes to talk to students tended to be an activity carried out by most chaplains occasionally, but particularly by part-time priest chaplains who visit the schools either on a regular basis or when time permits. These PBCs explained that this is the easiest way in which they can meet students. However, a difficulty arose for many who were very busy with other parish duties and were not familiar with the school time-table. Poor liaison with the school and time management was a problem. They found, at times, that on their visit to the school there was no religious education class in session.

Priests also stated that one of their functions as chaplains was to be resource persons for religious education teachers and catechists in theological matters. They felt that it was important that teachers of religious education should receive theological guidance at times. Non-ordained chaplains did not make this claim. However, all chaplains saw themselves as givers of guidance to some extent in the preparation of liturgical celebrations, both sacramental and non-sacramental, in schools.

7.10.2 Spiritual Life of the School:

A crucial function, in the eyes of SBCs, is the promotion and maintenance of the spiritual life of the school in a Christian context. In discussions on how this is achieved, it was stated that it is attained by a combination of factors. As one SBC stated,

> "The ethos of the school ensures that the spirit of Christ permeates the whole fabric of the school. The liturgical celebrations and use of appropriate symbols at Advent, Christmas and Easter, the Mass, the use of the oratory, the practice of prayer, the constant, open concern for the pastoral needs of students and staff all combine to build the spiritual life of the school" (Interviewee no. 16).

In the words of another, "A chaplain is engaged very much in the 'spiritual works of mercy' in the school. This does two things. It helps the growth of spirituality in others and it also increases one's own spirituality" (Participant in Focus Group 2). In connection with this aim to enhance the spiritual life of the school, SBCs thought it was necessary for them to provide suitable

resources for holding liturgical and prayer services in the school. They also organise or help to organise retreats for students annually. As one described it, "The annual retreat is so important. It is the spiritual fillip that helps us to focus in depth once a year on what life means" (Interviewee no. 10).

SBCs stated that a central function of theirs was to develop and encourage pastoral care programmes in their schools. Most chaplains who did this did so in partnership with the principal and other staff and the chaplain acted as co-ordinator. However, in a very small number of cases, the chaplain alone was left to undertake these duties. Most PBCs said they were not in a position to engaged in pastoral care programmes at all.

7.10.3 Staff Contact:

Contact and interaction with teachers in the school, and especially in the staff room was considered to be important to the work of a chaplain. SBCs had the benefit of meeting staff daily and regularly both inside and outside the staff-room. However, most PBCs did not. The most they could achieve by way of contact with staff was by visiting the staff-room and meeting the teachers present at the time. However, most PBCs said they made it a point to drop in to the staff-room when possible. As one said, "Although I seem to talk to the same people every time, I think it is important to make the effort.

Otherwise, they might not know I exist" (Interviewee no. 4).

7.10.4 Parish Links:

Most PBCs tried to establish links between the school and the local parish. Mostly priests, these PBCs served in the local parish mainly, and regarded the forging of a liaison between school and parish as part of their chaplaincy function. However, SBCs held in the main that, although links with the local parish might be desirable, it was not essential to their work as chaplains. In many cases, they said that many of the student and staff population did not reside in the parish anyhow, and that establishing such links could be unproductive.

7.10.5 Pastoral Counselling:

Pastoral counselling of students was a matter which SBCs dealt with to a considerable extent. It became clear throughout discussions and interviews that SBCs are called upon frequently to offer pastoral counselling to students or to make arrangement for them to avail of professional counselling. This was regarded as one of the chaplain's chief functions and one which arose very often in focus group discussions and in individual interviews. When asked if the schools' career guidance counsellors dealt with these matters adequately, it was the view of the

majority that, in their experience, these teachers were already busy with other areas, especially with career guidance aspect of their role, and that they did not always have sufficient time to devote to student counselling. In a small number of cases chaplains were critical of the interest which career guidance counsellors showed in students. They said they found them to be either selective in whom they would counsel, or simply not inclined to counsel at all. It must be emphasised, however, that most chaplains found career guidance teachers to be conscientious, caring and professional. In the opinion of one interviewee,

> "The careers' counsellor spends all his time on filling forms and talking about career choices. He simply has no time for counselling. He just won't do it. Youngsters know they're wasting their time going to him, so they won't go near him with their problems" (Interviewee no. 1).

Any shortcoming in the area of counselling was seen to be the result of lack of time in a busy schedule. In most cases, PBCs did not deal with counselling very much, either directly or indirectly. In a number of cases they said they did not know whether their schools had career guidance counsellors or not.

7.10.6 Death and Bereavement:

All SBCs said they would be aware of the needs of students in times of bereavement and that they would always make a special effort to meet these needs. There was much a chaplain could do in such situations, such as

visit the home, arrange a support group for the student in school, hold a special service in the school to pray for the deceased and their families. This was held to be a very important function at such times. In most schools, it would occur several times a year that a student would suffer the loss of a parent, near relative or close friend either through illness, fatal accident or suicide. Such students needed special support for a long time afterwards and SBCs, in particular, considered the giving of such support as an serious chaplaincy function. As one SBC expressed,

> "One of our students took his own life earlier this year. His two brothers, who are still in the school, and his friends and classmates were devastated. I think it was important to hold a special Mass in the school, just to commemorate his life and passing, with his parents, family and friends. His family appreciated it ... We also held several gatherings of the boy's class, friends and brothers, after that, just to pray a little and talk about our loss" (Interviewee no. 4).

Both SBCs and PBCs thought such ceremonies were important following a bereavement, but only SBCs are really in a position to carry them through consistently. Giving support in the face of other dilemmas encountered by students was also regarded as being a chaplaincy function, such as marital breakdown of parents, difficulties with teachers, peers and bullying, and difficulties with the opposite sex.

7.10.7 Home and Hospital Visitation:

The view was expressed by many SBCs that visitation of students who are ill at home or are hospitalised is considered to be an important chaplaincy function. It is part of the way in which chaplains can show both a pastoral and personal interest in the young people in their care. In conjunction with this, they try to encourage students to communicate with their absent friends and they bring their cards or letters to the one who is ill. Again, this was perceived to be chiefly a function of SBCs but a number of PBCs also saw it as important for them.

7.10.8 Charity Fund-Raising:

Leading or helping to organise fund-raising events with students in support of various charities is another function of the school chaplain. In the words of one SBC, "These are the corporal works of mercy. They are important too, as well as the spiritual works of mercy" (Participant in Focus Group 2). SBCs saw it as their duty to organise students, with parental consent, and engage with them during the annual Concern fast. Being an organiser in the school's Telethon fund-raising event for Children in Need also gave scope for positive leadership. Chaplains become involved with students in charity fund-raising events to alleviate hardship overseas caused by war or famine. They also organise students to assist with local fund-raising in aid of hospitals, hospices, the care

of the elderly, and other schemes to help those in need. It was clear that the more time-consuming these fund-raising events were the more they were the province of SBCs. PBCs occasionally engaged in such activity, but to a much lesser extent.

7.10.9 School Functions:

SBCs said they thought it important to attend school functions such as musicals, plays, evenings for parents, sports' days and such. SBCs said they attended these as a matter of course, as members of staff. However, to do so was more difficult for PBCs. They had to make special efforts to fit school events into busy schedules. In many instances, parish priests and curates had to make last minute cancellations in order to meet other calls on their time. A PBC put it this way:

> "A priest in a parish, especially today, is on call twenty four hours. You could be called upon to visit the sick or dying, receive a funeral or attend a meeting. Then you often have to send your excuses to the school. That's not very satisfactory, is it?" (Interviewee no. 17).

Tables F.20, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 328, shows that there is moderate agreement among ordained SBCs that it is their function to celebrate Mass daily in the school, while PBCs do not see this as their function. PBCs feel more strongly than SBCs that it is their function to celebrate Mass periodically in the school. On the point of providing the sacrament of reconciliation for

staff and students, SBCs agree more than PBCs that this is their function while PBCs do not.

In Table F.21, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 329, responses to the rest of Question 23 show that SBCs consistently score higher than PBCs on most stated functions. However, there is a marked difference between SBCs and PBCs on one point. In Question 23h, SBCs, scoring 4.54, say that it is their function to promote the spiritual life of the school while PBCs disagreed with this statement, scoring an average of 1.82. In two instances, Question 23f and Question 23m, PBCs score higher, indicating that they view the two functions of 'being resource persons for catechists and RE teachers' and 'developing links with the local parish and the wider community' as being important in their work as school chaplains. In contrast, SBCs do not embrace these as functions of chaplaincy.

7.11 Perceived Responses of Students and Staff to the Work of School Chaplains

Discussions and interviews revealed that the responses of students and staff to the work of school chaplains varied considerably. In particular, differences were recorded between the accounts of SBCs and PBCs.

7.11.1 Mass, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Liturgies :

The question of whether Mass was well attended when celebrated in the school elicited the general view of SBCs that is is, and of PBCs that it is not. Exceptions to this general phenomenon occur on specific occasions, such as at the beginning of school year, when a Mass is held during class time and classes are obliged to attend under the supervision of staff.

Likewise, all chaplains were of the view that attendance at the sacrament of reconciliation is very poor. Relatively few students take the opportunity to avail of this sacrament when it is provided in schools. It was widely held that staff members hardly ever did so in schools. As one chaplain expressed, "Confession [the sacrament of reconciliation] as we know it, is dead" (Interviewee no. 7).

Levels of attendance at liturgies and prayer services, arranged by chaplains, were stated to vary. The consensus was that, in common with Mass, these drew very large attendance when held on a whole school basis combined with the suspension of class. Otherwise SBCs asserted that they were "just about reasonable well attended ... by a dedicated, enthusiastic core of students who come along regularly. " (Participant in Focus Group 2). However, the small groups often tended to grow in the course of the year as more students became attracted. In contrast, PBCs were of the view that they are poorly

attended. Both SBCs and PBCs agreed that, if services were held for a particular purpose, such as the death of a student, a much larger attendance could be expected. On the other hand, however, PBCs held that services held occasionally and for no special reason were "usually attended only by a small core of students who would come along anyhow because of a home based commitment to the faith" (Participant in Focus Group 4). It was stated by a PBC that "about ten per cent of students come to the school oratory for prayer when that opportunity is presented to them" (Interviewee no. 12).

SBCs maintained that, in their view, both teacher attendance and teacher participation at prayer services were reasonably satisfactory and enthusiastic. On the other hand, the view of PBCs in general was that few teachers came to such services. "When it comes to prayer services in the school, indifference is the norm among teachers. They welcome a prayer service organised for the kids so that they can take the time off for coffee or a chat in the staff room" (Interviewee no. 9). They said that religious education teachers or members of the religious community might participate, but the general body of staff show little interest.

7.11.2 Helping with Problems:

Whether members of staff discuss their problems with chaplains was also a matter which divided SBCs from PBCs. Many SBCs asserted that they frequently do, but

PBCs said that this rarely happened in their case. The question of whether students discuss their problems with chaplains was reviewed in depth. Again, this was largely within the domain of the SBCs. It was agreed that some students do, although the extent could be difficult to assess. In one focus group this point was made by an SBC:

> "I know that some students come to me with their problems, and some of those problems are serious. But what I can't assess is whether there are students there who bottle up their problems and won't discuss them with me or with anybody. I don't think any one could assess or measure that. However, if I can help with solving anyone's difficulty, I think my work is worthwhile. (Participant in Focus Group 4).

Most chaplains said that of the students who did discuss problems with them, the majority returned more than once to talk about their difficulties and their progress in finding a solution.

In quite a number of cases SBCs recorded that students sometimes asked the chaplain to pray with them. It was stated that such students usually had experienced trauma. One SBC chaplain described such an incident:

> "This is reasonably common. A young lad recently came in. He's fifteen and he had two friends with him. His mother had died. They asked me to pray with them for her soul. I think it gave them solace to sit here in the candlelit quietness of this room and experience companionship in prayer. So we prayed together for his mother and for his family. It's not unusual for youngsters to come in here like that. They know they're welcome and they come ... (and in a lighter vein) ... It's better than drowning their sorrows in a pub! (Interviewee no. 10).

Some students were said to seek alleviation for their difficulty through prayer, in the company of the chaplain,

and in the quiet candlelit ambience of his or her room or in the oratory.

7.11.3 Attitude of Principals:

On being asked if school principals are enthusiastic about chaplaincy work, there were mixed views. In the case of SBCs it was reported that some principals are generally interested in their work, enquired about it regularly and offered any help which they could give. PBCs, with a few exceptions, were of the view that in many cases principals were not especially interested or enthusiastic about their work in the school. As one stated, "I feel I'm left pretty much to my own devices. I see the principal occasionally, but that's about it. What I do after that is my own business" (Interviewee no. 6).

7.11.4 Pastoral Care Structures:

It was stated that only SBCs are in a position to set up pastoral care structures in schools. Several SBCs in the focus group discussions and in interviews said they tried to do this. Two of these stated that their projects were welcomed eagerly and followed up by other members of staff with the support of the principal. The others said that attempts on their part to initiate pastoral care structures in their schools were received with little or no enthusiasm by members of staff. However, they were encouraged by the responses of students. Efforts to

engage students in the pastoral care of other students were mostly taken up with interest. A typical example is the setting up of a 'Cairdeas Group' from volunteer fifth year students to help with the induction of first year students into the school. While the chaplain acts as coordinator of the 'Cairdeas Group' each member takes charge of a small number of first years and offers guidance to them on how to manage the transition from primary to secondary school. Several SBCs have tried this in their schools and said they thought the 'scheme' was very helpful to first year students. Other pastoral schemes which SBCs have set up in their schools include anti-bullying and anti-drugs campaigns. These were conducted in various ways. Some were run on similar lines to the Cairdeas Groups, making use of volunteers from the senior classes to give guidance and assistance to juniors. Others were set up as discussion groups to explore ways in which to combat bullying and drug abuse among students. The majority of SBCs found that these pastoral schemes were embraced enthusiastically by students. They also thought that they were very beneficial as pastoral care measures.

7.11.5 Table F.22:

Table F.22, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 330, illustrates, with one exception that SBCs consistently score higher than PBCs. Although both agree that attendance at the Sacrament of Reconciliation is poor

(question 24b), PBCs are of that opinion more strongly. Two other differences are interesting. SBCs had a very high average score on both questions 24h and 24i, as opposed to negative scores on the part of PBCs, highlighting that both staff and students discuss problems with SBCs and not with PBCs. Both categories of chaplain scored negatively on Question 24 m, stating that pastoral care structures initiated by them are not welcomed by teachers. However, SBCs were nearly neutral on this point while the scores of PBCs were very low, indicating that PBCs may find it difficult to promote pastoral care through teachers.

7.12 Chaplains' Sense of Belonging and Sense of Influence in the School

It became very clear during focus group discussions and throughout interviews that the SBCs and PBCs differ greatly in their sense of belonging in the school. SBCs have daily contact with both staff and students and thus, can get to know them, and work more closely with them. They are in a position to feel they are part of the staff of the school as opposed to PBCs who can only visit the school, usually on an irregular basis. SBCs do not have the added pressures of other commitments such as parish work or lengthy teaching duties. As part of the staff they come to know the school better, its ethos and climate and its daily routine.

SBCs also have more frequent contact with the principal, which allows them to discuss their work and their difficulties with him or her. Some also have their own designated room or physical area in the school, which is usually close to the oratory or chapel. Those who have, asserted that this was important as they were often given charge of the chapel or oratory, and they needed to spend time there preparing it for services and exercising a degree of supervision when it was in use by students.

Familiarity with the school time-table is largely enjoyed by SBCs. Some PBCs are given a copy of the time-table, on request, at the beginning of the school year as it is important for them to know when religious education classes are in session. In some cases, during the visit of a PBC, students may be given the opportunity to avail of extra-curricular activities organised by the chaplain and involving prayer, meditation or discussions concerning their spiritual life.

SBCs, in general, said they work closely with the religious education teachers of their schools. Many SBCs also stated that they hold a central role in the pastoral care structure of their school. They are in a position to organise liturgies and prayer services frequently. They usually know the staff very well and they are accessible to teachers whenever the latter should wish to meet them. However, while they often attend staff meetings they feel their power to influence decision making at such meetings is, by and large, restricted. They offered the view that

this is so, mainly, because their field of knowledge is not in the academic domain and, in many schools, academic progress is considered to be more important than the religious and pastoral care of students.

SBCs usually make a point of knowing the students very well and they are easily accessible to them most of the time. They either counsel students frequently or arrange for professional counselling for them when needed. They usually have access to students' records and therefore are in a position to be aware of the difficulties experienced by certain students. They are in a position to attend parent teacher meetings and usually do so, and they can easily contact parents when they perceive the need to do so.

PBCs enjoy this sense of belonging and influence either to a much lesser extent or not at all. They are not members of staff. They do not have the same number of contacts within the school that their full-time counterparts have. They do not have access to school files at all nor do they have a good knowledge of the school. They are not as accessible to the staff or students. They do not attend staff meetings or parent teacher meetings or have contact with parents except, in the case of priests in a local parish, through ordinary parish visitation. Parents living outside the local parish are not contacted by them.

Table F.23, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 331, expresses the sense of belonging to the school by SBCs and PBCs. It

is clear from this Table that SBCs scored very highly on almost all of the questions in this section and that PBCs, in almost all cases, scored an average of less than 3. The only average score on which PBCs were higher stemmed from Question 25d and showed that PBCs, with a score of 5.00, are more engaged in parish work outside the school than are SBCs. On the whole, all of these scores indicate that SBCs have a far greater sense of belonging in their schools than PBCs.

7.13 Problems Presented to Chaplains by Students in Schools

Helping young people to cope with difficulties and personal problems is an extensive part of the daily work of SBCs. During discussions and interviews it became clear that students sought the help of SBCs on a wide variety of problems. Some were more prevalent than others and certain difference were noted between problems presented by boys and those by girls. However, most problems were equally common to both. In many cases chaplains are asked to understand the negative effects which home and personal problems exert on school work and they are then asked to intervene with teachers on the student's behalf.

7.13.1 Home Circumstances:

Students frequently seek the assistance of SBCs to talk about the marital breakdown of their parents. In many cases one parent leaves home. It is usually, though not always, the father. In some instances parents seek legal separation which may involve the sale of the family home and/or the separation of siblings. A situation which can be the lot of student victims of marital discord is described by an SBCs is as follows:

> "It's totally devastating for some kids. The home is in ruins; the parents are using the kids as ammunition against each other in a vicious battle; the teachers are demanding home work and attention in class and the kids are traumatised and bewildered. These kids really need someone with the time to sit down and listen, talk, show interest and, sometimes, pray with them" (Participant in Focus Group 2).

Another problem which young people experience is the effects of unemployment. Serious shortage of money at home may lead students to engage in part-time work. This may involve early morning paper or milk rounds, late hours and/or week-end work in order to supplement the family income. In one girl's school, an SBC recalled that a student was upset by discovering that her mother had turned to prostitution. Some SBCs stated long-term unemployment leaves its mark on certain students. As one related:

> "In some homes there's no experience of work. There's an absence of work ethic. It's sometimes very hard to get kids from these homes to look ahead and plan for a working life. It's as if they have a fear of the unknown. So they're not motivated in school and get into all sorts of trouble. They're not remedial, but they need special attention. They need a change of

outlook ... and that takes time. I try to give them that time" (Interviewee no. 6).

It was expressed by many SBCs that the chaplain may frequently be the only ally which a student can rely upon when in difficulty at school. In such cases the chaplain feels obliged to speak on behalf of such a student to teachers and/or to those in authority such as the principal or vice-principal.

7.13.2 Faith, Spirituality and Personal Difficulties:

Students occasionally seek SBCs' help with difficulties about their faith and spirituality. It was stated that young people are strongly spiritual and are eager to discuss matters of spirituality with the chaplain, but their attitude to the faith is less enthusiastic.

SBCs are presented with problems associated with depression, suicidal intent and self-mutilation are presented by students, but more frequently by girls. Other troubles for which girls sought help are pregnancy and, to a lesser extent, abortion. In the experience of female SBCs some girls sought help with post-abortion difficulties. As expressed by an interviewee:

"A student of sixteen came to me one day, very upset. She told me she had been pregnant and was coerced by her mother to go to England for an abortion. She was very traumatised by the event, but she was afraid to go for counselling because her mother would not allow it. Since I am a trained counsellor I helped in every way I could" (Interviewee no. 17).

Another SBC stated:

> "A girl can be deeply upset by an abortion. The enforced secrecy, the lies used to cover it up, the fear of the stigma, or of anyone finding out is awful for her. To begin with, the pregnancy has to be kept secret. The journey to England has to be kept secret, or explained away with lies. Then she has to deal with strangers, lose her baby, and then she has to face back home. She can't talk about any of this to anyone except by lying to explain her absence. I've dealt, over the years, with just two girls who went through that. And, while I wholly disagree with abortion, I have to be very supportive of the girls themselves and help them in every way possible. (Interviewee no. 21).

Other difficult areas mainly encountered by SBCs relate to school life. Among these are high expectations of teachers, peer pressure and bullying. SBCs are often asked to help students to solve or cope with such problems. Help is sought from PBCs in such matters to a much lesser extent. Students frequently seek help with difficulties at home. Of these the most common is that of stress induced by over-demanding parents with excessively high academic expectations of their children. Some students seek assistance with home problems of coping with physical brutality, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and, to a lesser degree, incest. Since, to date, reporting of abuse is not mandatory, each individual chaplain may exercise discretion in dealing with such a case. Consultation with the principal and the career guidance counsellor in the school in such instances would be the norm. Other home dilemmas involve conflict with parents, usually, about pocket money, choice of friends, pastime venues, discos and times of homecoming. Running away from home occurs occasionally and SBCs, mainly, are called upon

to mediate between student and parents in order to bring about a reconciliation.

Students seek the help of SBCs in talking about their sense of failure with the opposite sex and in expressing their anxiety about the use of alcohol and drugs. A number of SBCs said that the usual way in which these problems is expressed is through the use of an imaginary friend, such as, "Could you tell me how to help my friend whose boyfriend has let her down?" or, "I have a friend who is on drugs. What can I do to help him?" (Participant in Focus Group 1).

7.13.3 Death and Bereavement:

The chaplain is expected to be the chief person to offer help and comfort if the death of a student occurs. Such a death, through illness, is very upsetting for classmates and friends. A death, as a result of either accident or suicide, is always traumatic. This requires particular sensitivity and skill in dealing with students both in groups and individually, and in offering them comfort and reconciling them to an immediate and major loss. More often, however, chaplains are called upon to help students after the death of a close family member or close friend. Such students need special support from both staff and peers. Focus Group discussion and interviews revealed consistent agreement that the SBC is in an ideal position to offer such support. It is done by visiting the family, listening and talking to the student,

going to the oratory or chapel and organising prayer services focused on the needs of the bereaved. It was stated that such occasions are best served by involving the student's peers and family and offering light refreshments. Informal gatherings may also be arranged for all bereaved students, at appropriate times, in order to remember their deceased loved ones.

7.13.4 Gender Differences in Student Problems:

Tables F.24 and F.25, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 332 and 333, show the problems which boys and girls present to chaplains in their schools. It is evident from Table F.24 that, in dealing with boys, SBCs were more likely to have been appreciated in most areas. However, neither category of chaplain dealt with teenage pregnancy or abortion, and both had low scores in the areas of self-mutilation or suicide, brutality in the home and incest, which suggests one of two situations: either these problems do not occur, or boys do not often approach chaplains with such problems.

In Table F.25 it is manifest that, when dealing with girls, SBCs score consistently higher than PBCs in all areas. By comparing Table F.24 with F.25, it is also evident that some problems are dealt with more so with girls than with boys. These include depression, self-mutilation and suicidal intent, teenage pregnancy,

abortion, sex-abuse, incest, brutality and other forms of abuse in the home.

7.14 Areas of Stress for School Chaplains

It was posed that there are a number of areas in chaplaincy which cause stress. Because it is impossible to foresee the circumstances that will arise on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, they cannot plan their work satisfactorily, because of the unpredictable nature of the chaplain's day. This is true for both SBCs and PBCs. Parish life is charged with the unpredictable. As one PBCs stated, "If a funeral has to be attended to I can't visit the school although I might have made arrangements to do so. Arrangements often have to be re-scheduled and that causes a certain amount of stress" (Interviewee no. 26).

SBCs differed somewhat with PBCs in their views on how teachers perceive their role in the school. A number of SBCs thought that the indifference of staff members towards their role was stressful. PBCs differed in this view, mainly because they spent far less time on the school premises and, therefore, came into less contact with staff members.

A considerable source of stress for both types of chaplain was the difficulty they experienced in winning support from teachers for their vision for the school and

their vision for chaplaincy in schools in the future. At times they found communication with staff difficult on account of the unreceptive mood of some teachers to the very notion of chaplaincy and to the work of the chaplain. For some SBCs this was a causal factor in another source of stress, a sense of isolation and lack of support on the staff, and particularly so in a minority of cases where the principal is also less than enthusiastic about the chaplain's role in the school.

A sense of isolation and lack of support was also stress inducing for PBCs, but for reasons that differed in kind from those of the SBCs. Many of them asserted that their feeling of isolation in the role of school chaplain, was due not only to lack of support from staff and principals but also to lack of support and interest from the hierarchy and their fellow clergy. As one PBC put it:

> "My experience is that you're handed the job and that's it. When you step into the school, you're on your own. There's no supportive structure from bishop, PP, the school or anywhere. ... you can forget in-service ... you can't take time in this parish to go off on in-service. We're far too busy" (Interviewee no. 12).

Other causes of stress, particularly for many SBCs are the recent scandals relating to clergy and members of religious communities, the excessive care which needs to be exercised when dealing with students on a one to one basis, lack of official recognition from the Department of Education and the discrimination between chaplains in community or comprehensive schools and voluntary secondary

schools. Also, to a lesser extent, lack of recognition on the school timetable causes some stress.

Table F.26, Appendix F, Vol. 2, page 334, demonstrates factors which are stressful to chaplains. SBCs scored positively on all of the questions relating to causes of stress, except that concerning support from the school principal. PBCs scored negatively on all but 4 of these, indicating that the factors which cause them stress are somewhat different from those experienced by SBCs. PBCs indicated that inability to plan work, lack of vision of some teaching staff, isolation and lack of support are their chief causes of stress. Another view asserted by PBCs, mainly, is that attempting to encourage students to participate in prayer groups can sometimes be stressful. It was stated in 43% of cases that, although in the minority, some students do not respond to the chaplain's efforts to involve them in prayer groups and this is, at times, a cause of concern and stress to some PBCs.

52% of PBCs and 34% of SBCs also indicated, in the open question, that stress is induced by frustration or "a general feeling of swimming against the tide" (Questionnaire respondent). In general it can be concluded that the stress levels of SBCs, in the school environment, are considerably higher than those of PBCs.

7.15 Sense of Achievement as School Chaplain

In the focus groups, interviews and in the open question on the questionnaire most chaplains who recorded several areas in which they experienced a sense of achievement were SBCs. PBCs also expressed a sense of achievement as school chaplains, but to a much lesser extent. SBCs asserted that they derived a sense of fulfilment from gaining the confidence and appreciation of staff, students and parents. When staff "confide in me [the chaplain] as one of their own" (Questionnaire respondent no. 48), and students seek out the chaplain to share problems it reinforces the chaplain's sense of being needed. "Knowing that I was there when I was needed gives me a sense of achievement" (Interviewee no. 22). SBCs also asserted that they get positive feedback from past pupils and that

> "indeed past pupils, staff and 'past parents' sometimes come back to me for advice or information, which lets me know that I'm seen as a trusted listener. Past pupils tell me that they remember their chaplaincy experiences in the school. That is positive feedback and very affirming for me. It gives me a wonderful sense of having fulfilled an important role" (Questionnaire respondent no. 59).

Both SBCs and PBCs said that their sense of achievement is enhanced when they are welcomed into students' homes, either by parents or students, or when they are invited to attend a past pupil's wedding or a christening of his or her child.

SBCs derive a sense of achievement from knowing they have served in the building of a community spirit in the school. This is achieved through working as a member of a pastoral team or "working on projects with teacher and class groups... savouring the reward of spending time with groups on trips, activities etc. and, in general, causing good things to happen" (Questionnaire respondent no. 14).

A sense of achievement was also expressed by SBCs who said the were "free to organise counselling and refer families for necessary help". They said they mostly found good back-up services in the local area in the form of the JLO (Junior Liaison Officer) and counselling services. One respondent to the questionnaire wrote:

> "I have a wide experience of drug and alcohol abuse and have been able to get a prevention programme established in liaison with the Gardaí and other experts in the locality for parents and pupils. I found that networking with experts in the area was brought great results which was very rewarding" (Interviewee no. 24).

Replacing sadness with happiness is also rewarding for chaplains. Members of focus groups, interviewees and questionnaire respondents gave the following examples: "seeing a once sad student smiling" and "helping a family after a member's suicide" as acts which give them a sense of fulfilment. They also expressed that building student self-esteem is important to them. One SBCs partly attributed his sense of achievement to

> "creating an atmosphere of trust - what I call the 'trickle down effect' - when students believe that there's a support mechanism for them, they find ways of coping and are grateful to you for listening to

> their concerns. That's part of my feeling of doing well in my chaplaincy" (Questionnaire respondent no. 8).

Another area where chaplains feel they have progressed is in promoting spiritual growth in school. This was typically expressed in these words:

> "deep growth of spirituality in students; seeing students avail of the sacrament of reconciliation; looking at the emergence of Christian leadership among students and witnessing the supportive, enhancing relationships within the faith community in the form of meditation sessions with small groups, arranging retreats and creative, inclusive and participative liturgy in the school" (Interviewee no. 2).

A PBC described his own sense of achievement as "success in innovative ideas like Taize Prayer Group, Guitar Club (as part of contact) and Rock Gospel Concerts in school hours".

It was asserted by SBCs that school chaplaincy is suited to those in religious life at present and gives a sense of achievement in reinforcing "a faith presence in schools at a time when consumerist trends are gaining ground in the lives of young people" (Participant in Focus Group 2) and several SBCs asserted that they felt a sense of achievement in "confronting unjust treatment of individual students by school management and disciplinary system".

SBCs enjoy a sense of achievement in many areas of their work, from "aiding the career counsellor who is already overburdened" (Interviewee no. 29) to "speaking the language of the students and being an 'anam chara' [soul friend] to them" (Questionnaire respondent no. 61).

Many also stated that their sense of achievement was enhanced by a supportive principal who helped them achieve their objectives as chaplains and work fruitfully with the staff, students and parents of the school community.

7.16 Models of School Chaplaincy

Having reviewed the various attitudes, understanding of role, and responses which SBCs conveyed during the focus group discussions and individual interviews, it emerged that these chaplains differed from each other, albeit slightly, in the ways in which they carry out their school ministry. This applied to SBCs only. Equivalent distinctions could not be discerned among PBCs. Although they form a majority of chaplains in voluntary secondary schools, the latter's part-time duties in school are irregular and take up little time. Therefore, they did not appear to yield to categorisation as did the SBCs.

Firstly, an analysis of SBCs revealed that some chaplains differed from others in their preferences in interpersonal relationships and, therefore, in their inclination towards practising the type of professional conduct which tends to lead to the development of such relationships. Some chaplains showed a preference for relating mainly to young people in their work as chaplains while others related to both young people and to adults.

On this basis the SBCs were segregated into Group A and Group B:

Group A: SBCs who Relate mainly to Students;
Group B: SBCs who Relate to both Adults and Students.

Secondly, Group A were then looked at from the point of view of the chaplains' preference of location in which to work with students. It emerged that some members of the group preferred to meet students in their chaplaincy rooms either individually or in small groups while the others did not. The latter members preferred to meet with students in various areas around the school where students congregate outside class times. These two groups of chaplains were given the descriptive names 'host-chaplains' and 'loiterer-chaplains' respectively, for reasons explained in Chapters 8 and 9.

Group B were then looked at to see if chaplains here were further distinguishable from each other within the group. It was apparent that they were. Some members of the group preferred to work almost exclusively within the school while the others strove towards linking the school community with that of the parish, thus working both inside and outside of their schools. These groups of chaplains were then ascribed the descriptive names 'helper-chaplains' and 'community builder-chaplains' respectively, for reasons given in Chapters 10 and 11.

The name given to each of the four models reflect the main trait associated with each model. Figure 7.1 illustrates the determining factors used in the analysis

Focus Groups and Individual Interviews:
Criteria for Assigning SBCs to Models of Chaplaincy

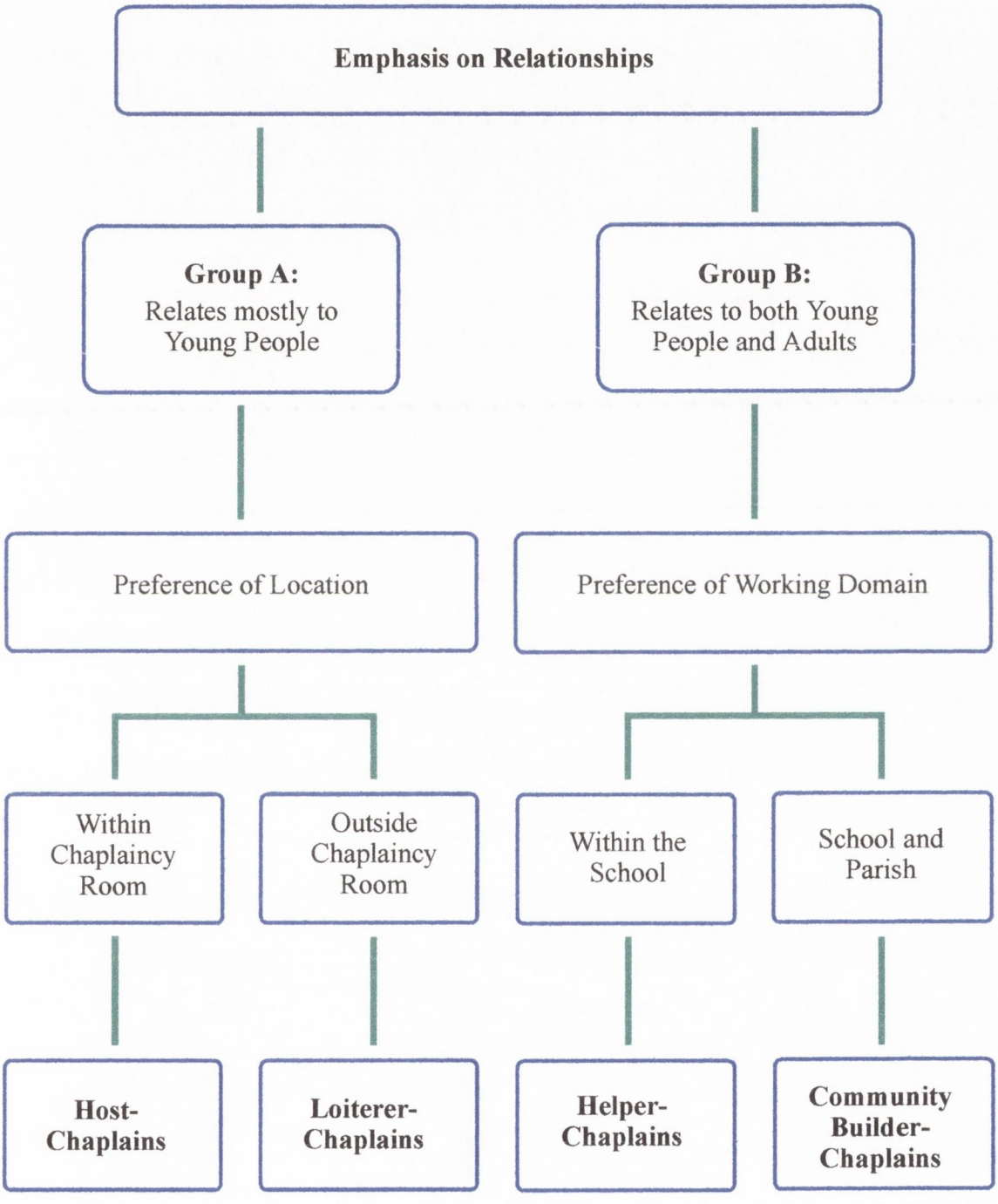


Figure 7.1 : Criteria for Assigning SBCs to Models of Chaplaincy from Focus Groups and Individual Interviews

of the focus groups and individual interviews to divide the SBCs into the four different models of chaplaincy. As all of these SBCs who comprise the four different models of chaplaincy described their objectives and how they spent their day in school, the various patterns of professional conduct and relationships with staff and students which emerged enabled the researcher to compile a descriptive analysis of each style or model of chaplaincy. It is important to emphasise that these divergent styles of chaplaincy are not greatly pronounced, nor do they imply that any chaplain, or group of chaplains, behaves exclusively in one particular fashion. Those chaplains who are associated mainly with one particular style or model of chaplaincy also possess the traits and behaviour patterns of other styles or models, although to a somewhat lesser extent.

Having discerned these models as a result of analysis of focus group discussions and individual interviews, the data from the questionnaire were then scrutinised to establish if they would yield the same models. It transpired that they did. Each of the twenty six respondents who were school based chaplains (SBCs) was then allocated to one of the four models through the following method:

Responses to Question 25(k) (My sense of belonging and sense of influence in the school are that I have daily contact with the RE team) showed that 15 SBCs answered 'yes' in contrast with 11 who did not. As the former (who

answered 'yes') were adjudged to relate to the adults of the school, the latter were considered to relate more to the student population. On that basis Group A was estimated to have 11 members and Group B to have 15 members. However, one of the chaplains in Group B posed a problem. Through his/her qualitative responses in the questionnaire it could be discerned that s/he related more to the students, for example, the following statements were given in response to Question 29 (Factors which give you a sense of achievement as school chaplain):

> I frequently enjoy talking to and praying with either small groups of students or with individuals in my chaplaincy (room) and I get satisfaction from gaining a deeper understanding of their world in that way.
>
> I prefer to work with the students.

In addition to this s/he agreed fully with the statement in Question 22a (Objective is pastoral care of young people) and not with the other statements in that question. S/he also scored negatively on Question 25f (I have frequent contact with the principal) and positively on Question 25g (Having one's own designated area in the school). On these grounds it was decided to transfer this particular chaplain from Group B to Group A and to designate him/her to the model of 'host-chaplain' , thus leaving Group A with 12 members and Group B with 14 (see Table H.48, Appendix H, Vol. 2, page 363).

In relation to Group A, looking at responses to Question 28j (The excessive care which I need to take when talking to young people, especially when on a one-to-one

basis with them), it could be seen that 6 chaplains answered 'yes' to this question and the other 6 did not. On this basis, those who answered 'yes' were designated as 'loiterer-chaplains' and the others as 'host-chaplains'.

Finally, in relation to Group B, responses to Question 28d (I am engaged in parish work outside the school) were examined. It was clear that, of the 14 members of the group, 5 answered 'yes' while the other 9 did not. Therefore, these 5 members of Group B were designated as 'community builder-chaplains' and the other 9 were named 'helper chaplains'.

Figure 7.2 illustrates the process of dividing the SBCs into the four models of chaplaincy in accordance with their questionnaire responses.

7.16.1 Areas of Perceptible Differences between Models:

Although, as already stated, the differences between models could rarely be regarded as great, they were, nevertheless, observable. Recognisable patterns could be distinguished in the following areas:

1. Objectives of Chaplaincy;
2. Functions of Chaplaincy;
3. Perceived Responses of Students and Staff to the Chaplain's Work;
4. Chaplains' Sense of Belonging and Sense of Influence in the School; and
5. Areas of Stress for Chaplains.

Questionnaire:
Criteria for Assigning SBCs to Models of Chaplaincy

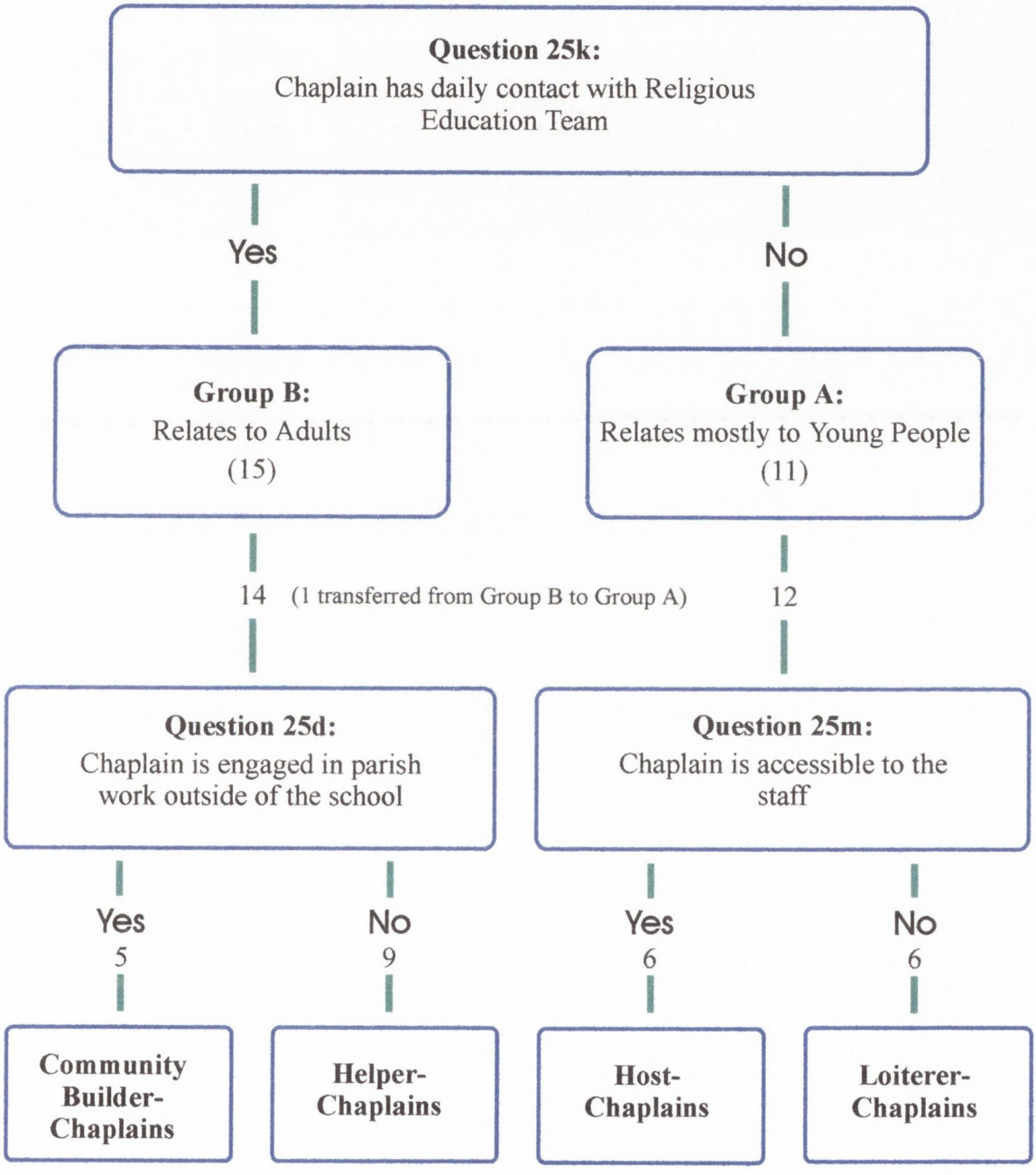


Figure 7.2 : Criteria for Assigning SBCs to Models of Chaplaincy from the Questionnaire

In addition, six other less indicative differences were identified between the models. These are circumstances in which the chaplains had limited influence rather than patterns of professional conduct. In effect they are external to the stated purpose of chaplaincy which either directly impact on the work of chaplains or are tangential to it. Yet, they impact on the milieu within which the chaplains work. They were:

1. Gender;
2. Religious Distinction (ordained, religious order or lay);
3. Accountability of Chaplain Models;
4. Size of School in which Chaplain Models work;
5. Time spent in School by Chaplain Models;
6. Chaplaincy Training;

Differences in these areas are minor and do not impact appreciably on the role of the chaplain. An elucidation of them is presented and described in Chapter 11.

On the other hand, no appreciable difference could be found between models in the following areas:

* Full-time or part-time status in schools;
* Whether in boys, girls or co-educational schools;
* Experience in chaplaincy work;
* The method of appointment as chaplain;
* Willingness to accept the post as chaplain;
* Remuneration;
* Knowledge of adolescents either before or after appointment;
* In-service courses attended;
* Qualifications (in teaching, youth ministry or pastoral care);
* Views on the possibility of chaplaincy work being done as part of parish ministry;

* Views on the possibility of chaplaincy work being done as part of religious education in schools;
* Views on the need to appoint chaplains to secondary schools and the need to be paid by the Department of Education and Science;
* Problems presented by young people;
* Sense of competence;
* Sense of Achievement; and
* Vision for chaplaincy in the future.

The former areas, numbered 1 to 5, in which differences were more evident, will be dealt with in discussing the various models in Chapters 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Summary

This chapter examined the status of chaplains in the voluntary sector and looked at how chaplains contributed to the faith, spiritual and pastoral life of schools on the basis of the amount of time they could devote to chaplaincy duties. It was evident that major differences arose between SBCs and PBCs in a wide variety of areas. It was found that the former were in a position to contribute greatly to the life of the school community while the latter were not. Furthermore, it was possible to distinguish four models of chaplaincy among the SBCs

In the next four chapters the prevalent characteristics and hallmarks which distinguish each of these models will be examined. It is important to stress that, in all instances, the approaches of the different models to school chaplaincy will be reviewed both

qualitatively and quantitatively, as will the various experiences which they encounter in schools. The qualitative review is that derived from the focus group discussions and individual interviews. The quantitative evaluation is supportive of the qualitative and is deduced from the questionnaire.

In each of Chapters 8 to 11, this will be done using the following headings, adapted to each model appropriately:

1. Profile of the Chaplain Model;
2. Objectives of the Chaplain Model;
3. Stated Main Functions of the Chaplain Model;
4. Perceived Responses of Staff and Students to the Work of the Chaplain Model;
5. Chaplain Model's Sense of Belonging and Sense of Influence in the School; and
6. Areas of Stress for the Chaplain Model.

In addition, all quantitative responses to the relevant sections of the questionnaire, pertaining to the four models of chaplain, are shown in Tables H.1 to H.69, Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 339 to 373. The chi-square value of selected tables is also given on the basis of either significant or interesting results.

As well as describing the minor differences, Chapter 12 will examine the main comparative and contrasting factors which were found between the models.

Chapter 8

The Host-Chaplain

CHAPTER 8

THE HOST-CHAPLAIN

The appellation 'host-chaplain' is given to this model of chaplain because of their preference for welcoming students or teachers to their chaplaincy rooms and for the qualities of hospitality and kindness which they impart to their visitors. Host-chaplains feel more 'at home' in the chaplaincy room, the school oratory or chapel rather than in other locations within the school. Therefore, they like to do most of their chaplaincy work there. Many are full-time and have some training in counselling skills. It is not unusual for them to spend a great deal of time in the school, usually five or six hours per day or more. They frequently make themselves available in the school chaplaincy room during lunchtime and after school hours. Consequently, chaplains using this style are available to members of staff and particularly to students who wish to visit them in order to discuss problems, talk about spiritual matters or simply pray. They find themselves working mainly with individuals rather than groups since they are visited

mostly by individual students. However, if small groups present themselves in the chaplaincy room they are also made feel very welcome and catered for in the fullest way possible.

Getting to know and working with individuals is the field in which these chaplains are most comfortable and they feel that they do this particularly well. They often build enduring relationships with a number of teachers and students and they find that those whom they get to know are willing to help when liturgies and prayer services are arranged for larger numbers in the school.

8.1 Profile of the Host-Chaplain

Chaplains who follow this style encourage individuals to visit them. As they find they are more comfortable when talking to either teachers or students individually, they, therefore, tend to devote a generous amount of their time to communicating on a one to one basis. In describing how he works, one host-chaplain said,

> "I tend to spend a lot of time working from my chaplaincy room. Therefore, I have planned the decor of the room carefully because I think it is important that it is a pleasant and peaceful place for receiving either youngsters or teachers when they want to come and visit me" (Interviewee no. 14).

Host-chaplains ensure that the ambience of the chaplaincy room is tranquil, peaceful and welcoming. The use of

subdued lighting enhances the ambience, the room being neither too brightly lit nor too dim. Candles are mindfully placed in various areas of the room, to provide tranquil points of light, the atmosphere of tranquillity being often enhanced by the use of scented candles. In most cases host-chaplains give considerable thought to appropriate furnishing. Comfortable seating is usually around low tables, upon which books, magazines and/or pamphlets are placed for the perusal of students. Reading is assisted by positioning a reading lamp nearby. In order to offer guests a choice of refreshments at any time, tea and coffee making facilities are often placed in a corner of the room. Biscuits may also be provided. Consequently, in an unostentatious manner, it is made abundantly clear that the chaplaincy room is a welcoming haven where students or members of staff may come to reflect, pray, share their thoughts, discuss or seek help for problems.

It is recognised that some students, especially those of a lesser academic disposition, might favour spending their time in the attractive setting of a chaplaincy room instead of the environment of the average classroom. Consequently, host-chaplains tend to be vigilant of this. Therefore, they tend to make arrangements for visitation either with the knowledge and consent of the teachers of the students concerned or, alternatively, outside class time as appropriate.

When the host-chaplain's time is in heavy demand it is necessary to arrange an appointment system during class hours. This can have its drawbacks since students, with pressing problems, who wish to talk to the chaplain may want to do so on the spot and not at a later time. It can also prove awkward since the chaplain must make such appointments personally, not having a secretarial service. A way of dealing with the problem is to issue an appointment slip, signed by the chaplain, with which a student may be excused from class at a particular time. In order to maintain a system of supervision, this slip is then marked with the time of departure from the chaplaincy as the student returns to class, and another appointment slip is issued to the next student in line.

Although this method may overcome the pressure of time and is sometimes employed in the interest of making the chaplaincy system convenient, it has its limitations and is by no means regarded as very effective. Its main disadvantage is that it requires a high degree of tact and discretion from teachers in order to afford privacy to the student. Many students would not want to be seen leaving class for the express purpose of visiting the chaplain. They would usually wish it to be a visit of a private nature. As one host-chaplain stated,

> guaranteeing privacy under such circumstances can prove very difficult at times. Although teachers could want to and promise to be cooperative, in busy moments they can lapse into saying something, albeit innocuous, in front of others, which breaches the student's privacy and that can hurt the student very much. But, it is the best that can be arranged under

> the present circumstances (Participant in Focus Group 2).

Host-chaplains would wish, therefore, for a better system, but, at present, such does not seem to be available to them.

No particular gender pattern emerged among host-chaplains during the discussions and interviews. However, the data gleaned from the questionnaire is shown in Graphs 12.1 and 12.2, Chapter 12, Vol. 2, pages 51 and 54. These show that four respondents are male and priests and two are female and nuns. All host-chaplains have their own designated (physical) area in the school. These data are also numerically presented in Tables G.1, G.2 and G.8, Appendix G, Vol. 2. pages 335 and 338.

8.2 The Objectives of Host-Chaplains

The primary objective expressed by host-chaplains was the pastoral care of students in school. The following statement typified the views of all host-chaplains:

> My first objective as chaplain is to provide a certain stratum of pastoral care for the students. The objective of my presence in the school is to listen to them, hear what they have to say, counsel them when necessary and help them to look at, and understand, the meaning of their life. My objective is the pastoral care of students with a Christian spiritual dimension, bringing the message of the gospels into their world (Interviewee no. 8).

Clearly, therefore, host-chaplains hold it to be their foremost objective to be directly concerned with the welfare of the students. The next most important objective of host-chaplains is the fostering of the ethos of the school. They expressed the view that the spiritual welfare of students was critically determined by the school's Catholic ethos. Therefore, promoting and nurturing that ethos is, in their view, important. One host-chaplain asserted that,

> The Catholic ethos is also vital to the spiritual welfare of our students. I would, therefore, hold the promotion of that ethos to be the second most important objective of my chaplaincy (Participant in Focus Group 3).

In contrast with this, other objectives such as the pastoral care of staff and being the acceptable face of the Roman Catholic church were not regarded as of crucial importance to host-chaplains. As one host-chaplain asserted,

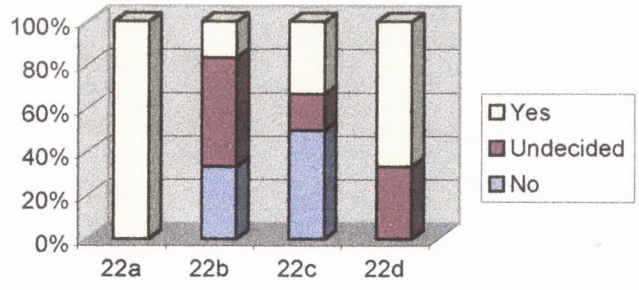
> I do not consider the welfare of teachers to be an objective. I think that's the responsibility of school management. ... Is it my objective to be the acceptable face of the Church? I think not. I represent the Church. That's true enough. But, in doing my work, the Church's image is neither a concern nor an objective. The welfare of students would be uppermost (Interviewee no. 21).

In analysing the answers to the questionnaire, of the twenty six school based chaplains (SBCs), six of them accord with the model of host-chaplain. Graph 8.1, page 314, illustrates the manner in which host-chaplains answered Question 22 which relates to the objectives of school chaplaincy. It is shown that all of them answered

affirmatively to Question 22a, therefore stating that, in their view, the pastoral care of students is a clear objective of their school chaplaincy. They also scored quite highly on Question 22d indicating that they considered the upholding of the Catholic school ethos to be important as an objective. However, it is clear that they were quite negative in their answers to Question 22c, revealing that being the 'acceptable face of the Catholic church' is not deemed to be important as an objective. Neither is the pastoral care of staff considered as an objective, as shown in Question 22c.

Host-chaplains, therefore, avowed that the pastoral care of young people is a matter of prime importance to them. It is more important as an objective of chaplaincy than to promote the Catholic ethos of the school, and far more important than the pastoral care of staff, or to be the "acceptable face of the Catholic Church" in the school.

The Objectives of Host-Chaplains:



Graph 8.1: Questions 22a to 22d N=6

This data is also presented in table form in Appendix H, Tables H.1 to H.4, Vol. 2, pages 339 to 320.

8.3 Stated Main Functions of Host-Chaplains

During the focus group discussions and interviews, most ordained host-chaplains stated that their prevalent functions is that of celebrating Mass in the school periodically but not on a daily basis. Graph 8.2, page 317, supports this view in showing that all ordained host-chaplains gave this as a decided function in their answers to Question 23b (My function is to celebrate Mass periodically in the school). In their answers to Question 23a none stated that it was a function to say Mass daily.

Ordained host-chaplains also said that they administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the school. Graph 8.2 again supports this view in showing that the majority of host-chaplains answered affirmatively to Question 23c (My function is to provide the Sacrament of Reconciliation for staff and students). Most host-chaplains, both ordained and non-ordained, asserted that it is their function to make provision for students and members of staff to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the school from time to time.

Host-chaplains do not usually pay special visits to religious education classes. However, in contrast, the majority view among them is that they should act as

resource persons for catechists and religious education teachers. A majority also give guidance in the preparation of liturgical celebrations, both sacramental and non-sacramental, and most see it as their function to promote and maintain a high profile for the spiritual life of the school.

Most host-chaplains asserted that they provide suitable resources for prayer services and liturgies for students. However, the functions of organising retreats, and visiting the staff room to meet teachers were not stated by a majority. It was contended by many that developing and encouraging pastoral care programmes in the school is not really a function of their chaplaincy although it should be.

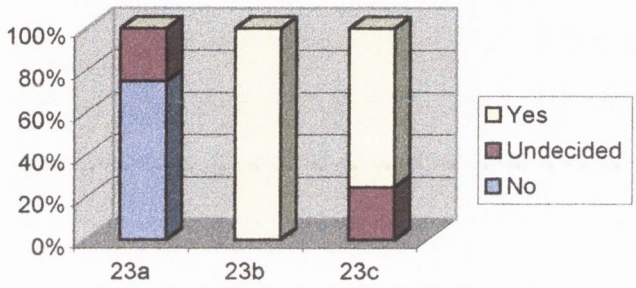
> Helping to develop pastoral care programmes should be am important function of my role, but, it is not, at present anyhow. This is done at staff meetings and such and I'm afraid I'm not part of that picture (Participant in Focus Group 1).

Neither do most host-chaplains develop links with the local parish or the wider community. Counselling students is a function of most host-chaplains and, in common with other models of chaplain, they all help students to receive appropriate counselling when necessary and they are aware of and meet the needs of students in times of bereavement and other personal and family difficulties.

Most host-chaplains do not consider it to be their function to visit students either at home or in hospital. Neither do they, as a rule, view it as their function to give support to charity fund raising by students or attend

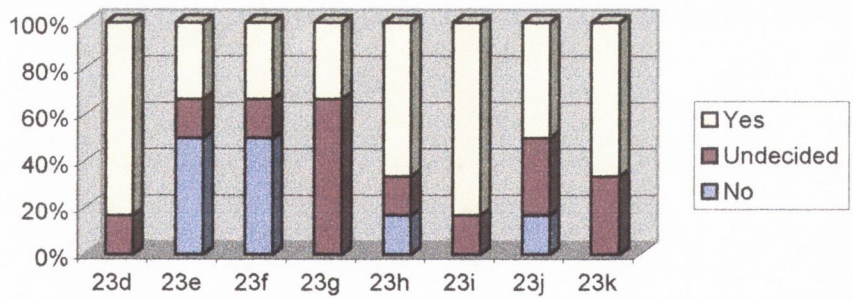
school functions such as musical shows or sporting events. These data, gleaned from members of the focus groups and from individual interviewees, are upheld by Graph 8.2, Graph 8.3, and Graph 8.4, page 318, which illustrate the manner in which chaplains answered Questions 23d to 23s in relation to the functions of chaplaincy.

Functions of Ordained Host-Chaplains

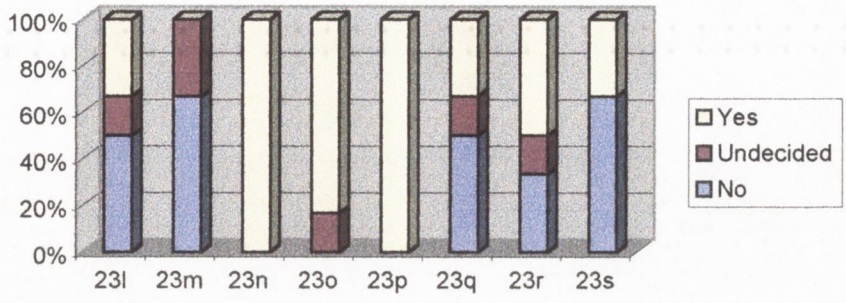


Graph 8.2: Questions 23a to 23c N=4

Functions of <u>all</u> Host-Chaplains



Graph 8.3: Questions 23d to 23k N=6



Graph 8.4: Questions 23l to 23s N=6

This data is also reflected in Appendix H, Tables H.5 to H.23, Vol. 2, pages 341 to 350.

The following points encapsulate the functions and non-functions considered by host-chaplains:

Main Functions of Chaplaincy to which Host-chaplains give priority:

For ordained Host-chaplains:

1 Celebrating Mass periodically in the school (Q. 23b);

For all Host-chaplains:

2 Arranging for the provision of the sacrament of reconciliation for students and staff (Q. 23d);

3 Acting as resource persons for catechists and religious education teachers (Q. 23f);

4 Giving guidance in the preparation of liturgical celebrations, both sacramental and non-sacramental (Q. 23g);

5 Promoting and maintaining a high profile for the spiritual life of the school (Q. 23h);

6 Providing suitable resources for prayer services and liturgies for students (Q. 23i);

7 Counselling students (Q. 23n);

8 Helping students receive appropriate counselling when necessary (Q. 23o);

9 Being aware of and meeting the needs of students in times of bereavement and other personal and family difficulties (Q. 23p).

Functions of Chaplaincy to which Host-chaplains gave least priority:

For ordained Host-chaplains:

1 Celebrating Mass daily in the school (Q. 23a);

For all Host-chaplains:

2 Paying special visits to religious education classes (Q. 23e);

3 Organising retreats (Q. 23j);

4 Developing and encouraging pastoral care programmes in the school (Q. 23k);

5 Visiting the staff room to meet teachers (Q. 23l);

6 Developing links with the local parish and the wider community (Q. 23m);

7 Visiting students at home or in hospital (Q. 23q);

8 Supporting charity fund raising by students (Q. 23r);

9 Attending school functions such as musical shows and sporting events (Q. 23s).

8.4 Perceived Responses of Students and Staff to the Work of Host-Chaplains

Host-chaplains generally find Mass not to be well attended in school, nor is there good response to the provision of the sacrament of reconciliation. Student attendance at school liturgies was stated to be good but, in contrast, teacher participation was held to be poor. Host-chaplains also find that students, but not teachers, participate with enthusiasm in school liturgies.

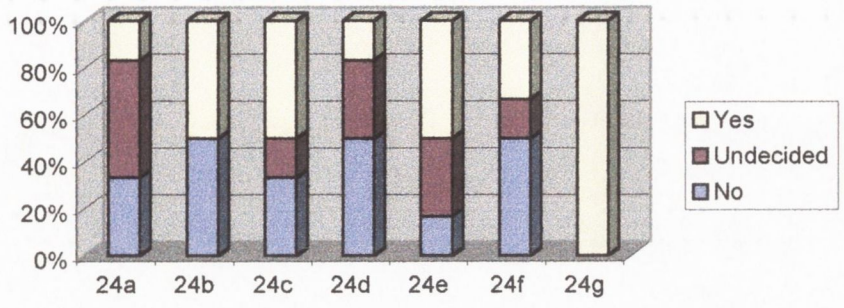
Both students and members of staff discuss their problems with host-chaplains. Students return to discuss and report on progress in problem solving and students sometimes ask the chaplain to join with them in prayer. In the words of one host-chaplain:

> Much of my time is spent helping students to solve personal dilemmas or problems they experience in school ... and they often come back again and again to tell me how they are getting on. I welcome that and encourage it and we often pray together for a lasting solution. Occasionally, teachers will also come to talk about a problem (Participant in Focus Group 4).

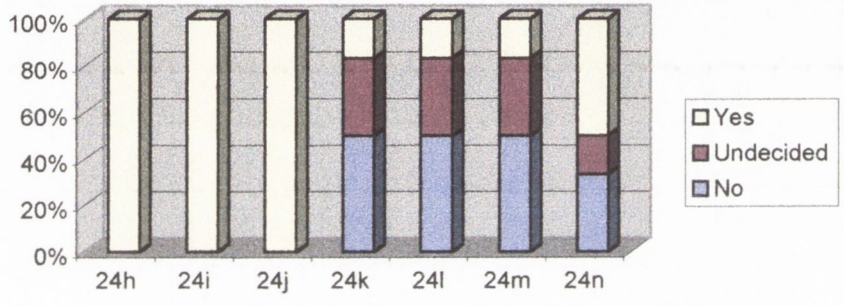
However, host-chaplains said that, in their view, their work does not often meet with enthusiasm from school principals. As one put it, "The principal is largely unaware of the amount of contact I have with the youngsters. He can hardly be enthusiastic about what he doesn't know about" (Interviewee no. 8).

Other negative response experienced by hosts are that pastoral care measures initiated by them are neither welcomed nor subsequently accepted and executed by staff, nor are they pursued with enthusiasm by students. This is supported in Graphs 8.5 and 8.6, page 321, indicating how host-chaplains answered Questions 24a to 24n in the questionnaire regarding the responses of students and staff to their work in school.

Responses of Staff and Students to the Work of Host-Chaplains:



Graph 8.5: Questions 24a to 24g N=6



Graph 8.6: Questions 24h to 24n N=6

This is also depicted in numerical detail in Appendix H, Tables H.24 to H.37, Vol. 2, pages 351 to 357.

The following outlines the positive and negative responses experienced by hosts to their endeavours:

Students' and Staff's Main Positive Responses to Host-chaplains:

---

1 Members of staff members discuss problems with the chaplain (Q. 24g);

2 Individual students discuss problems with the chaplain (Q. 24h);

3 Students return to discuss progress in problem solving (Q. 24i);

4 Students sometimes ask the chaplain to pray with them (Q. 23j).

Students' and Staff's Main Negative Responses to Host-chaplains:

---

1 Mass in school is not well attended (Q. 24a);

2 Poor attendance by teachers at liturgies and prayer services in the school (Q. 24d);

3 Unenthusiastic participation in school liturgies by teachers (Q. 24f);

4 Principals are not enthusiastic about host-chaplains' work (Q. 24k);

5 Pastoral care measures or structures initiated by the chaplain are not welcomed by teachers (Q. 24l);

6 Pastoral care measures or structures initiated by the chaplain are taken up and run by other members of staff (Q. 24m).

8.5 Host-Chaplains' Sense of Belonging and Sense of Influence in the School

Host-chaplains enjoy a sense of belonging and influence in their schools in a number of areas. Most of them asserted that they feel they are members of staff. In the words of one,

> "I am there in the school all day long. I spend most of my time in contact with the youngsters and some of it in contact with teachers, and I deliver what I consider to be a very important service. I am a member of staff" (Interviewee no. 12).

Most host-chaplains have a constant presence in the school. A majority asserted that they spent at least five hours per day on chaplaincy work. Consequently, they have

a good knowledge of the school. All of them have their own chaplaincy room in which they can work during a substantial part of their time. As one declared, "My room is essential to me. I couldn't make myself available to the students in the same way otherwise. It is an ideal place to talk, reflect and pray" (Interviewee no. 23). Host-chaplains are, therefore, accessible to any student or group of students or to members of staff who wish to visit them in their chaplaincy room. Most of them said they also counsel students regularly.

One of the distinguishing features of host-chaplains is that, although they do not come into contact with a large number of students, they become well acquainted with those with whom they do. As some typically attested,

> I have to say that I come in contact with a relatively small percentage of the school's population. However, I get to know these very well. I usually build long-term relationships with them and the spiritual influence is lasting. I know this because they often come back to visit me and they let me know how they're getting on, or they write to me after they have left the school (Participant in Focus Group 2).

> I've got to know few of the teachers really, but I have managed to get to know two or three of them very well. These help me out quite often when I need help and I appreciate that very much. However, I don't feel my influence is that widespread throughout the school (Participant in Focus Group 1).

> "Of course, I think the reality of the way I work is that my influence is not felt that much throughout the whole school, but it is very real and deep among a minority, but that minority is very important to me (Interviewee no. 8).

> My style of ministry is all right in a small school where people get to know me without too much effort on my part. But it would not do at all in a very large

> school. If I were in a much bigger school I wouldn't get to know many of the youngsters at all. That would put my ministry at a disadvantage (Participant in Focus Group 3).
>
> I have to admit I don't contribute very well to community building in school. I'm not a very outgoing person (Interviewee no. 21).

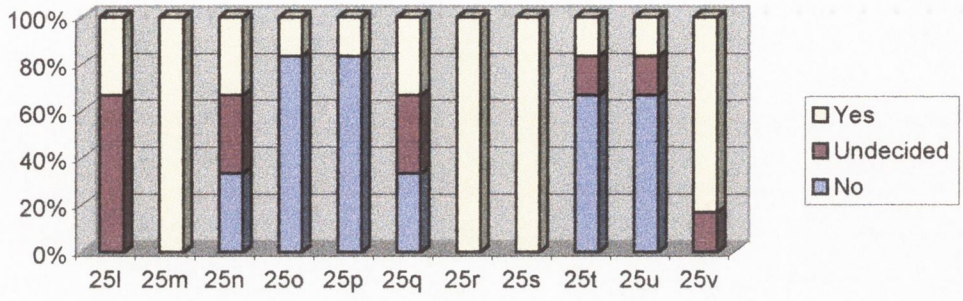
It would appear, therefore, that host-chaplains do not make an impact on a wide range of either students or teachers in their schools, but that they make deep and lasting relationships with those whom they get to know. They also feel that their spiritual influence has the quality of depth rather than breadth in their schools.

Host-chaplains are in a position where they can contact parents, invite them to the school and discuss problems with them concerning their sons or daughters. As two host-chaplains asserted,

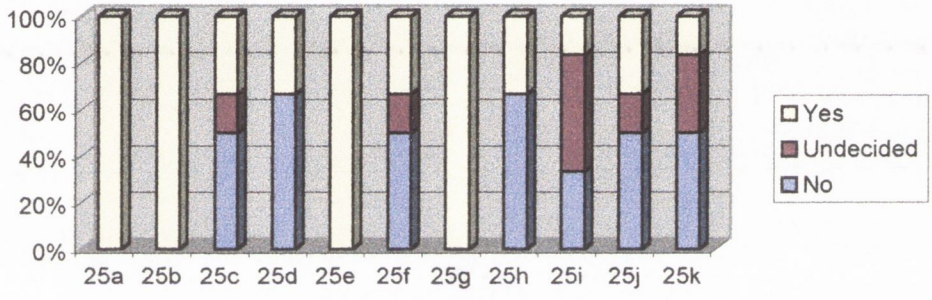
> I can lift the phone and contact a parent at any time. I would do so, on average, about twice a term. However, I would never contact a parent without the knowledge and consent of the student concerned. Otherwise, I would be breaking the youngster's trust (Participant in Focus Group 4).
>
> When I have a youngster in counselling, I think that getting to know the parents and sometimes the rest of the family is very important to the outcome. There are times when I can't do this for different reasons ... but when I can I always do and I invite them to come in to see me (Interviewee no. 17).

In general, host-chaplains said that if circumstances arose in which parents needed to be contacted against a student's wishes, the principal would have to be notified and the matter would then be removed from the chaplain's sphere of duty.

Sense of Belonging and Sense of Influence of Host-Chaplains:



Graph 8.7: Questions 25a to 25k N=6



Graph 8.8: Questions 25l to 25u N=6

Graphs 8.7 and 8.8, support these data, illustrating how host-chaplains answered Question 25 relating to their sense of belonging and sense of influence in the school. They show that the answers in this part of the questionnaire are in accordance with the statements and assertions made during the focus group discussions and individual interviews. Tables H.38 to H.59 in Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 358 to 368, also support this data.

Main Reasons why Host-chaplains feel they have a Sense of Belonging and a Sense of Influence in the School:

1. They are members of staff (Q. 25a);
2. They have a constant presence in the school (Q. 25b);
3. They have a good knowledge of the school (Q. 25e);
4. They have their own (physical) designated area in the school (Q. 25g);
5. They are frequently accessible to the staff (Q. 25m);
6. They are easily accessible to students (Q. 25r);
7. They counsel students (Q. 25s);
8. They can easily contact parents in connection with school matters (Q. 25v).

Main areas in which Host-chaplains do not develop a Sense of Belonging and a Sense of Influence in the School:

1. They do not work closely with career guidance teachers (Q. 25j);
2. They do not work closely with the RE team (Q. 25k);
3. They do not have access to student records (Q. 25t);
4. They do not attend parent/teacher meetings (Q. 25u).

8.6 Areas of Stress for Host-Chaplains

Some situations prove more stressful than others to host-chaplains. Dealing with large numbers of students at one time was one mentioned by many. As already outlined, host-chaplains are more comfortable with individuals and small groups, and therefore, many find large groups difficult to manage. As one host-chaplain indicated,

> The youngsters I deal with are actually quite pleasant but I find dealing with them in large numbers

> intimidating. I enjoy talking to the small groups. However, when I have to organise a whole class or a few classes together for a prayer session, I get help from a few of the teachers (Interviewee no. 23).

Many host-chaplains tend to rely on teachers to assist them when they need to manage large groups of students.

Another area which many host-chaplains find stressful is that concerning their place in the pastoral care structure of the school. Allusions were made by several to their lack of standing in the official pastoral care structure despite the fact that the pastoral care of students is of intense importance to them.

> I would like to have been involved when the pastoral care policy was being formulated and when decisions were taken about pastoral care, and what to do for students in this regard, but I was not even informed, never mind consulted, during the decision making process. Pastoral care is nowadays seen as a matter for teachers. It is seen to be up and running and going well as long as it's integrated into teaching and general classroom practice. But chaplaincy is not really seen as part of the pastoral care system (Participant in Focus Group 3).

This situation is connected with yet another area of stress: the indifference of staff to the work of host-chaplains. Many host-chaplains claim that, because of their predominant way of working, staffs in general can remain unaware of the full nature of the work done in the chaplaincy room, school chapel or oratory. "Staff become aware of my role in the school only when prayer services and Masses are organised on a large scale in the school, and this occurs rather infrequently" (Interviewee no. 12). Another host-chaplain commented, "They [the teachers] see me as pottering about, doing my own thing and trying to

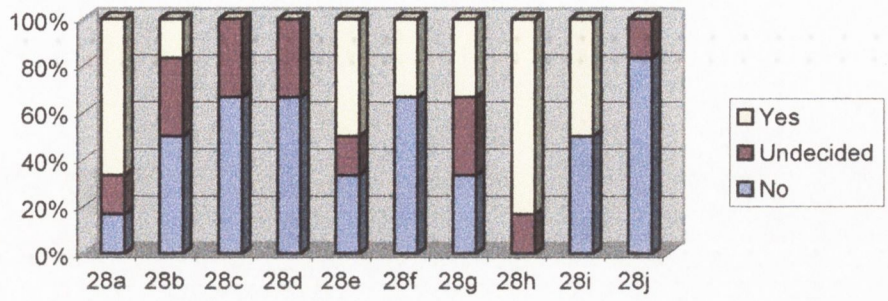
involve kids with religion. As long as I don't interfere with the general run of the school I'm tolerated" (Interviewee no. 12).

Lack of concern shown by school principals to the work of host-chaplains is also, not surprisingly, a cause of stress. Principals are frequently, not only unaware of the full extent of the work of host-chaplains, in some instances they give the impression that they are indifferent to some or all of that work.

> I don't think what I do really matters to him [the principal]. He rarely asks about my work ... no interest really. He just takes it for granted. He gets wildly excited, though, if the lads win a football match. His priorities are not exactly mine ... I try not to let it get me down (Interviewee no. 21).

Host-chaplains, in common with all other models of school chaplain, regard their ministry to be of crucial importance in education and in school life, and just as vital to the holistic development of young people as are other non-curricular pursuits on the school programme. Therefore, they assert that the experience of having their role taken for granted by the principal and/or teaching staff is stressful and, at times, demoralising. Graph 8.9, page 329, indicates the quantitative data gleaned from the questionnaire on areas of stress (Question 28) for host-chaplains. Numerical date in Tables H.60 to H.69, Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 369 to 373 in support of this.

Areas of Stress for Host-Chaplains:



Graph 8.9: Questions 28a to 28j N=6

Main Areas of Stress for Host-chaplains:

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1 Inability to plan work (Q. 28a);

2 Discrimination between chaplains in State schools and secondary schools (Q. 28h).

Areas Causing Least Stress for Host-chaplains:

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1 Indifference of staff member towards role as chaplain (Q. 28b);

2 Hostility of staff members towards role as chaplain (Q. 28c);

3 Lack of vision on behalf of the teaching staff (Q. 28d);

4 The recent scandals relating to clergy and religious personnel (Q. 28f);

5 Care needed when talking to students on a one-to-one basis (Q. 28j).

Summary

The model of host-chaplain became apparent during the focus group discussions and individual interviews. In addition to that the questionnaire data revealed that six chaplains portrayed the main characteristics of this model. However, although it is acknowledged that this number is small, the data derived from the questionnaire, in relation to host-chaplains, supports that from the other two instruments of the research.

To summarise the traits of the model of host-chaplain, it is a style of chaplaincy in which emphasis is given to dealing with individuals and small groups in preference to large groups of students. All host-chaplains possess their own chaplaincy room and most take great care as regards its decor and ambience, making it an attractive venue for students and members of staff to use. Most also invest a great deal of time in their work. Host-chaplains generally admit that, while they are very hospitable to those who visit the chaplaincy room, they are not outgoing in their ways and their influence is confined rather than far-reaching. Since it does not prompt acquaintanceship with many students or teachers, it is possible that this style of chaplaincy would be more effective in smaller school communities rather than in large schools. It is a style of depth rather than breadth of spiritual influence.

The primary objective of host-chaplains is the pastoral care of students and they frequently counsel students. They provide spiritual resources within the school as part of their function. They generally contend that these resources are availed of by students much more so than by staff, and that their interaction with students is much more fruitful and positive than that with the staff. Host-chaplains enjoy a profound sense of belonging in their schools through their constant presence and through having their own chaplaincy rooms. They are accessible to all who wish to avail of their services and they are in a position to get in touch with parents if they so wish.

Unresponsive principals and apathetic staff are commonly experienced by host-chaplains and are a cause of stress. Dealing with large numbers of students at one time is also stressful to such chaplains who are more comfortable with individuals. Reliance on members of staff to help out in such situations is resorted to, which is mostly helpful but may also be stressful, given the apathy of many teachers. Although all of these areas were stated as stressful none of them was strongly emphasised as such.

A simplified résumé of host-chaplains is given in Figure 8.1. In the interest of clarity it presents only the strongly emphasised, i.e. mentioned by every respondent, features of that model as shown in Tables I.1 to I.10, Appendix I, Vol. 2, pages 374 to 382.

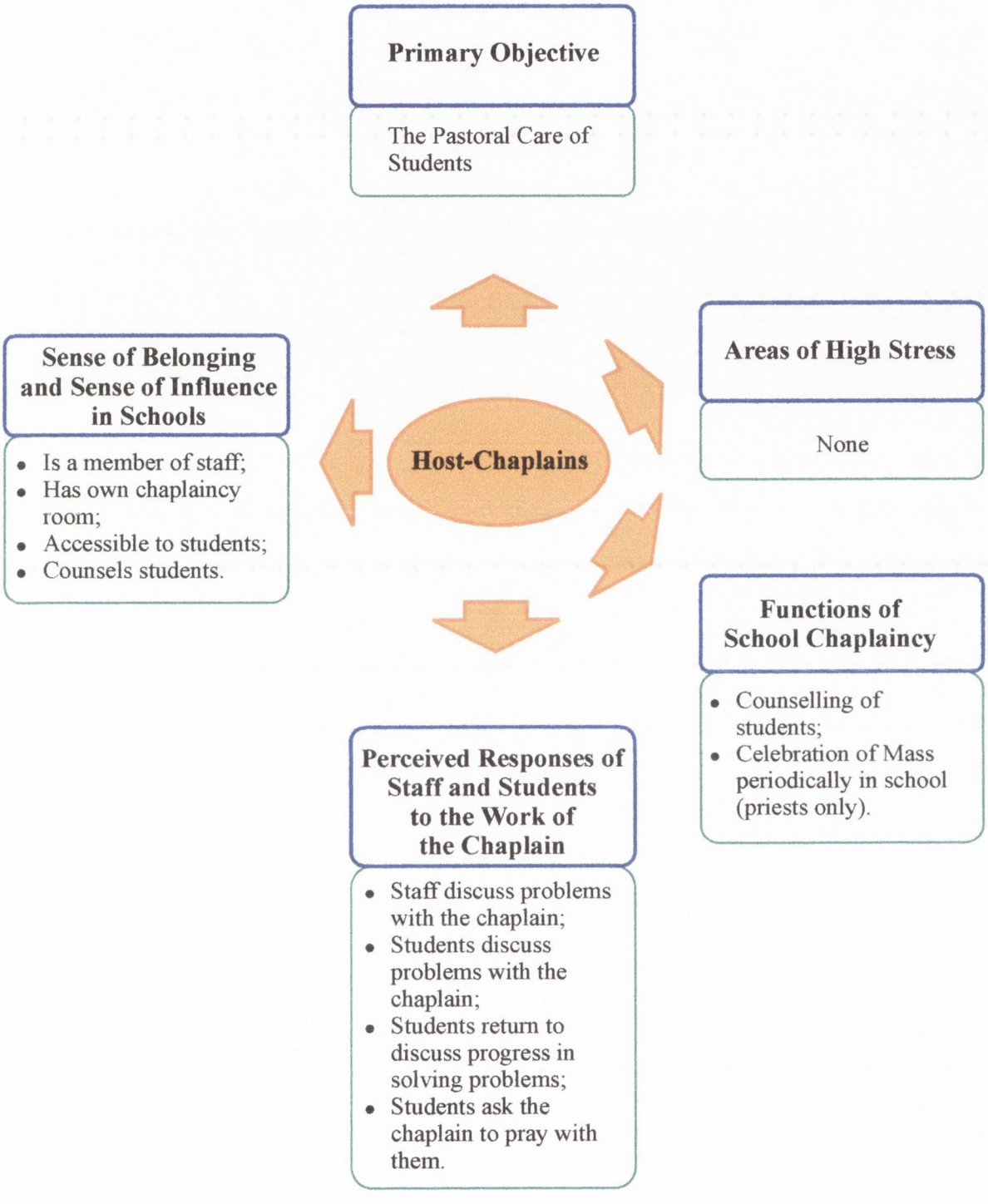


Figure 8.1: Résumé of Host-Chaplains

Chapter 9

The Loiterer-Chaplain

CHAPTER 9

THE LOITERER-CHAPLAIN

Loiterer-chaplains are so called because of their preference for spending more time than others 'out and about' on the school's corridors, open spaces, school grounds and areas within and around the school which students use in order to socialise. The term 'Loiterer', although it appears to be value laden, is derived from these chaplains' self-description of their preferred style of working. The Loiterer-chaplain's purpose is to meet students as often as possible. In the words of one such chaplain:

> I loiter with intent - very specific intent. My intention is to meet students, talk to them and get to know them as well as I can, and I find that by being where the students frequent is the most effective way that I can achieve that (Interviewee no. 9).

Chaplains using the loiterer-chaplain's style also try to remain constantly alert to the needs of students and to observe those needs while present among them on a daily basis. In particular, they observe those students

who are troubled in some way and in need of help. One loiterer-chaplain put it this way:

> Part of my work is to observe youngsters daily and detect those who are in trouble of some kind, perhaps being bullied, having trouble at home or experiencing personal problems of one kind or another. Basically I use three different strategies for this. One is to just watch for the expression and body language of the kids themselves as they walk about their business. In this way you can sometimes see the loner or the kid who is acting out of character, or whatever. Another is to hear what friends and peers have to say about each other. They will often tell you that 'so-and-so' is not himself or that there is something bothering him. And a third useful strategy is to listen to teachers. They will occasionally tell you straight out that a youngster is having problems. However, more often than not, they will complain about him - his homework, absence, attitude, test results, dropping out of activities, general performance so on. I can then take the opportunity to 'run into' this young fellow somewhere and talk to him, find out what the source of the problem might be, and see if a satisfactory solution can be found (Interviewee no. 5).

9.1 Profile of the Loiterer-Chaplain

Chaplains who practice the loitering style of chaplaincy say they are more at ease when they are among students. A number of loiterer-chaplains in Focus Group 4 agreed that they

> like to spend time here and there around the school. You find that you meet a wider mix of youngsters that way. Some students tend to congregate in certain areas of the school during break time while others gather in other areas. If you move about and spend some time in all areas, then you are likely to come across most of the youngsters at some time or other (Participant in Focus Group no. 4).

Loiterer-chaplains spend a large amount of their time communicating with students. However, in contrast with other models of chaplaincy, loiterer-chaplains, on the whole do not possess their own designated area in the school. This may explain to some extent why they 'loiter'. However, it also seems that part of the reason why they are not assigned their own rooms in schools is that they do not particularly desire to have them. They expressed a genuine preference for their style of practice. As one explained,

> I prefer to be free to wander about the school. I don't have a room in which to spend my time, and if I did I don't think I'd spend too much time in it. I'm a nomad at heart. I like to meet the youngsters and the best way I can do that is to go where they are. Otherwise they would have to find me (Interviewee no. 5).

It appears that loiterer-chaplains, on the whole, do not have a formal system of meeting students. They rely on chance meeting or on ad hoc arrangements when an occasion calls for such. Another typical view expressed by a loiterer-chaplain was,

> Given today's climate, I wouldn't meet a youngster in a closed room. I feel it would be foolish of me to do so. I think it's wiser to meet a pupil somewhere in private in the school where you can talk and not be heard, but can still be visible from a distance anyhow. This is important for self-protection from false accusations (Participant in Focus Group no. 2).

It is evident, therefore, that loiterer-chaplains are conscious of the current dangers of conducting interviews with individual students and are not willing to risk being accused, albeit falsely, of impropriety of any kind. It would also appear that having their own designated area in

the school is not only largely immaterial to loiterer-chaplains in their style of chaplaincy, it is a facility which many would not normally use for meeting students in private. However, they stated that they use school oratories, chapels and halls to hold prayer sessions and liturgies with students periodically throughout the school year.

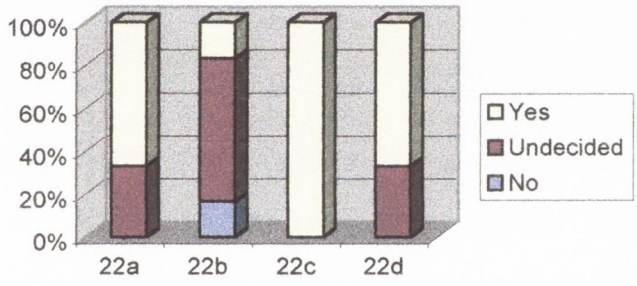
9.2 The Objectives of Loiterer-Chaplains

One of the distinguishing features of loiterer-chaplains is that they regard the Church's image as very important. Therefore, they see their own presence in the school in terms of promoting a favourable image for the Church. They stated their disquiet about the widespread and profound damage caused by recent scandals involving clergy and religious congregations. They are concerned that proven allegations of child sex abuse by priests and religious personnel have done irreparable harm to young victims and their families. They are also concerned about the weakened image of the institutional Church as a result of the criminal proceedings and publicity. They expressed their wish to bring about a healing process and a renewal of the Church's image, especially among young people. A sentiment expressed by one loiterer-chaplain summed up their views in regard to the perceived damage to the Church's image:

> The damage done in recent years is of such magnitude that it is vital now, before all is lost, that young people are brought into contact with a ministry which is responsible, consistent, caring, in touch with the real needs of young people, and truly spiritual. We must counteract the awful and almost hopeless image that has gained currency in recent times. What has happened is most regrettable and it cannot be denied. It is now up to those at the coal face, as it were, to be what the Church should be, and should always have been, and I think we must start with young people in schools. We must show them the real value of a Christ like ministry and how spirituality can be woven into the fabric of daily life in a truly Christian sense (Participant in Focus Group 2).

Graph 9.1 illustrates the priority of objectives of loiterer-chaplains as answered in the questionnaire:

The Objectives of Loiterer-Chaplains:



Graph 9.1: Questions 22a to 22d N=6

All loiterer-chaplains chose Question 22c (To be the 'acceptable face of the Roman Catholic Church' in the school) as an objective of chaplaincy. In contrast, four (66.7%) answered positively to Question 22a (Objective is the pastoral care of young people). Four (66.7%) also answered positively in Question 22d (Objective is to promote the ethos of the school). However, only one (16.7%) answered positively to Question 22b (Objective is the pastoral care of staff). These priority of objectives

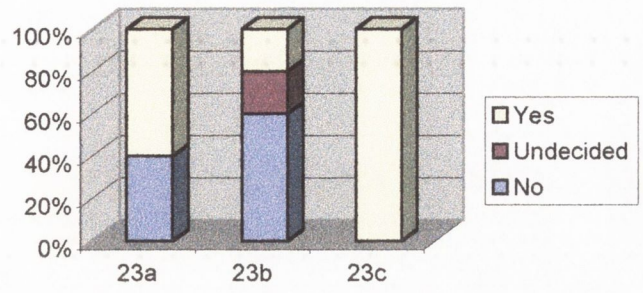
are also presented in Tables H.1 to H.4, Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 339 to 340.

Therefore, it would seem that the primary concern of loiterer-chaplains is the way young people perceive the Church. It is their view that a negative image of the Church will cause disaffection towards the Church among the young. Therefore, it is important for them to promote an image of Church in schools which will draw students "closer to their faith and to their Church because these young people are the Church's imminent future (Participant in Focus Group 4).

9.3 Stated Main Functions of Loiterer-Chaplains

In the focus groups and individual interviews, most of the loiterer-chaplains who are priests stated that it is their function to provide the Sacrament of Reconciliation for staff and students and also to celebrate daily Mass in the school. Similar data were derived from the questionnaire, as Graph 9.2, page 338, illustrates:

Functions of Ordained Loiterer-Chaplains



Graph 9.2: Questions 23a to 23c N=5

In this graph it is shown that all five ordained loiterer-chaplains opted for Question 23c (To administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation) as a function. Three chose daily celebration of Mass (Question 23a) and one chose periodical celebration of Mass (Question 23b) as a function of chaplaincy. This data is also presented in Tables H.5 to H.7, Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 341 to 342.

Giving guidance in the preparation of liturgical celebrations, both sacramental and non-sacramental, is a function strongly asserted by most loiterer-chaplains. They also attend school functions and actively support students in charity fund-raising events. Describing how he did this, a loiterer-chaplain stated:

> I do the Concern fast with the students and I take part in the annual St. Vincent de Paul collection along with them, among other things. I don't really see myself as leading by example although, given my position, I suppose that's what it is. I like to view myself and the students as acting together, developing together the spirit of Christian community (Interviewee no. 9).

Loiterer-chaplains considered it a function of chaplaincy to avail of opportunities to be among students, work with them and alongside them.

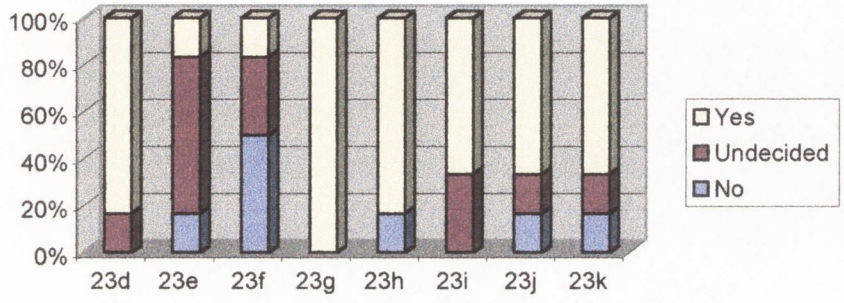
Developing structures for pastoral care among students and organising retreat programmes for students were stated as clear functions for loiterer-chaplains, although they "tend to do so somewhat independently of whatever pastoral care programme is in place with the staff" (Participant in Focus Group 1). Consequently, encouraging staff to be involved is not a high priority with loiterer-chaplains.

A function which loiterer-chaplains emphasised was that of visiting students who are ill, either at home or in hospital. This is always done with the knowledge of the principal. On occasions, the chaplain is accompanied by a colleague who is free and willing to go along. It was pointed out that such a colleague is usually a member of a religious order.

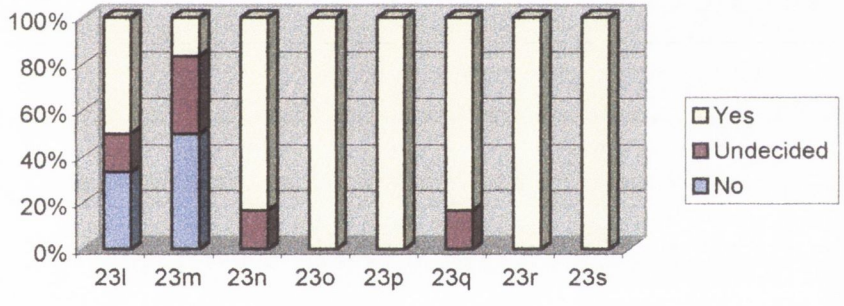
Functions commonly denied by loiterer-chaplains were visiting RE classes, being resource persons for catechists and RE teachers, visiting the staff room to meet teachers and developing links with the local parish. In the words of one, "My work is done essentially among students and if I do that well I see no need to try to reach beyond that" (Interviewee no. 9).

Graphs 9.3 and 9.4 represent the functions stated by all loiterer-chaplains in the questionnaire:

Functions of <u>all</u> Loiterer-Chaplains



Graph 9.3: Questions 23d to 23k N=6



Graph 9.4: Questions 23l to 23s N=6

To summarise:

Main Functions of Chaplaincy to which Loiterer-chaplains give priority:

For <u>ordained</u> loiterer-chaplains:

1 Providing the Sacrament of Reconciliation for staff and students (Q. 23c);

For <u>all</u> loiterer-chaplains:

2 Arranging for the provision of the sacrament of reconciliation for students and staff(Q. 23d);

3 Giving guidance in the preparation of liturgical celebrations, both sacramental and non-sacramental (Q. 23g);

4 Promoting and maintaining a high profile for the spiritual life of the school (Q. 23h);

5 Providing suitable resources for prayer services and liturgies for students (Q. 23i);

6 Organising retreats for students (Q. 23j);

7 Developing and encouraging pastoral care programmes in the school (Q. 23k);

8 Counselling students (Q. 23n);

9 Helping students receive appropriate counselling when necessary (Q. 23o);

10 Being aware of and meeting the needs of students in times of bereavement and other personal and family difficulties (Q. 23p);

11 Visiting students at home or in hospital when appropriate (Q. 23q);

12 Giving support to charity fund raising by students (Q. 23r); and

13 Attending school functions (Q. 23s).

Functions of Chaplaincy to which Loiterer-chaplains give least priority:

For <u>all</u> Loiterer-Chaplains:

1 Paying special visits to religious education classes (Q. 23e);

2 Being a resource person for catechists and RE teachers (Q. 23f);

3 Developing links with the local parish and the wider community (Q. 23m).

Tables H.8 to H.23, Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 342 to 350, show this data numerically.

9.4 Perceived Responses of Students and Staff to the Work of Loiterer-Chaplains

Members of the teaching staff and the students of the school seem to respond differently to the work of loiterer-chaplains. Loiterer-chaplains spend more time working and communicating with students than they do with teachers. Consequently, they have developed more links with the students and receive more responses from them than they do from teachers. In the words of one loiterer-chaplain, "I have developed a strong rapport with the youngsters, much more so than with the teachers. It is only natural, then, that the youngsters would be much more responsive to my ministry than the teachers would be" (Participant in Focus Group 3). Loiterer-chaplains, on the whole, stated that students are enthusiastic in taking part in school liturgies, and that pastoral care measures initiated by the chaplain are enthusiastically embraced by the students. However, these pastoral care procedures may be confined to a chaplain/student agreement and may not always involve the staff. As one chaplain put it:

> I started a group in the school, known as "Cairdeas". They consist of several fifth year students. Each one of them is charged with the care of five or six of the first year pupils whom they befriend. Their function it is to monitor their progress and help them to settle in and adjust to the huge changes they encounter in secondary school. The Cairdeas group also help me to organise prayer sessions for the first years and they bring their charges to these sessions. They meet once a week during the first term to discuss how the first years are getting along, but as the year progresses they don't need to meet as often. Now, I find them to be a great asset to the school. However, I am the only adult involved with them. The teachers

> don't seem to be interested, but I accept that situation (Interviewee no. 5).

This point of non-teacher involvement was reinforced by another loiterer-chaplain who said:

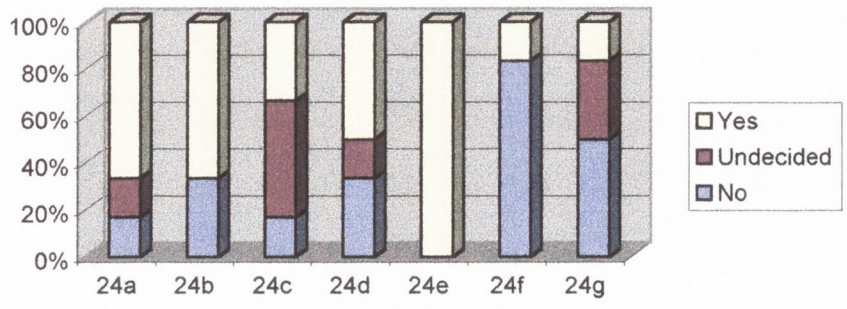
> I tend to work independent of the teaching staff. I am involved in pastoral care, but my involvement seldom happens as part of the school's pastoral care structure. I try to have a spiritual dimension to my interaction with the students. Whether I counsel or just discuss a problem I always try to include prayer in some form (Interviewee no. 9).

It is largely the experience of loiterer-chaplains that students approach them to discuss problems and seek help. Students also commonly return to discuss progress in coming to terms with problems or in effecting solutions for them. One loiterer-chaplain typified this, stating:

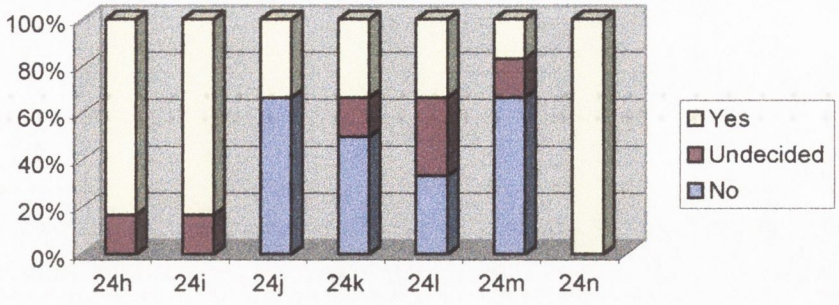
> As students get to know me they are aware that I am there to listen and to help and treat what they say with confidentiality. So, I often act as a sounding board for them. They can and they do come back again and again until the problem is cleared up, or at least until they come to terms with it (Participant in Focus Group 1).

Graph 9.5 and Graph 9.6, page 344, reveal data from Question 24 with regard to responses to chaplaincy work:

Responses of Staff and Students to the Work of Loiterer-Chaplains:



Graph 9.5: Questions 24a to 24g N=6



Graph 9.6: Questions 24h to 24n N=6

To summarise:

Students' and Staff's Main Positive Responses to the Work of Loiterer-chaplains:

---

1 Mass, when celebrated in school, is well attended by staff and students (Q. 24a)

2 Student participation in liturgies is enthusiastic (Q. 24e);

3 Individual students discuss their problems with the chaplain (Q. 24h);

4 Individual students return to the chaplain to discuss progress in solving their difficulties (Q. 24i);

5 Pastoral care activities initiated by the chaplain are pursued with enthusiasm by the students (Q. 24n).

Students' and Staff's Main Negative Responses to the Work of Loiterer-chaplains:

---

1 Attendance at the Sacrament of Reconciliation is poor (Q. 24b);

2 Poor attendance by students at liturgies and prayer services in the school (Q. 24c);

3 Teacher participation in school liturgies is not enthusiastic (Q. 24f);

4 Members of staff do not discuss problems with the chaplain (Q. 24g);

5 Students do not ask the chaplain to pray with them (Q. 24j);

6 Principals are not enthusiastic about loiterer-chaplains' work (Q. 24k);

7 Pastoral care measures or structures initiated by the chaplain are not welcomed by teachers (Q. 24l);

8 Pastoral care measures or structures initiated by the chaplain are not taken up and run by other members of staff (Q. 24m).

This data is also given in Tables H.24 to H.37, Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 351 to 357.

9.5 Loiterer-Chaplains' Sense of Belonging and Sense of Influence in the School

Loiterer-chaplains stated that their sense of belonging and influence in the school arise mainly from their association with students as distinct from staff and the principal. They do not seem to feel that they are members of staff. As one loiterer-chaplain expressed: "I don't feel I am a full member of staff. I don't associate with staff all that much, nor have I got the influence that other members of staff seem to have" (Interviewee no. 9). In the words of another loiterer-chaplain:

> I know the students far better than I know the staff. I know I should look upon myself as a member of staff but I don't. My work is different. Unlike the teaching staff, I don't have a captive audience when relating to students. I depend on their voluntary co-operation (Interviewee no. 5).

Loiterer-chaplains tend to get to know a large number of students and they maintain a constant presence in the school. They also acquire a good knowledge of the school:

> I know the school very well. I know most of the youngsters. I can organise liturgies and prayer

> sessions easily for them at different times. Of course, I wouldn't know the timetable very well. If I need information about that I depend on the youngsters to keep me informed (Participant in Focus Group 2).

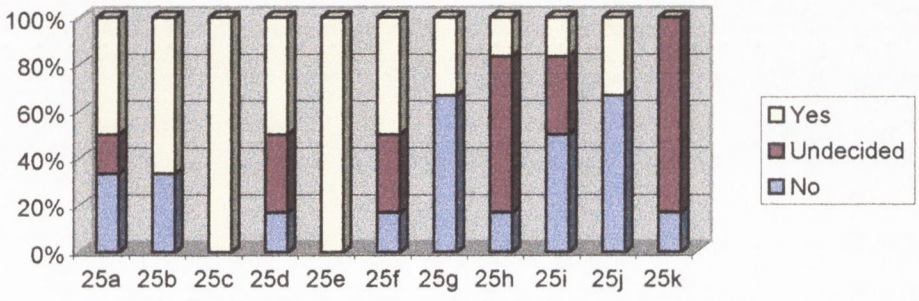
Most loiterer-chaplains stated that they have special training in youth ministry. They are constantly available to students and easily accessible to them. They also counsel students and contact parents if necessary. One chaplain typified the views of loiterer-chaplains in the following words:

> I rely heavily on my training in youth ministry and on my counselling skills in dealing with youngsters, especially those experiencing difficulties. I think anybody dealing with pastoral issues in schools must be skilled in counselling and have an understanding of the recurrent pressures which impact on the lives of young people at present. It is important to include their parents in the picture too, and therefore, I am both accessible to parents and I also can, and do, contact them when that is called for (Participant in Focus Group 3).

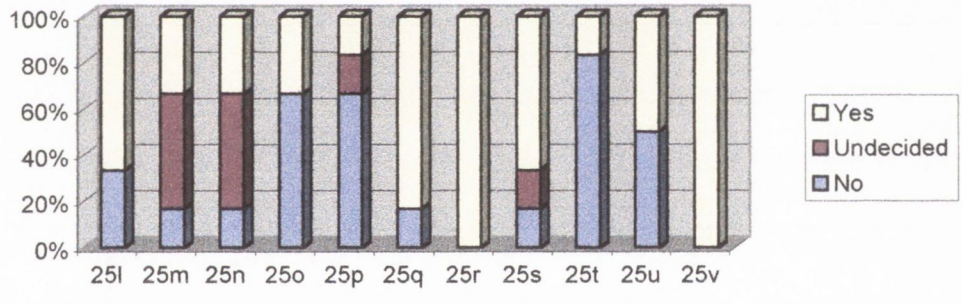
In expressing their sense of belonging and influence in the school, loiterer-chaplains said they did not experience a central role in the pastoral care structure of the school. Neither did they enjoy a close working relationship with career guidance teachers nor with religious education teachers. They felt they were not very readily accessible to staff members nor did they know the staff very well. Their attendance at staff meetings was infrequent with the consequence that their influence on decisions made at such meetings was minimal. They also stated that they did not have access to students' records, except on an occasional and very restricted basis.

Graphs 9.7 and 9.8 illustrate the quantitative data on the strength of loiterer-chaplains' sense of belonging and influence in their school:

Sense of Belonging and Sense of Influence of Loiterer-Chaplains:



Graph 9.7: Questions 25a to 25k N=6



Graph 9.8: Questions 25l to 25u N=6

To summarise:

Main Reasons why Loiterer-chaplains feel they have a Sense of Belonging and a Sense of Influence in the School:

---

1 They have a constant presence in the school (Q. 25b);

2 They have special training in youth ministry (Q. 25c);

3 They have a good knowledge of the school (Q. 25e);

4 They can organise liturgies and prayer services frequently in the school (Q. 25l);

5 They know the students very well(Q. 25q);

6 They are easily accessible to students (Q. 25r); and

7 They can easily contact parents in connection with school matters (Q. 25v).

Main areas in which Loiterer-chaplains do not develop a Sense of Belonging and a Sense of Influence in the School:

---

1 They do not have their own designated area in the school (Q. 25g);

2 They are not familiar with the school time-table (Q. 25h);

3 They do not hold a central role in the pastoral care structure in the school (Q. 25i);

4 They do not work closely with the career guidance counsellor (Q. 25j);

5 They do not have daily contact with the RE team (Q. 25k);

6 They are not frequently accessible to the staff (Q. 25m);

7 They do not know the staff very well (Q. 25n);

8 They do not attend staff meetings (Q. 25o);

9 They cannot influence decision making at staff level (Q. 25p); and

10 They do not have access to student records (Q. 25t).

This data is also given in Tables H.38 to H.59, Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 358 to 368. It is clear from these two lists that loiterer-chaplains have fewer causes for feeling a sense of belonging and sense influence in schools than they have for not doing so. It can be concluded, therefore, that they do not seek such sense as much as other models of chaplain.

9.6 Areas of Stress for Loiterer-Chaplains

Loiterer-chaplains were emphatic about the main area of stress in their work among young people. Revelations, almost on a daily basis, about child sex-abuse by priests and, to a lesser extent, by members of religious congregations, are a source of anguish to them. That this is a prevalent cause of distress may coincide with the finding that most loiterer-chaplains are priests. As one described his feelings:

> When I see one headline after another in the daily papers about yet another priest 'up for' abusing children, I'm devastated. As a fellow priest, I feel I'm sullied ... it rubs off on me. The term 'paedophile priest' has become commonplace. I feel people are becoming more and more sceptical about the priesthood and the media are not making things any easier ... I know the point has been made that only a small proportion of priests are involved in abuse, but, nevertheless, I find it's utterly shattering (Participant in Focus Group 1).

Most ordained loiterer-chaplains are deeply hurt by the allegations of sexual abuse of children by a few fellow priests and by the criminal records of some of these. They also fault the hierarchy for poor handling of clerical sex abuse cases. "The bishops knew what was going on. They got enough complaints about it. Having done nothing at all to any effect in time, they have left us ordinary clergy to take the consequences" (Interviewee no. 9).

Closely allied to this hurt is the second most prevalent source of stress to loiterer-chaplain, namely,

the care which needs to be taken in dealing with young people individually. Loiterer-chaplains assert that, in the role of school chaplain, it is difficult to avoid, at all times, being alone with a student. "Nevertheless, it's a rule one must follow, even though it shouldn't exist at all" (Interviewee no. 9). They view abiding by this rule as quite important, given the impact of recent events. However, they also say that procedures such as counselling or talking privately with a student, can be difficult when such a rule must be observed. It was referred to as a "dilemma ... with no right solution, so one must choose the lesser evil which is to deprive students of much needed privacy at times" (Interviewee no. 5).

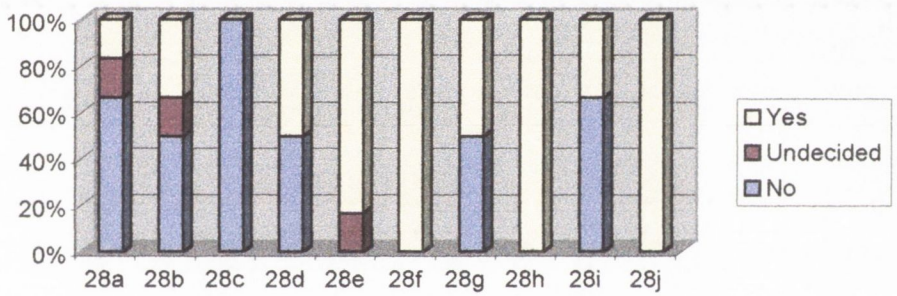
It was also a common view that a sense of isolation and lack of support is stressful among loiterer-chaplains. Isolation is experienced in the school environment and lack of support is felt both from school authorities and from the hierarchy. "Once appointed, one is left to one's own devices in the school, more or less, ... The hierarchy show no interest at all in chaplaincy" (Interviewee no. 5). It is of interest that loiterer-chaplains are disappointed by the lack of support from the hierarchy on two accounts. Most of them feel that appropriate action was not taken by the bishops in cases of clerical sex abuse of children. They also perceive the hierarchy to be unsupportive of their work as chaplains. In the words of one loiterer-chaplain:

> Doesn't it raise a question about how the hierarchy value children and adolescents, their status as members of society and their status as members of the Church? Do they see them as members of the Church at all? (Interviewee no. 9).

In short, loiterer-chaplains, who avow that they value the Church membership of students, seem to be sceptical about the esteem in which they perceive the hierarchy to hold the young.

Graph 9.9 represents the quantitative data on stress among loiterer-chaplains:

Areas of Stress for Loiterer-Chaplains:



Graph 9.9: Questions 28a to 28j N=6

To summarise:

Main Areas of Stress for loiterer-chaplains:

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1 Isolation and lack of support (Q. 28e);

2 The recent scandals relating to clergy and religious personnel (Q. 28f);

3 Discrimination between chaplains in community schools and secondary schools (Q. 28h); and

4 The excessive care that needs to be taken when talking to young people, especially on a one-to-one basis (Q. 28j);

Areas Causing Least Stress for Loiterer-chaplains:	
1	Inability to plan work (Q. 28a);
2	Indifference of staff members to one's role as chaplain (Q. 28b);
3	Hostility of staff members to one's role as chaplain (Q. 28c); and
4	Lack of official recognition on the school time-table (Q. 28i).

This is also given in Tables H.60 to H.69, Appendix H, Vol. 2, pages 369 to 373.

Summary

In the focus groups and individual interviews, several chaplains could be identified with the model of loiterer-chaplain. In addition to this, six loiterer-chaplains were recognisable from the questionnaire data. While, as in the case of other models of chaplaincy, this is quite a small number, the quantitative data from the questionnaire serves to support the qualitative information derived from the focus groups and interviews.

Most loiterer-chaplains proved to be priests. They are essentially outgoing people and interested in working among students. Therefore, they tend to 'waste time' around the school talking preferably to groups of students, but also to individuals when the need presents itself. They tend not to have a chaplaincy room in the school. Reasons put forward for this included that they

are not particularly interested in having one. However, they tend to use the school oratory, chapel or hall to organise prayer sessions in the school.

Loiterer-chaplains are acutely conscious of the image of the Church. They fear that this image is deeply tarnished at present because of the adverse publicity accorded to constantly emerging scandals involving clergy in recent times. They are of the view that it is of paramount importance that this image is reversed, and that one of the most critical means of doing this is to work with young people through the medium of a spiritual, caring, responsible and trustworthy image of Church in the form of school chaplaincy. However, despite loiterer-chaplains' interest in and preference for being among students, it could be sensed that they operate, to a certain extent, in a climate of fear. They are wary of situations in which they might be alone with a student and they try to guard against such occurrences.

In common with host-chaplains, loiterer-chaplains have a greater rapport with students than they have with teachers. They see their functions in schools as saying Mass daily, providing, or arranging for the provision of, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, giving guidance in the preparation of liturgical celebrations, attending school functions and helping students with charity fund-raising. As a further dimension of their pastoral service, loiterer-chaplains visit students at home or in hospital if they are are ill or in other trouble.

They do not embrace the functions of visiting RE classes or being resource persons for RE instruction. Despite the fact that most loiterer-chaplains are priests, they do not tend to develop links with the local parishes or with the community outside the school.

The principal responses to the work of loiterer-chaplains are twofold. Although attendance by students at school liturgies is regarded as poor, those students who do attend participate enthusiastically. While students avidly pursue pastoral care measures set up by the chaplain, loiterer-chaplains assert that neither teachers not principals show interest to any appreciable degree in the pastoral care activities which the chaplains initiate, nor do they participate in such activities.

A sense of belonging and influence in schools is gained mainly through the establishment of good relationships with students. A constant presence, knowing both the school and the students well and training in youth ministry are important factors which help in this regard. So is the ability to contact parents when necessary. On the negative side, there is little sense of belonging or influence through the staff. These chaplains stated that they do not know the teachers very well. They do not usually attend staff meetings, have influence in decision making at staff level or have access to student records.

Loiterer-chaplains insisted that a major source of worry in their ministry is the sustained allegations of

abuse of children currently levelled at members of the clergy. Since they perceive their role in schools as being official representatives of the Church, the damaged image of that institution is a source of stress to them. They also assert that apparent lack of interest on the part of the hierarchy, in their work as school chaplains, leaves them feeling unsupported and isolated. However, loiterer-chaplains are dedicated to their ministry and they hold that they are determined to persevere with their work among school students because it is their contention that today's young people are the Church of tomorrow.

A simple résumé of loiterer-chaplains is given in Figure 9.1, which is drawn from Tables I.1 to I.10, Appendix I, Vol. 2, pages 374 to 382. It presents only the strongly emphasised features of this model which will later be used for the purpose of comparing and contrasting this model with others in Chapter 12.

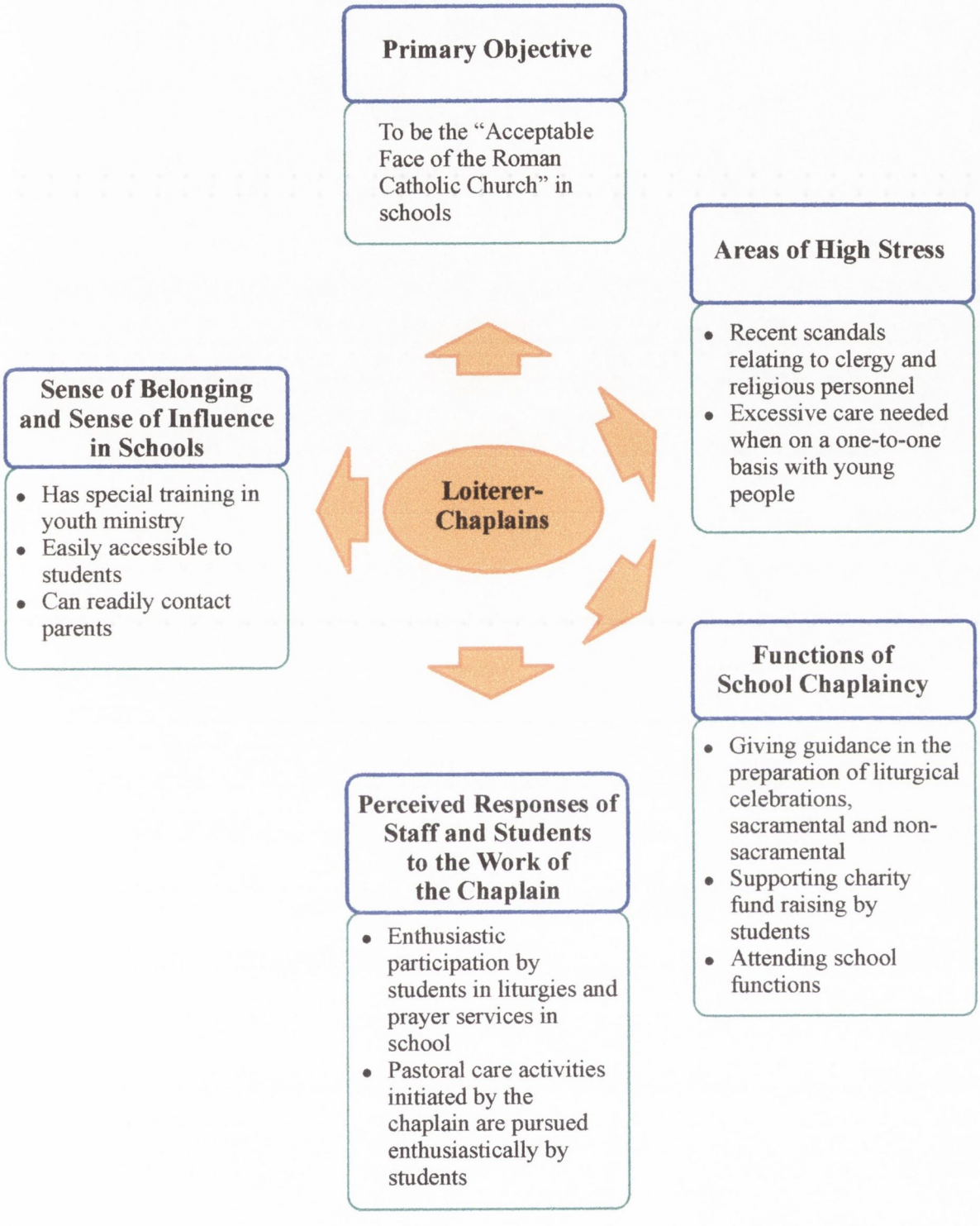

Figure 9.1: Résumé of Loiterer-Chaplains