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Table of Contents

List of Contributors	4
Editors' Foreword	5

Articles

Murphy, Terrence Emancipation vs. Equity: Civic Inclusion of Halifax Catholics, 1830-1865	7
McEvoy, Frederick J. Father James T. Foley: Irish-Canadian Priest and Journalist	25
Stafford, Joe Strict Neo-Thomism in the Catholic High Schools of the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1940-1960	47
Hrynkow, Christopher, Brigid Ward, and Caitlin Ward Essential Recovery, Rural Resilience, and Energizing Communities from St. Peter's Abbey in Muenster, Saskatchewan.....	67

Book Reviews

Abbott, Frank A. <i>The Body or the Soul? Religion and Culture in a Quebec Parish, 1736-1901</i> by Paul Laverdure	89
Smyth, William J. <i>Toronto, The Belfast of Canada: The Orange Order and the Shaping of Municipal Culture</i> by Peter Ludlow	91
Munro, Kenneth. <i>St. Joseph's College, University of Alberta</i> by Edward MacDonald	93
André N. Vachon. <i>Alexandre Vachon: the Scholar's Cleric and the Clerics' Scholar</i> by Glenn Wright	96
Baum, Gregory. <i>Fernand Pathway Dumont: A Sociologist Turns to Theology and The Oil Has Not Run Dry: The Story of My Theological Pathway</i> by Indre Cuplinskas	98

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Editors' Foreword

At first glance, Canadian Catholic History might appear to be a narrow subject. As the articles in this 2017 edition of *Historical Studies* indicate, Canadian Catholic history is very much a part of Canadian history generally. The papers and book reviews in the following pages range in time from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first; in place, from Halifax to Edmonton with stops in Ontario and Quebec; and in subject matter from politics to education, theology, and agriculture.

The first two papers deal with politics, particularly the efforts of Catholics to secure civil rights. As Terrence Murphy observes, although Emancipation removed legal disabilities from Catholics in Nova Scotia, they still had to work for equality in such matters as political representation, patronage, and funding for their schools. Frederick J. McEvoy describes how, in the early twentieth century, priest and journalist Father James Foley sought federal patronage appointments for Catholic friends and lobbied the government of Ontario for a fairer distribution of educational funds for Catholic schools. In seeking patronage, Catholics were not unlike the Orange Order, whose activities are sketched in Peter Ludlow's review of William Smyth's book, *Toronto, The Belfast of Canada*.

In the papers by Murphy and McEvoy, Irish Canadian Catholics are prominent and were well informed about issues in Ireland. Particularly in the case of Father Foley, they had decided opinions on Irish affairs. Ethnicity was a factor in Canadian Catholicism. In Nova Scotia, Irish and Scottish Catholics worked in harmony. Language, however, could divide Catholics. Father Foley opposed Franco-Ontarians in the controversy over French-language schooling; at a later date Archbishop Vachon worked to heal the wounds that clash had caused. In Saskatchewan, early settlers from Germany were suspicious of francophone priests.

Education, not surprisingly, appears, at least in passing, in all of the articles and in several book reviews whether it be concern in Halifax for the funding of Catholic schools; the use of French in Ontario Catholic schools, the teaching of religion; and the importance of education in the work of St. Peter's Abbey in Saskatchewan, which Christopher Hrynkow, Brigid Ward, and Caitlin Ward show co-operated in agricultural studies with the university. The accomplishment of Canadian Catholics of creating their own institutions, but working with provincial universities, is also illustrated in Edward MacDonald's review of the history of St. Joseph's College in Edmonton. Another example of co-operation with the larger society appears

in Glenn Wright's review of the biography of Archbishop Alexandre Vachon of Ottawa, who, as well as dealing with spiritual and educational issues within the church, was a highly respected physical scientist who served on various government boards. While the history of a rural parish in nineteenth-century Quebec might be expected to do little more than deal with religious matters, Paul Laverdure's review of *The Body or the Soul? Religion and Culture in a Quebec Parish, 1736-1901* shows how church records can reveal much about the economy and society of a community. As Laverdure's review suggests in the interplay between local community and the larger world, the micro informs the macro, the specific feeds into the universal.

Of course, some papers are primarily of interest to students of Catholicism, such as Joe Stafford's article on the influence of neo-Thomism in the Catholic schools within the archdiocese of Toronto and the review of two books by the theologian Gregory Baum. Both, however, demonstrate how studies of Canadian Catholicism can contribute to an understanding of broader Canadian history.

The contributions in the following pages would not have been possible without the work of their authors, of the anonymous reviewers of papers submitted, of Valerie Burke, who looks after our subscriptions and many other CCHA activities, of Father Ed Jackman, O.P., who has long supported *Historical Studies*, and of the generous financial assistance of the Jackman Foundation. Thank you to all.

Patricia E. Roy
Edward MacDonald

Emancipation vs. Equity: Civic Inclusion of Halifax Catholics, 1830-1865

Terrence MURPHY

Abstract: *One of the best known facts in the story of Nova Scotia Catholicism is that Emancipation from penal laws and civil disabilities was achieved with remarkable ease. Beginning in the 1780s, incremental measures of relief gave Catholics the right to purchase and inherit land, operate schools, and vote in provincial elections. In 1823, Catholic merchant Laurence Kavanaugh was permitted to take his seat in the Assembly without swearing the Declaration against Transubstantiation. In 1830, following the passage of the Catholic Emancipation Act in Britain, the Nova Scotia assembly passed an equivalent bill, confirming in law what had already been granted in practice. However, Emancipation by itself did not lead immediately to equitable treatment in public life. While no longer formally excluded from office, Catholics frequently felt under-represented or ignored. Genuine advances therefore were achieved against a background of mounting complaints about persistent inequities. Grievances covered a wide range of areas, including electoral politics, appointments to public office, jury selection, and support for education. This paper examines the principal obstacles in the way of genuinely equitable treatment and traces the steps by which these obstacles were largely overcome.*

Resumé: *Un des aspects les plus connus de l'histoire du catholicisme néo-écossais est que l'Émancipation des lois pénales et des infirmités civiles fut accomplie sans grande difficulté. À partir des années 1780, des mesures progressives d'exonération donnèrent aux Catholiques le droit de se procurer la terre et d'en hériter, de diriger des écoles, et de voter lors des élections provinciales. En 1823, le marchand catholique Laurence Kavanaugh acquit le droit de prendre son siège dans l'Assemblée sans prêter le serment de la Déclaration contre la Transsubstantiation. En 1830, suite à l'adoption de l'Acte d'émancipation catholique en Grande-Bretagne, l'assemblée néo-écossaise passa un projet de loi semblable, ainsi confirmant légalement ce qui se faisait déjà sur le plan pratique. Toutefois, l'Émancipation en soi n'aboutit pas immédiatement au traitement équitable dans la vie publique. Bien qu'ils ne fussent plus exclus d'être en fonction, les Catholiques se sentaient sous-représentés ou ignorés. Des progrès réels furent donc réalisés dans un contexte de récriminations croissantes à propos d'inégalités continues. Les griefs couvrirent un large éventail*

de domaines, dont la politique électorale, les nominations à la fonction publique, la sélection des jurés, et le soutien de l'instruction publique. Cette communication examine les principaux obstacles qui empêchaient un traitement véritablement éthique et décrit les étapes au moyen desquelles ces obstacles furent en grande partie surmontés.

One of the best known facts in the story of Nova Scotia Catholicism is that Emancipation from penal laws and civil disabilities was achieved with remarkable ease. These laws date from the establishment of the Nova Scotia Assembly in 1758. The Assembly, elected on a franchise that excluded “Popish recusants,” almost immediately passed measures prohibiting Catholic priests from exercising their powers within the colony and preventing Catholics from acquiring land by deed or inheritance. A few years later, another act stipulated that Catholics were not permitted to operate schools. These measures closely mirrored legislation then in effect in Great Britain and Ireland, and reflected a broader agenda of bringing the laws and institutions of Nova Scotia into conformity with those of the mother country. Beginning in the 1780s, however, incremental measures of relief were granted to the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland, and Nova Scotia followed suit. By 1789, Catholics priests could serve legally in Nova Scotia, and Catholics could purchase and inherit land, operate schools, and vote if they met the property qualification. They were not yet eligible for election to the Assembly, but the reunification of Cape Breton with Nova Scotia in 1820 was followed by a successful challenge to this remaining barrier. In 1823, a Catholic merchant, Laurence Kavanagh, having been duly elected as one of two representatives for Cape Breton, was permitted to take his seat in the Assembly.¹

This breakthrough was made possible by the willingness of the Assembly, supported by the tacit consent of Governor Kempt, to waive the requirement to swear the obnoxious Oath against Transubstantiation. In fact, the Assembly was prepared to go further and admit any Roman Catholic elected thereafter on the same terms. The Legislative Council, however, refused to agree. Meanwhile, the Catholic population had grown significantly due to increased immigration following the Napoleonic Wars. In Halifax alone, the 1827 census showed that Catholics comprised about a quarter of the population (3,627 of a total population of 14,443),² and lay leaders had

¹ John Garner, *The Franchise and Politics in British North America, 1755-1867* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968); John Garner, “The Enfranchisement of Roman Catholics in the Maritimes,” *Canadian Historical Review*, XXXIV, no. 3 (September 1953): 203-218; Terrence Murphy, “The Emergence of Maritime Catholicism: 1781-1830,” *Acadiensis*, XXX, no. 2 (Spring 1984): 29-49.

² The tabulated results of the census by district were printed in the *Novascotian*, 3 April 1828.

emerged to campaign for complete emancipation from civil disabilities. In 1827, a petition signed by 1,000 Roman Catholic inhabitants asked the Crown to remove the test oaths as a requirement for membership in the House and appointment to certain offices. John Garner has described this as the “first overt political act of the Irish [Catholic] population of Halifax.”³ The Assembly endorsed the petition and passed a resolution that would have granted the request. The Legislature was prevented from implementing the act until an equivalent law was passed in the United Kingdom in 1829, but the final Catholic Emancipation Act of Nova Scotia followed the next year.⁴

The admission of Laurence Kavanagh to the Nova Scotia Assembly and ensuing events were momentous developments, whose significance extended far beyond the borders of Nova Scotia. As Karly Kehoe has argued, Catholic Emancipation, with Nova Scotia in the vanguard, entailed an amended and expanded definition of British citizenship, one that saw no inherent conflict between Catholicism and Britishness.⁵ By 1830, all legal obstacles had been removed to Catholic participation in politics, the professions, and (with a few exceptions) civic offices. In Nova Scotia, Catholics gradually took advantage of their new freedom by entering the practice of law, running for election to the Assembly, and accepting appointments to the Executive and Legislative Councils. However, without detracting from the importance of this change, it is also important to recognize that Emancipation by itself did not lead automatically or immediately to equitable treatment in public life. The focus on Emancipation as a decisive turning point should not be allowed to obscure the process of gradual empowerment that unfolded over the ensuing decades. This paper examines some of the principal obstacles in the way of this process and traces the steps by which they were largely overcome.

Progress was often slow. While no longer formally excluded from office, Catholics frequently felt under-represented or ignored. In some cases, this was due to deliberate exclusion, while in other instances Catholics were simply overlooked or taken for granted. Genuine advances, therefore, were achieved against a background of mounting complaints about persistent

³ Garner, “The Enfranchisement of Roman Catholics,” 217-218.

⁴ Following Catholic Emancipation in the United Kingdom in 1829, Catholics in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick were also made eligible for election to local legislatures. In Newfoundland, a change in 1779 to the Royal Instructions to the Governor had the effect of including Catholics in the general provision for religious toleration. Newfoundland Catholics were admitted to the Assembly from the beginning of representative government in 1832. See Terrence Murphy, “Catholic Emancipation,” Gerald Hallowell, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2004), 120.

⁵ S. Karly Kehoe, *Empire and Emancipation: Catholics in Britain’s Atlantic World, 1780-1880* (forthcoming).

inequities. Grievances covered a wide range of areas, including electoral politics, appointments to public office, jury selection, and support for education. These issues intersected with the shifting political allegiance of Catholics, as they transferred their support from the Reformers to Conservatives; and controversy was exacerbated by rising sectarian tensions in the 1840s and 1850s. But the demand for fairer treatment in public life is not subsumed under either of these topics. Catholic complaints were directed against “pretended friends” as well as “dastardly enemies.”⁶

The most vociferous demands for more equitable treatment of Catholics came from the mostly Irish Catholic community of Halifax and it is from their point of view that the issues are examined here. Still very much an immigrant community, Halifax Catholics were deeply influenced by the ongoing struggle for civil rights among the Catholics of Ireland. Linked to the homeland through newspaper reports, travellers, personal correspondence, and branch membership in nationalist organisations such as the Repeal Association, they quickly came to see that Daniel O’Connell was right in describing Emancipation as a beginning not an end.⁷ Irish Catholic newspapers in the capital, such as the *Cross*, the *Register*, and the *Halifax Catholic*, became important outlets for airing grievances and promoting reform.⁸ Bishop William Walsh, though disavowing partisanship,⁹ joined Catholic politicians such as Laurence O’Connor Doyle in denouncing injustices and prejudice.¹⁰ While they approached the issues from a decidedly Irish point of view, their concern extended beyond their ethnic community to other Nova Scotian Catholics, including Acadians but especially their fellow British immigrants from Scotland. Relations between Irish and Scottish Catholics in Nova Scotia were often strained but this did not prevent Irish

⁶ *Cross*, new series, II, no. 11 (14 March 1846).

⁷ “How mistaken men are who suppose that the history of the world will be over as soon as we are emancipated! Oh! That will be the time to *commence* the struggle for popular rights.” Daniel O’Connell to Edward Dwyer, 11 March 1829, as quoted in Fergus O’Ferrall, *Catholic Emancipation: Daniel O’Connell and the Birth of Irish Democracy, 1820-1830* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1985), 253.

⁸ All three papers were influential, though short-lived. The *Cross*, whose content was primarily religious, was published between 1843 and 1850. The *Register*, an Irish nationalist publication, appeared between 1843 and 1845. The *Halifax Catholic* was published between 1854 and 1857.

⁹ *Cross*, new series, II, no. 36 (5 September 1846).

¹⁰ By his own admission, Walsh wrote many of the articles in the *Cross*. After he suspended publication due to problems with his health, he complained to Tobias Kirby at the Irish College in Rome that not one of the clergy or ecclesiastical students “assisted me with a single line or even to correct the Proof Sheet.” Archives of the Irish College, Rome, Kirby Papers, KIR/1836-61/837, Walsh to Kirby, 16 January 1851. Since articles were unsigned, it is impossible to identify his contributions for certain, but his influence was such that the paper consistently reflected his strong opinions.

spokesmen from citing the experience of their co-religionists as proof of discrimination.

* * *

The direct participation of Catholics in the Nova Scotia government in the generation following Emancipation illustrates both the extent and the limits of change due to the removal of civil disabilities. In 1832, a Catholic, James Tobin, was appointed to the Executive Council for the first time. In 1838, when the Council was divided into Executive and Legislative branches, his brother, Michael, succeeded him on the Executive Council and served for three years, while James was given a seat on the Legislative Council until his death later that year. In 1841, Michael took James' place on the Legislative Council. The Tobins were merchants and very influential in both the business and Catholic communities, but until 1843, when Edward Kenny joined Michael Tobin on the Legislative Council, there was never more than one Catholic on either Council. At most, they held one of six seats on the Executive and two of 18 seats on the Legislative Council. For six years, beginning in 1841, the Executive Council had no Catholic member. Census figures from 1851 leave no doubt that Catholics were under-represented on both Councils, as by that date they comprised a quarter of Nova Scotia's population.¹¹ Even if Catholics were less numerous in the affluent class of persons likely to be appointed to government, finding more than two suitable Catholic candidates for the Legislative Council and more than one for the Executive Council would not have been difficult.

The overt commitment of most Catholics to the Repeal of the Union of Ireland with the United Kingdom greatly exacerbated the problem. The cause of Repeal smacked of disloyalty, and both the Colonial Secretary, Lord Stanley, and Lieutenant-Governor Falkland opposed the appointment of its advocates or sympathisers to the Councils. This issue came to a head when three prominent reformers – Joseph Howe, James Boyle Uniacke, and James McNab – resigned from the Executive Council in protest over Falkland's appointment of Mathers Byles Almon, a Conservative without any legislative experience,¹² to the Executive and Legislative Councils. Falkland wished to replace them with other Reformers to balance the Conservative

¹¹ Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management [hereafter NSARM]. Journals and Proceedings of the House of Assembly, 1852. Appendix 94, 421. This census lists 256,255 adherents of various religious denominations, of whom 69,634, or 27 percent, are Roman Catholics. The total population of the province is given as 276,117, of whom those identified as Catholics comprise 25 percent. A summary of these census figures is included in Statistics of Canada, IV (Ottawa: I.B. Taylor, 1876), 232, but the numbers given there are slightly different.

¹² See Brian Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose at the Polls: Epic Nova Scotian Election Battles, 1758-1848* (Halifax: Formac Publishing, 1994), 82.

members and avoid any hint that he was accepting party government and, by inference, responsible government. But he was at a loss to do so without men linked directly or by association with Repeal.¹³ When he appealed to Stanley for guidance, the Colonial Secretary replied:

I have received your despatch of the 1st Feb. [1844] on the subject of the appointment to the Executive Council of Nova Scotia of Gentleman holding opinions favourable to the Repeal of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland. The question which your Lordship has proposed to me admits of a ready and immediate answer. I have not the slightest inclination to interfere with any man's private opinions but I cannot take it upon myself to sanction the appointment to office under the Crown of any person who belongs to or aids the Repeal agitation in Ireland.¹⁴

The situation did not improve until the late 1840s by which time Daniel O'Connell had died, the Repeal movement had lost momentum, and responsible government had triumphed in Nova Scotia. By 1849, Halifax Catholics of Irish birth or descent occupied two seats on each of the Councils,¹⁵ and Michael Tobin was named President of the Legislative Council. Tobin held that position until 1856, when it passed to his Catholic colleague, Edward Kenny.

The progress of Catholics in the Legislative Assembly followed a similar pattern of slow growth. In Halifax, where the Catholic portion of the population had grown to one-third (approximately 7,000 of 21,000),¹⁶ no Catholic was elected to the House until 1843 (fourteen years after Emancipation), when Laurence O'Connor Doyle gained one of the two seats for Halifax County. Even then, his nomination came only after the Catholics threatened to abstain from the election to the detriment of the Reformers if they overlooked him.¹⁷ The close association of Catholics with the campaign for Repeal also figured in this controversy, for a number of Reformers wished to avoid the taint of disloyalty while also staving off undue Catholic influence over their party.¹⁸ Faced with an open revolt among Catholic

¹³ National Archives of the United Kingdom [hereafter TNA], CO 217, 186, Falkland to Stanley, [1 February 1844?].

¹⁴ TNA, CO 217,186, Stanley to Falkland, 2 March 1847.

¹⁵ Michael Tobin and Laurence O'Connor Doyle had been appointed to the Executive Council; Michael Tobin and Edward Kenny sat on the Legislative Council.

¹⁶ Archives of the Archdiocese of Halifax [hereafter AAH], St. Mary's Cathedral Fonds, Wardens Minute Book, fols. 108r-109r, where a detailed census of the Halifax Catholic population is reported.

¹⁷ They had already abstained from the City election in protest, a fact that contributed to the defeat of Reformer William Stairs. Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose*, 78-81. Doyle had represented the town of Arichat from 1833 to 1840 when he withdrew in favour of a French-speaking Catholic candidate, Henry Martell.

¹⁸ Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose*, 78.

supporters, William Annand, a leading Reformer, reluctantly stepped aside in favour of Doyle.

Cape Breton, with its population of Acadians, Scottish and Irish immigrants was a potential stronghold for Catholic politicians. Yet in the 1847 election, Cape Breton returned four Protestants and only two Catholics for its six seats.¹⁹ In Cape Breton such an imbalance was not seen as problematic. The prevailing concern was to have strong advocates for the island's pressing material needs, and ethnic ties made Scottish Presbyterian candidates quite acceptable to Scottish Catholic voters.²⁰ For Halifax Catholics, especially in light of rising anti-Catholic sentiment, it was another matter. Proximity to the centre of government and the growth of a strong mercantile and professional elite made them determined to secure a share of political power. The influence of Ultramontanism, vigorously promoted by Archbishop Walsh, fostered an expansive and assertive attitude, compared to which the accommodating approach of the Cape Breton Scots seemed timid and complacent. The *Cross* asked pointedly why Catholics should continue to support Protestant candidates, when Protestant ridings never elected Catholics. "When will Catholics open their eyes to their humiliating and ignominious position? When will they refuse to become accomplices in their own degradation?"²¹ In its next issue, the *Cross* published an article decrying the fact that the current distribution of seats meant that Cape Breton was seriously under-represented in the Assembly, the inference being that this injustice was due to its large Catholic population.²²

The lack of reciprocity on the part of Protestants became a recurring theme in Catholic commentaries. In 1854, when a seat normally reserved for Cape Breton became vacant on the Legislative Council, the *Halifax Catholic* insisted that a Catholic should be appointed. To complaints from Protestants that an ostensibly religious publication should not meddle in politics, the editors responded sharply that they would do so whenever Catholic rights were at stake. "The Catholics," they wrote, "for many years have been the principal means of elevating their fellow citizens to many situations of power, dignity, and emolument. Now, to be candid, we must say that those favours have never been returned."²³

While inequities in predominantly Catholic districts such as Cape Breton certainly existed, it was simplistic of Catholic spokesmen to attribute them

¹⁹ Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose*, 287.

²⁰ Peter Ludlow, "Disturbed by the Irish Howl: Irish and Scottish Roman Catholics in Nova Scotia, 1844-1860," in *Irish Catholic Halifax: from the Napoleonic Wars to the Great War*, CCHA *Historical Studies*, 81 [Occasional Paper] (2015): 36.

²¹ *Cross*, new series, III, no. 7 (13 February 1847).

²² *Cross*, new series, III, no. 8 (20 February 1847).

²³ *Halifax Catholic*, I, no. 8 (6 May 1854).

solely to religious bias. The problems were due in large part to structural features of the electoral system. Seats were unevenly distributed largely because of the entrenched double representation enjoyed by freeholders in the older towns.²⁴ These rights were established long before large-scale immigration of Scottish immigration to Cape Breton took place. At irregular intervals after 1830, new constituencies were added to Cape Breton, but never enough to achieve an equitable balance.²⁵ By the same token, removing religious barriers to the franchise did not mean that Catholics would qualify to vote in the same proportions as non-Catholics. Except for the ten years between 1854 and 1864,²⁶ the franchise was based on property. Catholics, who were disproportionately represented among the labouring and tenant classes, were significantly less likely to meet the requirement. In Halifax, Catholics comprised approximately two-fifths of the population in 1843 but only one-fifth of the eligible voters.²⁷

Under-representation in positions that depended on appointment rather than election also figured prominently among Catholic grievances. In varying degrees, these appointments carried with them influence and emoluments as well as public recognition of individuals and the religious or ethnic communities that they represented. Catholics complained repeatedly that they enjoyed far less than their fair share of such posts. Tempers flared over this issue as the 1847 election approached. In an effort to woo Protestant Liberals away from the Reformers, the Tories raised the spectre of impending “Catholic ascendancy” in politics.²⁸ This was one occasion when Irish Catholics cited injustices to their Acadian co-religionists. On 27 February 1847, the *Cross* decried

the manner in which the many thousands of French Catholics in the Province, the descendants of those primitive settlers who were so brutally

²⁴ Freeholders in the older towns could vote for both town and country representatives. Brian Cuthbertson, *The Evolution of Parliamentary Democracy in Nova Scotia*, www.nslslegislature.ca/pdfs/about/timeline/introduction-EN.pdf (accessed on 15 March 2016).

²⁵ Garner, *The Franchise and Politics*, 39.

²⁶ Manhood suffrage was introduced on the initiative of the Conservatives in 1854. It was repealed by the Liberals in 1863, but the Conservatives managed to get an amendment passed that deferred the change until 1864. Garner, *The Franchise and Politics*, 31-38.

²⁷ Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose*, 74. In the 1847 election campaign, an ugly clash took place between Irish Catholic supporters of the Liberals and African Nova Scotian partisans of the Conservatives. The Catholics used blatantly racist language to complain that the small land holdings of the African Nova Scotians entitled them to vote, while many Catholics were excluded. See David A. Sutherland, “Race Relations in Halifax, Nova Scotia, During the Mid-Victorian Quest for Reform,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, new series, 7, no. 1 (1996): 35-54.

²⁸ At the time, the Reformers were beginning to refer to themselves as Liberals, but both names were commonly used.

expelled from their country, are treated in Nova Scotia as far as public situations are concerned. Not one Frenchman in the Province receives Two Pounds a year in any official situation. And yet these worthy Acadians form no small portion of the “usurping Denomination.”²⁹

The *Times*, a staunchly Conservative paper that first raised the charge of Catholic Ascendancy, added insult to injury by declaring that Catholics should be grateful for the concessions they had already received.³⁰ In reply, the *Cross* snapped:

We were treated as if we had nothing to complain of, as if we got more than our fair share of public patronage, as if we ought to be *grateful* for the toleration we received, and chew our bitter cud in silence The fact is that no Catholic in the province held a situation at all, or at least anything that would deserve the name.³¹

What made matters worse was the lack of transparency in how the appointments were made. James McKeagney, the Catholic member for Inverness, called for a return on all paid public offices held by Catholics and Protestants. When this was refused, Patrick Power, member for the County of Sydney, said the figures for Catholics could be obtained by taking a large sheet of paper and writing “0” at the bottom.³²

Dissatisfaction over patronage appointments became a contributing factor to the rift between Catholics and their Liberal allies. The full story of this rupture has been closely analyzed elsewhere³³ and it is not necessary here to trace the events except as they relate to the Catholic pursuit of equitable inclusion in civic offices. However, an important step occurred in 1856, when James McLeod, one of two Catholic ministers, resigned over what he called a “want of candor” in the making of such appointments. A year later, Catholic Reformers John Tobin and Peter Smyth abandoned the government over the dismissal of William Condon from his position as a customs gauger, after he exposed Joseph Howe’s surreptitious recruitment of Irishmen in the United States to fight in the Crimean War. Tobin and Smyth subsequently

²⁹ *Cross*, new series, III, no. 9 (27 February 1847).

³⁰ *Times*, 30 February 1847, XIV, no. 7.

³¹ *Cross*, new series, III, no. 8 (20 February 1847).

³² *Cross*, new series, III, no. 8 (20 February 1847). The Patrick Power referred to here was an Antigonish merchant and member of the House of Assembly from 1843-1847, not the better known Patrick Power, Halifax merchant and member of the federal Parliament following Confederation.

³³ See J. Murray Beck, *Politics of Nova Scotia*, vol. I, (Tantallon, N.S.: Four East Publications, 1985), 143-145; Cuthbertson, *Johnny Bluenose*, 303-304; A.J.B. Johnston, “Popery and Progress: Anti-Catholicism in Mid-Nineteenth Century Nova Scotia,” *Dalhousie Review*, LXIV, no. 1 (Spring 1984): 147-163; Terrence M. Punch, “Joe Howe and the Irish,” *Collections of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, 41 (1982): 119-140.

joined six other Catholics and two Protestants representing Catholic ridings in defeating the Liberals on a non-confidence motion.

The appointment of local magistrates was a particular bone of contention for Catholics.³⁴ Here as elsewhere, they felt deprived of their fair share, as can be seen in an unsigned letter to the editor of the *Cross* in 1846. The writer noted that the recent appointment of two Catholic magistrates in Cumberland County was a move in the right direction, but complained that there was no Catholic magistrate in Halifax or Dartmouth, where there were “upwards of ten thousand Catholics.”³⁵ Before the Liberal victory of 1847, the Tories had controlled the appointment of magistrates, who were responsible for drawing up grand jury lists. Bias in the selection process was obvious, as both Reformers and their Catholic allies were for the most part excluded. In January 1845, the Irish Catholic *Register* complained that while Catholics formed a third of the population of Halifax, and 100 of them were eligible for grand jury service, not a single one of them appeared on the jury list.³⁶ Because grand juries played a major role in local governance, the exclusion of Catholics severely restricted their role in decisions affecting their communities, while also depriving them of an important symbol of respectability and citizenship.

The role of grand juries in local government became much less important for Halifax after the town was incorporated as a municipality governed by an elected mayor and council in 1841. Yet this change gave new grounds for complaint inasmuch as few Catholics were elected to the council. Edward Kenny, who played a significant role in achieving incorporation, was elected as an alderman and served briefly as mayor in 1842.³⁷ Three years elapsed before the next Catholic, Daniel Creamer, was elected as a councillor. Creamer was joined by Thomas Ring in 1846, but Creamer’s term ended in 1847, leaving Ring as the only Catholic on a council with eighteen members. Not until the 1850s, with the election of Patrick Power, Peter Morrissey, Patrick Donohoe, and others did the number of Catholic councillors begin to approach the Catholic proportion of the population.

Jury selection was also an issue in civil and criminal trials. Complaints on this score were fuelled by the example of Ireland, where in 1844 Daniel

³⁴ For the following discussion of magistrates and jury selection, I am heavily indebted to R. Blake Brown, *A Trying Question: the Jury in Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

³⁵ *Cross*, new series, II, no.21 (23 May 1846).

³⁶ *Register*, V, no. 2 (14 January 1845) and V, no. 3 (21 January 1845).

³⁷ Terrence M. Punch, *Some Sons of Erin in Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Petheric Press, 1980), 32; D. A. Sutherland, “Edward Kenny,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (hereafter *DCB*), http://biographi.ca/en/bio/kenny_edward_12E.html (accessed 9 January 2017)

O'Connell was convicted of sedition by a Protestant jury. Halifax Catholics and Reformers saw an immediate parallel to the O'Connell case in the trial of Richard Nugent, an Irish Catholic and close associate of Joseph Howe.³⁸ Nugent claimed that he had been unjustly convicted of libel a year earlier by a packed jury selected by Tory magistrates. The damages awarded the plaintiffs forced Nugent to sell his interest in the *Novascotian*, principal organ of the Reform party, and even to serve time in jail until the damages awarded were fully paid.³⁹ Nugent lashed out at the politically biased system that had placed him in such dire straits: "Special juries are admirable contrivances," he wrote, "to punish the conductors of Liberal Journals, especially when the Grand Jury list from which they are drawn is made up almost exclusively of violent and uncompromising Tories."⁴⁰

Dissatisfaction with the jury system continued to mount until 1845, when a large public meeting was held in the Mason's Hall to demand change. The first speaker, the Catholic Laurence O'Connor Doyle, was followed by other prominent Reformers, including Joseph Howe and George Renny Young. Pursuant to resolutions passed at the meeting, Doyle steered a bill through the Assembly that provided for much more transparent selection procedures and resulted in a new and greatly expanded jury list for Halifax. The new list included Irish Catholics and also African Nova Scotians.⁴¹

The Liberals' electoral victory in the landmark election of 1847 did not immediately end such abuses. The Reformers used their increased authority to dismiss Conservative appointees and replace them with men of their own party. With the reversal of roles, the Conservatives now became the critics, suspecting that juries were being rigged to their disadvantage.⁴² Declining confidence in so flawed a system eventually led to successive reforms requiring magistrates to compile jury lists more fairly. Nevertheless, the reforms did not end religious tensions in the courts. Catholics, now more fairly represented on juries, came in for accusations that they were using their role to protect their own from justice. Such charges were most notably

³⁸ Brown, *A Trying Question*, 71.

³⁹ J. Murray Beck, "Nugent, Richard," *DCB*, VIII.

⁴⁰ Richard Nugent, Letter to the Editor of the *Acadian Recorder*, 32, no. 19 (11 May 1844); reprinted in the *Novascotian*, 5, no. 20 (13 May 1844). The *Novascotian*, 6, no. 2 (20 January 1845) reprinted the critique of the Grand Jury system from the *Register*, V, no. 2 (14 January 1845) with the ironic comment that "... it merely says in civil language what every Irishman has been saying to himself for the last month – that there is nearly as much fairness in the system here as there is in Ireland."

⁴¹ NSARM, Statutes of Nova Scotia. VIII Victoria cap.1. Brown, *A Trying Question*, 77. See also, R. Blake Brown, "Three Cheers for Lord Denham: Reformers, the Irish and Jury Reforms in Nova Scotia, 1833-1845," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2005): 165. *Erudit* (accessed 30 June 2016).

⁴² Brown, *A Trying Question*, 10.

made following the violent clash in 1856 between Catholic and Protestant railway workers, known as the Gourlay Shanty Riots. Joseph Howe, the railway commissioner, was then locked in a bitter conflict with Halifax's Irish Catholics. Nine Irish navvies were charged as a result of the incident, but three trials with mixed Protestant and Catholic juries failed to deliver verdicts. This enraged Howe. Famously acquitted by a jury in his 1835 libel case, he now depicted the system as frustrating the course of justice. The *British Colonist* meanwhile declared that the failure to get convictions meant that Nova Scotia had been convulsed with fear "because Irishmen and Catholics were determined to shield those of their countrymen and creed from the operation of the law."⁴³

* * *

The controversial issues discussed thus far all relate to access for Catholics to civic offices, whether elected or appointed. A major concern of a different, but equally important, kind centred on Catholic educational rights. Rightly or wrongly, Catholics regarded separate educational institutions, infused with the spirit of their religion, as essential to preserve their identity and collective integrity. Providing for such institutions required that they contend with two key and closely related issues. The first was the right to establish and maintain Catholic schools and a Catholic college; the second was entitlement to a fair share of government educational funding. The success that Halifax Catholics achieved on both these fronts marked a watershed in their quest for civic inclusion.

The idea of establishing a Catholic college in Halifax dates back to 1802, when Edmund Burke was appointed Vicar-General for Nova Scotia. Burke, who was determined to have such an institution, took some preliminary steps towards achieving it. For example, he constructed a building intended to house the proposed college; and he instructed a handful of seminarians in his own household to prepare them for ordination. Not until 1839, however, did St. Mary's College begin classes under the direction of Richard Baptist O'Brien, a secular priest recently arrived from Ireland.⁴⁴ One year later, with the help of Reform politicians Joseph Howe and William Young, the college secured a provincial charter and an initial grant of 300 pounds.⁴⁵ That assistance

⁴³ *Halifax British Colonist*, 29 November 1859, 2, as quoted in Brown, *A Trying Question*, 113.

⁴⁴ The official name of Saint Mary's University includes the full spelling of "Saint," but in the nineteenth century, "St." was used. For early ventures in higher education in the eastern portion of the province, see James D. Cameron, *For the People: a History of Saint Francis Xavier University* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 11-16.

⁴⁵ NSARM, Nova Scotia, House of Assembly, *Journals and Proceedings*, 1841: 254. The grant was increased to 444 pounds for one year, afterwards lowered to

should have come from those quarters was somewhat paradoxical, since most Liberals were opposed in principle to denominational colleges, favouring a single non-sectarian institution to serve the province as a whole. But Dalhousie had failed to establish itself as such an institution, and in 1840 the Baptists had set a precedent for denominational colleges by securing a charter and, thereafter, a government grant for Queen's College, soon to be renamed Acadia. This situation, combined with Liberal reliance on Catholic votes, made resistance to the establishment of St. Mary's untenable. Nevertheless, strong support persisted for a single non-denominational college, and in 1849 W. A. Henry made a motion in the Assembly to abolish all grants to denominational colleges. The motion was defeated, but it stirred up fears that the St. Mary's grant was in jeopardy and that it might be forced into a merger with other colleges. The *Cross* declared in no uncertain terms that Catholics would never be content to merge with "four other sects" in a single institution.⁴⁶ Likewise, it took a very firm stand on the government grant:

We have no exclusive or intolerant claims to set up. We ask no better treatment for the Catholic College than shall be shown to other existing institutions . . . , [but] If St. Mary's be injured or destroyed, and any other college be suffered to exist or to receive a higher Grant, then and only then we will complain . . .⁴⁷

These fears proved unfounded, and St. Mary's continued to receive government support until 1881 when an attempt to create a federated University of Halifax failed and all grants to colleges were suspended. Forced to close for lack of funding, St. Mary's re-opened as a Catholic college in 1903.

The question of Catholic elementary schools was even more central to securing Catholic rights in Halifax. The first Catholic schools in the city were St. Mary's boys' and girls' schools, opened by Bishop Edmund Burke in 1819 and 1820. Like most other schools at the time, St. Mary's schools relied for financial support on a combination of tuition fees, government assistance, and money raised directly or indirectly by voluntary subscription. Almost from the start, the legislature awarded them a grant, which they continued to receive without obvious controversy.⁴⁸ Trouble erupted in 1846, however, by

250 pounds, the same as the amount awarded to Acadia College. The grant is also mentioned in a handwritten report found in National Archives of the United Kingdom, CO 217/178, fols. 284r-286v. On the role of Young and Howe in helping to secure the charter, see J. Murray Beck, "William Young," *DCB*, http://biographi.ca/en/bio/young_william_11E.html (accessed on 10 January 2017).

⁴⁶ *Cross*, new series, IV, 1 (22 January 1848).

⁴⁷ *Cross*, new series, V, no. 8 (24 February 1849).

⁴⁸ Sister Francis Xavier Walsh, "The Evolution of the Catholic Public Schools in Nova Scotia," (M.A. thesis, Boston College, 1958), 34.

which time the Catholics had founded a second parish and opened schools at St. Patrick's in the North End. For three years in a row, they petitioned the legislature for grants for the new schools, only to be rebuffed.⁴⁹ Frustration over the denial of their requests brought the whole issue of school funding to the fore. Articles appeared in the *Cross* complaining not only about the treatment of St. Patrick's schools, but also about the inadequacy of funding for the schools at St. Mary's and the composition of the Boards of School Commissioners, whose responsibility it was to distribute education funding in the various parts of the province.⁵⁰ When a petition on behalf of St. Patrick's was referred to the Halifax Board, the *Cross* declared that given the "complexion of these functionaries," it was well known that "they would not give the Papists a single penny."⁵¹

Catholic complaints on this and other issues, especially those that appeared in the *Cross*, sometimes relied on hyperbole or simplistic statements of the facts. In arguing the case for a grant to Saint Patrick's school, for instance, the *Cross* repeatedly said that Catholics were "approaching one half of the entire population" of the city,⁵² when a phrase such as "exceeding one third" would have been closer to the mark. In discussing the underrepresentation of Catholics among school commissioners, the *Cross* took little notice of the fact that Michael Tobin was one of five members of the Central Board of Education, which oversaw all of the province's commissioners.⁵³ More fundamentally, however, the statement of grievances with respect to school funding was detached from the context of the times. Legislators were struggling in good faith with ways to achieve urgently needed improvement in elementary education throughout Nova Scotia. Many saw sectarianism as an obstacle that had to be overcome before progress would prove possible.⁵⁴ Whether they were right about this or not, reluctance to add the recently founded Saint Patrick's school to the list of denominational institutions receiving government support owed as much to this belief as it did to anti-Catholic prejudice.

Nevertheless, bias against Catholics no doubt played a role. Events in England, including the conversions arising from the Oxford Movement,

⁴⁹ Sister Francis Xavier, "The Evolution of Catholic Public Schools," 51.

⁵⁰ *Cross*, new series, II, no. 14 (4 April 1846). The St. Mary's schools received 100 pounds a year, divided equally for the salaries of the male and female teachers. The *Cross* claimed there was currently not "one Catholic Commissioner of Schools, from Halifax to Yarmouth, or from Digby round by Windsor to Halifax."

⁵¹ *Cross*, new series, IV, no. 13 (15 April 1848).

⁵² *Cross*, new series, II, no. 14 (4 April 1846) and IV, no. 1 (22 January 1848) and V, no. xxx (20 January 1849).

⁵³ Charles Bruce Fergusson, *The Inauguration of the Free School System in Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Bulletin No. 21, 1964): 15.

⁵⁴ Fergusson, *Inauguration of the Free School System*, 17.

fanned the flames of anti-Catholic sentiment in the colonies as well as at home. Under the system in effect in the 1840s, Halifax Catholics had legitimate grounds for complaint. St. Mary's schools at this stage received 100 pounds per year, as did five other schools in the city. The fact that all the schools received the same amount created a superficial appearance of fairness. But one-sixth of the total was not, by any accounting, proportionate to the percentage of Catholics in the total population. In 1849, Bishop Walsh organized a meeting of his increased flock to press Catholic claims.⁵⁵ Events overtook this initiative because, in 1850 the government replaced individual grants to denominational schools in Halifax with an allocation of 700 pounds, which the school commissioners could distribute according to their best judgement.⁵⁶ St. Patrick's took a small step forward under this new arrangement in 1851, when the City School Board awarded it the modest sum of 40 pounds.⁵⁷

The whole question of Catholic education entered a new phase in the 1850s. Until then, all schools in Nova Scotia were essentially private institutions supported in part by government subsidies, and many children received no formal education. Calls for a comprehensive system of common schools as an alternative to this arrangement began as early as 1825,⁵⁸ but more than thirty years elapsed before these calls seemed poised to succeed. In 1856, William Young, leader of the Liberal government, introduced a bill that would have established public schools based on compulsory taxation. Young, who had already supported the Catholics in the school grants controversy as well as with the incorporation of St. Mary's, was persuaded by his Catholic colleagues in the Assembly to include a provision for separate schools within the public system.⁵⁹ In the months preceding Young's initiative, the *Halifax Catholic* unequivocally expressed the Catholic position:

Catholicity and Protestantism are so essentially different that they can hardly ever unite, but least of all on such a subject as education. We do not desire others to adopt our views, we only ask to be left

⁵⁵ *Cross*, new series, V, no. 7 (17 February 1849) and no. 8 (24 February 1849). A special committee of the Assembly charged in 1849 with investigating the situation at St. Patrick's school gave the number of students as 800, though it is unclear whether this was the actual enrolment or an estimate of the number of children in the North End eligible to attend the school. See Sister Francis Xavier Walsh, "Evolution of Catholic Public Schools," 51. Firm numbers for St. Mary's School at this time are not available but within a few years of the arrival in Halifax of the Sisters of Charity in 1849, there were approximately 400 pupils in the girls' section alone. See Archives of the Sisters of Charity, Halifax, unsigned and undated typescript.

⁵⁶ Fergusson, *Inauguration of the Free School System*, 20. See also Nova Scotia, House of Assembly, *Journals and Proceedings*, 1850, Appendix 51, 183.

⁵⁷ Sister Francis Xavier Walsh, "Evolution of Catholic Public Schools," 51.

⁵⁸ Fergusson, *Inauguration of the Free School System*, 6-9.

⁵⁹ Beck, *Politics of Nova Scotia*, 143.

in the enjoyment of our own . . . and that . . . we participate in an equitable distribution of funds to which all contribute.⁶⁰

Protestant opposition to the provision for separate schools, combined with resistance to new taxes, forced Young to defer the bill.⁶¹ Catholic disappointment over his backpeddling contributed to their growing rift with the Liberals. In 1857, partly on the strength of Catholic votes, the Liberal government was defeated, and the bill never made it into law.

A free public school system was finally achieved in 1864-1865 by the Conservative government led by Charles Tupper. By this time, the pragmatic and congenial Thomas Louis Connolly had succeeded the more combative William Walsh as Archbishop of Halifax. A political ally of Tupper over the issue of Confederation, Connolly tried to convince him to include separate schools for Nova Scotia in the scheme, but Tupper refused, insisting on common rather than denominational free schools. However, Tupper reminded Connolly that the Council of Public Instruction, which was to oversee the new system, was the province's Executive Council acting under a different name, and that the Council would always include Catholic members, who could safeguard the interests of their community.⁶² He also agreed to a special clause in the Common Schools Act which allowed the School Commissioners for Halifax – which by this time included a Catholic priest and two Catholic laymen – to cooperate with the governing body of any existing city school as they saw fit.⁶³ On the strength of this provision, Connolly was able to negotiate an arrangement for Halifax Catholic schools to be incorporated in the new public system. While this provision applied specifically to Halifax, similar arrangements eventually prevailed in other parts of Nova Scotia with heavy concentrations of Catholic population.⁶⁴ The

⁶⁰ *Halifax Catholic*, II, 25 (30 June 1855).

⁶¹ Beck, *Politics of Nova Scotia*, 143-144.

⁶² Sister Francis Xavier, "Evolution of Catholic Public Schools," 60. See also Sister K. Fay Trombley, *Thomas Louis Connolly (1815-1876): The Man and his Place in Secular and Ecclesiastical History* (Leuven: Catholic Faculty of Theology, 1983), 300-301.

⁶³ NSARM, Statutes of Nova Scotia. 28 Victoria (1865), cap.29, section 49 (3). For a discussion of this provision, see Sister Francis Xavier Walsh, "Evolution of Catholic Public Schools," 62.

⁶⁴ The Sisters of Charity, who established convents in many of these areas, were available as teaching staff. In an undated letter of Archbishop O'Brien of Halifax (1883-1906) to Msgr. Falconio, Apostolic Delegate to Canada (1899-1902), the Archbishop explained: "In other parts of the Diocese there are five houses of the Sisters of Charity whose inmates teach in public schools. The trustees of the district, as all the people in these places, are Catholics and engage the Sisters. In other places, where Catholics abound, the trustees are Catholic and Catholic teachers are secured for the schools. In this way full nine-elevenths of the Catholic children are attending schools which, whilst not Catholic separate schools, are nevertheless Catholic in tone and free from all possible danger to the Faith." AAH, O'Brien Fonds, O'Brien to Falconio, [c.1899]. I am grateful to Peter

compromise in Halifax was achieved by mutual agreement and, unlike the separate schools of Ontario and Quebec, it did not become a constitutional right under the British North America Act of 1867. Nevertheless, it did become a distinguishing feature of Halifax Catholicism and lasted until the early 1970s, when a cluster of new circumstances led to greater integration.

The achievement of the unique provision for their schools was a milestone in the development of the Catholic community in Halifax. The significance of the agreement on separate schools goes beyond the provision of Catholic education, important as this was. By accommodating Catholic demands on this crucial issue, their Protestant fellow citizens conferred a recognition on their culture that allowed them to feel increasingly secure in Halifax society and less in need of contentious self-assertion.⁶⁵ The Catholic approach to education reflected the separatism typical of the Ultramontane ideology which dominated the Roman Church by the mid-nineteenth century. It was equally evident when the Catholics developed other social institutions, from hospitals to orphanages and recreation clubs. But separatism of this kind tended more to peaceful co-existence than to mutual hostility. The determination of Catholics to protect their rights remained strong, but it was pursued from a position of greater strength and in a spirit of increased cooperation.

The gradual pace at which Halifax Catholics progressed between Emancipation in 1830 and the pivotal agreement on separate schools in 1865 was in large measure inevitable. A change in the law could not be expected to lead to an immediate change in behaviour or attitudes. An upsurge in sectarian sentiment in the 1840s and 1850s was an obstacle to progress, as was the fact that Catholic demands became enmeshed with broader political tensions between Conservatives and Reformers. However, advances did occur. Even if their presence in the Executive and Legislative branches did not reflect their proportion of the population, they had established a strong beachhead in government and had demonstrated their capacity to influence elections and help to topple governments. Their demands for a greater share of patronage appointments could not lightly be ignored. Problems with the jury system remained, but Catholics were no longer blatantly excluded. They had achieved a unique and enduring agreement with respect to separate schools. Upward mobility within the Catholic community and the eventual

Ludlow for sharing his knowledge of Catholic schools in eastern Nova Scotia, where both the Sisters of Charity and members of the Congregation of Notre Dame staffed schools. In 1877, a similar agreement allowed *de facto* Catholic schools in Charlottetown and other parts of Prince Edward Island.

⁶⁵ On the recognition accorded Catholic culture by Protestants in Halifax, see Judith Fingard, "Seaport City (1841-1871)," in Judith Fingard, Janet Guildford, and David Sutherland, *Halifax: the First 250 Years* (Halifax: Formac Publishing Company, 1999), 86.

expansion of the franchise meant that more Catholics qualified for the vote. All of these changes were stages in a process rather than a definitive solution to inequities. By the time of Canadian Confederation, however, Halifax Catholics had achieved a very significant measure of civic inclusion. Emancipation had opened the way to this result, but it took the struggles of the ensuing decades for Catholic rights to be firmly established in practice.

Father James T. Foley: Irish-Canadian Priest and Journalist

Frederick J. McEvoy

Abstract: *Father James Foley was generally considered the leading Catholic journalist of his day as editor of the Catholic Record from 1912 to 1932. Even before this, while serving 20 years as pastor in rural parishes, he had strong connections to the Laurier government, which he used to advance the interests of Ontario's Irish Catholics in conjunction with his close friends Charles Murphy and Bishop Michael Fallon. He had strong opinions on Canada's constitutional status, favouring independence within the Empire/Commonwealth as opposed to participation in an imperial parliament. True to his Irish roots he took a keen interest in the situation in Ireland, originally condemning the 1916 Easter Rising but coming to support Sinn Fein when he realized it had gained the support of a majority of Irish. He supported Canada's war effort, though not without doubts about the conscription issue, believing that all the nation's resources should be put towards winning the war. He virulently opposed the campaign of Franco-Ontarians for French-language schooling, which he feared would lead to the demise of the separate school system in Ontario. During the 1920s he developed an intense hatred of Mackenzie King, leading him to support the Bennett Conservatives in the 1930 election. He again sought to forward the cause of Irish Catholics with the new prime minister, but to no avail. His death in 1932 was widely mourned within the world of Catholic journalism in Canada.*

Resumé : *Le père James Foley fut considéré comme le journaliste catholique le plus apprécié de son époque dans son rôle de rédacteur en chef du Catholic Record de 1912 à 1932. Même avant cette période, au cours des vingt années de ses fonctions en tant que curé dans des paroisses rurales, il jouissait d'étroites connections avec le gouvernement Laurier; celles-là lui permettaient d'avancer les intérêts des Catholiques irlandais d'Ontario avec l'appui de ses proches amis Charles Murphy et l'évêque Michael Fallon. Il avait des opinions très fortes sur le statut constitutionnel du Canada, favorisant l'indépendance à l'intérieur de l'Empire/Commonwealth plutôt qu'une participation à un parlement impérial. Fidèle à ses origines irlandaises, il s'intéressait particulièrement à la situation en Irlande, condamnant l'insurrection de Pâques de 1916 en même temps qu'il appuyait Sinn Fein quand il se rendit compte que celui-ci avait acquis le*

soutien de la majorité des Irlandais. Il soutint l'effort de guerre canadien, tout en mettant en cause la conscription, croyant que toutes les ressources de la nation devraient contribuer à la victoire. Il s'opposa avec véhémence à la campagne des Franco-ontariens pour l'instruction en langue française, craignant que celle-ci ne provoque la destitution du système d'éducation séparé en Ontario. Pendant les années 1920 il se prit d'une animosité intense à l'endroit de Mackenzie King, ce qui l'amena à soutenir les Conservateurs de Bennett lors des élections de 1930. Il essaya de nouveau d'avancer la cause des Irlandais auprès du nouveau Premier-ministre, mais ce fut en vain. Sa mort en 1932 provoqua un deuil généralisé au sein des journalistes catholiques du Canada.

At a time when religion and politics most definitely did mix in Canada, the point of intersection was often the press. Roman Catholic journalists, that is, journalists whose Catholicism was central to their professional activities, played a significant role in articulating – and, sometimes, shaping – public and political opinion among Canadian Catholics. Such a figure was Father James Foley, the long-time editor of *The Catholic Record* in London, Ontario. Even though it was based in London, the paper had a country-wide, even international, distribution. Foley's editorial career offers a unique insight into the relationship between the Irish-Canadian Catholic press and political power in early twentieth-century Canada, and graphically demonstrates how ethnic and religious loyalties continued to influence Canadian politics. Despite assertions of non-partisanship, Foley never hesitated to comment, often strongly, on political issues.

James Thomas Foley was born on 26 April 1863 in Asphodel, a farming community near Peterborough, Ontario. His father Patrick was born in Ireland and his ethnicity would be an important factor in Foley's life. After teaching at a school in the nearby town of Norwood, he received the B.A. degree in 1888 from Ottawa College (now the University of Ottawa), which promptly hired him as a teacher.¹ Here he made two friends who would play a major role in his life: Charles Murphy, a future Liberal cabinet minister and senator, and Michael Fallon, the future bishop of London, Ontario. Both men would prove to be staunch defenders of the Irish Catholics of Ontario, what Murphy termed "our clan."²

In 1892 Foley was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Ottawa. After a brief term as curate at St. Patrick's Parish in Ottawa, he served as pastor

¹ Foley to Archbishop of Ottawa, 16 August 1888, James T. Foley File, Archives of the Archdiocese of Ottawa.

² Murphy to Dr. E.J. Mullally, 9 August 1927, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), Charles Murphy Fonds, vol. 21, 8715.

in two country parishes, Farrellton, Quebec, and Fallowfield, Ontario, for the next twenty years.³ Both areas had a strong Irish component.

But the life of a country pastor was not sufficiently fulfilling for a man of Foley's intellectual bent. Like many Catholic clerics of his generation, he turned to politics to project his concerns and ideas beyond the ambit of his parish. A staunch Liberal, he maintained regular contact with Wilfrid Laurier during his long tenure (1896-1911) as prime minister. At this time patronage was the glue that held parties together. As a contemporary biographer wrote, "Sir Wilfrid Laurier had a large toleration for patronage.... He believed there was far more of gain than of loss to governments and parties through control over appointments to office and distribution of public contracts."⁴ Foley became one of many applicants for positions, not for himself, but on behalf of Ontario's Irish Catholics, never hesitating to stress the importance of the Catholic vote and to give Laurier political advice.

Foley was perturbed by the result of the federal election of 1900, which saw Quebec vote solidly Liberal while the party lost fourteen seats in Ontario, where many Protestant voters who had supported Laurier in 1896 returned to the Conservative fold.⁵ He believed this split "constitutes a danger not only to the party but to the country." The "race cry" would be raised, asking Protestants to "cut loose from French Domination." There was "only one way... to offset the defection of bigoted Protestants and that is to gain amongst Irish Catholics." Foley also raised the issue of Irish representation in the cabinet. Ontario's Irish Catholics had long been dissatisfied with Richard Scott, their current cabinet representative.⁶ Foley, however, strongly opposed the appointment of John Costigan, a New Brunswick MP, to the cabinet. Costigan sat in Conservative cabinets from 1882 to 1896, but was elected as a Liberal in 1900. Foley considered that switching parties showed him to be "mercenary and lacking in moral courage." Costigan had admitted

³ J.J. O'G[orman], "Rev. J.T. Foley, D.D. – An Appreciation," *Ottawa Journal*, 9 March 1932. At that time the Archdiocese of Ottawa encompassed parishes on the Quebec side of the Ottawa River.

⁴ Sir John Willison, *Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, Part II (London and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1927), 468-9. As another biographer stated, "The distribution of patronage was the most important single function of the government." Oscar Douglas Skelton, *The Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Volume II: 1896-1919*, edited by David M.L. Farr (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1965), 103.

⁵ Skelton, *Life and Letters*, Vol. II, 49.

⁶ P.D. Stevens, "Laurier and the Liberal Party in Ontario, 1887-1911," PhD. thesis, University of Toronto, 1966, 316. Scott had been the English Catholic representative in the cabinet of Alexander Mackenzie, 1873-78, and in Laurier's cabinet from 1896. He retired from cabinet in 1908 at the age of 83. Brian P. Clarke, "Scott, Sir Richard William," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/scott_richard_william_14E.html, (accessed 2 May 2017).

that as a cabinet minister, he had been unable to obtain any benefits for Irish Catholics. Thus, Foley believed that Irish Catholics would consider Costigan's appointment an insult that would lead to Liberal losses in the next Ontario election in 1902, which the Conservatives would attribute to "the appeals to race prejudice," so that "this dangerous and mischievous policy will receive new life."⁷ Laurier laconically replied that he had no intention of making cabinet changes at that time; Foley, he advised, was misinformed.⁸

Foley also suggested candidates for other, lower level positions. In each case Laurier gave a non-committal answer, that he would pass on the recommendation to the appropriate minister, in the case of a judgeship, to his Ontario colleagues as a group since they had more say than he did.⁹ This was in line with Laurier's view of provincial rights; it was up to Ontario Liberals to manage party business in their own province.¹⁰

Cabinet appointments were another matter, however, as final decisions were the prime minister's to make. Though unsuccessful earlier, in 1907 Foley again suggested a cabinet appointment, emboldened, he noted, by Laurier's courteous hearing of his previous approach "with regard to the status of Irish Catholics in public life and in the Liberal party." He recommended that the appointment of his friend Charles Murphy as a representative of Irish Catholics, "would allay discontent and convert apathy into enthusiasm," thus preventing Conservative gains in Ontario.¹¹ Murphy was, in O.D. Skelton's words, "a vigorous and outspoken Ottawa barrister."¹²

Laurier was again non-committal, though stating that he would "always be glad of the opportunity" to discuss the issue with Foley.¹³ In the end, shortly before the 1908 election, he did appoint Murphy to cabinet, which pleased Foley, who believed it would help the Liberal party with the Irish Catholic vote in Ontario.¹⁴ Laurier confirmed that his objective in making the appointment was "to give satisfaction to the Irish element of the community, who wanted to be represented by a younger man than Mr. Scott. . . . I sincerely

⁷ Foley to Laurier, 11 November 1900, LAC, Sir Wilfrid Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C780, 50542-5.

⁸ Laurier to Foley, 14 November 1900, Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C780, 50546.

⁹ Foley to Laurier, 22 August 1906, Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C837, 113073; Laurier to Foley, 113074; Foley to Laurier, 6 September 1906, microfilm reel C838, 113462-7; Laurier to Foley, 113468.

¹⁰ Stevens, "Laurier and the Liberal Party in Ontario," 3-4.

¹¹ Foley to Laurier, 23 November 1907, Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C855, 132668-74.

¹² Skelton, *Life and Letters, Vol. II*, 99.

¹³ Laurier to Foley, 26 November 1907, Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C855, 132675.

¹⁴ Foley to Laurier, 17 September 1908, Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C866, 144867-71.

hope that his fellow compatriots will give him the assistance to which he is certainly entitled.”¹⁵

Although his lobbying efforts focused on Irish Ontario, Foley described himself as a Liberal and a Canadian.¹⁶ He was concerned about the future of the country, warning Laurier about clubs in Toronto dedicated to annexation to the United States, whose members included “several leading present day Protestant politicians.” He believed, however, that Laurier was “the Pilot ... who will guide us into the port of nationhood within the Empire.”¹⁷

As a result of the federal election of 1911, Robert Borden and the Conservatives replaced Laurier and the Liberals as the government of Canada. About the same time, Foley’s own career was in transition. For almost twenty years, despite his broad intellectual interests, Foley had only served in rural parishes. His close friend, Father J.J. O’Gorman, noted that the “inevitable loneliness” of a country pastor “weighed heavily” on one who loved discussion and argument with his intellectual peers.¹⁸ Then, his college friend Michael Fallon, now Bishop of London, Ontario, recruited him to take on the editorship of one of the country’s leading Catholic newspapers, the *Catholic Record*, despite Foley’s lack of journalistic experience. “I shall do my best,” Fallon wrote Murphy, “to make the arrangements satisfactory to him [Foley] and, so far as my own relations with him are concerned, he need have no fear of the future. I am convinced, moreover, that he can be of immense service in a position where his great ability can be turned to good account.”¹⁹ Making all the arrangements, including Foley’s appointment as chaplain at St. Joseph’s Orphanage in London, where he resided, took time and his name did not appear as editor until 28 December 1912.

His new position put Foley in a position to preach to a wider audience. Published weekly, the *Catholic Record* had been in existence since 1878 and owned by Thomas Coffey since 1879. Born in Ireland, Coffey strongly supported the movement for Home Rule in his homeland, a cause Foley would also champion. In general, the paper faithfully reflected the concerns of Canada’s English-speaking Catholics. By 1913 Coffey had built up the circulation of the paper to around 30,000, extending far beyond the diocese

¹⁵ Laurier to Foley, 19 September 1908, Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C866, 144872. Liberal success in Ontario in the 1908 election has been credited to Murphy and George Graham, former leader of the provincial party. Stevens, “Laurier and the Liberal Party in Ontario,” 317. Despite Foley’s optimism about the effect of Murphy’s appointment, the Liberals won the same number of seats in Ontario in 1908 as in 1904.

¹⁶ Foley to Laurier, 23 September 1908, Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C867, 145081.

¹⁷ Foley to Laurier, 7 October 1908, Laurier Fonds, microfilm reel C687, 145639-46.

¹⁸ J.J. O’G[orman], “Rev. J.T. Foley, D.D.: An Appreciation,” *Ottawa Journal*, 19 March 1932, 4.

¹⁹ Fallon to Murphy, 24 June 1911, LAC, Charles Murphy Fonds, Vol. 9, 3569.

of London itself.²⁰ Though officially neutral in politics, he was a staunch Liberal, who was rewarded with a Senate appointment in 1903. In particular, Coffey was loyal to Laurier, a stance that was certainly congenial to Foley.

Foley had a clear vision of the nature of a Catholic paper and a strong sense of his role as editor. The paper was “an antidote to the poison that is within reach of everyone. It exposes our doctrines and repels charges against them. It is a safeguard against the calumnies that are championed by a hostile press. And it also strives to impress upon its readers that eternity should not be forgotten.”²¹ When readers complained that the *Record* did not print local news, he explained that it “bids fair to become the national Catholic weekly of Canada, if, indeed, it has not already attained that status.” As such it had to concern itself with broader issues.²² He was also determined to run the paper on business principles, as Catholic papers had an unfortunate tendency to go out of business. On the other hand, as he later told Murphy, if the paper’s business manager ever tried to influence editorial content he would have resigned.²³ Nor would he accept political advertising, as “political bias would be suicidal for the *Catholic Record*.”²⁴ While a Catholic paper “must ever be strictly orthodox in doctrinal matters and it must have a single eye to the interests of God’s Church,” it need not be “merely the echo of prevailing Catholic sentiment.”²⁵

Foley stressed that the paper had “one Editor. Two or three, it is true, contribute something to its columns. But even these are subject to the Editor’s supervision.”²⁶ He also clearly stated that the paper was not “the diocesan organ of London,” though it was under the jurisdiction of the bishop. However, Fallon “gives us a scope so free and untrammelled that we are made to feel that one thing only would entail the exercise of his unquestioned authority; and that one thing is not the expression of opinion divergent from his own, but the publication of matters or views unworthy

²⁰ On Coffey see Michael Power, “Coffey, Thomas,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/coffey_thomas_14E.html, (accessed 2 May 2016). Coffey died on 8 June 1914, though his name remained on the masthead for some time afterwards.

²¹ “The Catholic Paper,” *Catholic Record*, 20 September 1913, 4.

²² “The *Catholic Record* and the Catholic People II,” *Catholic Record*, 9 August 1913, 4. In a later editorial Foley noted that the paper had more subscribers in St. John’s, Newfoundland, than in London as well as some 1,500 subscribers in the United States. “A Little ‘Local Talk’ With Sensible Readers,” *Catholic Record*, 23 January 1916, 4.

²³ Foley to Murphy, 3 September [1930], Murphy Fonds, volume 10, 4271.

²⁴ “The *Catholic Record* and the Catholic People I,” *Catholic Record*, 2 August 1913, 4.

²⁵ “Catholic Journalism,” *Catholic Record*, 16 August 1918, 4.

²⁶ “Separate Schools,” *Catholic Record*, 26 February 1916, 4.

of the Catholic name we bear.”²⁷ Editorial independence was accompanied by Catholic orthodoxy.

One issue that continued to concern Foley was the status of Canada. He bitterly opposed Borden’s proposal to give \$35 million to Britain to construct battleships as opposed to Laurier’s plan to establish a Canadian navy. In the 1911 election, imperialists rejected Laurier’s policy as insufficient while in Quebec it was attacked as inevitably leading to conscription; as a result, Laurier lost forty-two seats in his home province.²⁸ Foley believed that Borden’s policy was “the first step” towards “Canada’s permanent policy, viz. Joint Defence with its corollary of participation in Imperial foreign policy... ‘A nation within the Empire’ is Imperialism enough for most of us.... If British connection is not compatible with Canadian autonomy then so much the worse for British connection.”²⁹ Laurier must, he told Murphy, lead a campaign of “Canadianism against the suicidal policy of Imperialism to which Borden was committing the country”; Canada needed “a true national sentiment begetting national self-reliance and national self-respect.”³⁰

On the other hand, he did not oppose Canadian participation in the First World War. Parliament, he asserted, “will show a warring world that Canada is ready and willing to assume her full measure of responsibility as an integral part of the British Empire.”³¹ Foley had no doubt as to the justness of the Allied cause:

We are at war because it is a necessary and unavoidable measure of self defence on the part of the British Empire against the premeditated and carefully matured plans of German colonial expansion at our expense.... we are fighting for a great principle – the principle of individual liberty as against the nearest possible modern approximation of the deified State of ancient Rome.³²

The Allied powers and the then neutral United States, however, were not without blame for the state of the world, as shown by their lack of social conscience. As Foley wrote in 1915:

the war is an infliction, permitted by God to harass the world, because of almost world-wide sin.... The capitalist’s crimes of underpaying and overtaxing are committed daily upon countless victims.... So with Germany’s monster of militarism may be coupled the United States’

²⁷ “A Little ‘Local’ Talk With Sensible Readers,” *Catholic Record*, 23 January 1916, 4.

²⁸ Skelton, *Laurier*, II, 141-2.

²⁹ Foley to Murphy, 25 March 1913, Murphy Fonds, vol. 9, 4133-5.

³⁰ Foley to Murphy, 13 June 1913, Murphy Fonds, vol. 9, 4143.

³¹ “Canada and the War,” *Catholic Record*, 15 August 1914, 4.

³² “The Causes of the War III,” *Catholic Record*, 7 November 1914, 4.

monster of dollar-blinded industrialism.... [The war] merely expresses by violent methods the greed, cruelty and dishonesty that flourish in the business world under most respectable garb. It is God's lesson for the human race, to emphasize the need of new principles in the world of business and politics.³³

The war, he hoped, would restore "the appreciation of the old values of eternal truths... [the] follies and fetiches [sic] of the modern unchristian philosophy of life may be seen in all their hideous deformity in the fierce light which the War sheds on life and death, their purpose and their meaning."³⁴ Later in the war he noted that "the war has saved many souls from grave danger" by bringing them back to God.³⁵

Conscription became an issue in 1916 in the face of falling enlistment and rising casualties. Under great pressure from English Canada and believing it a military necessity, Prime Minister Borden announced its imposition on 18 May 1917.³⁶ Foley's first reaction was positive. Concerning the obligations of Canadians he wrote, "it seems clear that the only fair, equitable and democratic apportionment of that obligation to individual Canadians is by the action of the responsible authorities of the State."³⁷ Nevertheless, he defended the right of French Canadians to object to conscription, though not to indulge in "hooliganism," which would do "far greater injury to Quebec than all the *Orangeists* of Ontario put together."³⁸ By June, mirroring Laurier's position, he favoured a referendum to show definitively whether the government had a mandate for conscription, feeling that Quebec would accept a yes vote, but "in either case the division on racial lines which menaces the peace and unity of the Dominion would be obviated."³⁹

³³ "A Peace That Is As Cruel As Europe's War," *Catholic Record*, 4 September 1915, 4. This reflected the social teaching of Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *Rerum Novarum*.

³⁴ "One Good Result of the War," *Catholic Record*, 20 November 1915, 4.

³⁵ "The Brighter Side of the Great War," *Catholic Record*, 12 February 1916, 4.

³⁶ Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada 1896-1921 A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), 264-68.

³⁷ "Conscription in Canada," *Catholic Record*, 26 May 1917, 4. On this issue the *Catholic Register* was much stronger in its support for the government's policy. Mark G. McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 275-78.

³⁸ "Quebec and Conscription," *Catholic Record*, 2 June 1917, 4. The Protestant press, though generally supporting conscription, also opposed using the issue to stir up anti-French and anti-Quebec feelings, believing that such divisiveness would be a danger to the nation especially during a time of war. Gordon L. Heath, "The Protestant Denominational Press and the Conscription Crisis, 1917-1918," Canadian Catholic Historical Association, *Historical Studies*, 78 (2012): 27-46.

³⁹ "Selective Conscription," *Catholic Record*, 9 June 1917, 4.

When the government announced that farmers and munitions workers would be exempted from conscription, his position shifted and he denounced conscription that was for military purposes only:

The whole question should be squarely put before the people as a comprehensive measure, vesting the Government with wide powers to mobilize the entire resources of the nation and to exercise compulsion on those who stay at home as well as those chosen to go to the front, to claim the same authority over the incomes of the rich as over the lives of the poor.⁴⁰

This reflected the position of both organized labour and farmers.

At the same time, Foley criticized newspapers that were stirring up trouble between French and English – “the yellow gossip of . . . stupid bigots.” He noted that opposition to conscription was not limited to Quebec, and expected it would be defeated in a referendum. The press “should desist from its veiled threatening and tart lecturing, it should on the contrary practice the art of soothing and reconciling.”⁴¹

The Liberal party imploded when Laurier refused to support the government’s policy; many leading Anglophone Liberals joined a Unionist government under Borden. In the subsequent election the government swept English Canada while the Liberals dominated Quebec. Unlike Fallon, and several other anglophone bishops,⁴² Foley did not explicitly endorse the Union government. Despite the vitriolic anti-Catholicism of some segments of the Unionist party, Foley felt that the country was split along racial, but not religious lines, He hoped that “the voices of hatred will be stilled; that the message of peace and goodwill and mutual understanding will find a permanent lodgement in the hearts and minds of all Canadians.”⁴³

At the Armistice, Foley briefly summarized what had taken place. “State supremacy,” he declared, “is the most odious form of tyranny; and State supremacy was carried to its logical conclusion in Germany.... State-worship and Catholic principles are incompatible as fire and water,

⁴⁰ “Conscription,” *Catholic Record*, 30 June 1917, 4.

⁴¹ “The Duty of the Press,” *Catholic Record*, 28 July 1917, 4. He also sardonically noted the large number of requests for exemptions in Ontario, which showed a similarity of view between French and English. “Claims For Exemption,” *Catholic Record*, 27 October 1917, 4.

⁴² McGowan, *Waning of the Green*, 279-80. Despite his Irish sympathies, Fallon was also a staunch imperialist who believed in the righteousness of the Allied cause and regarded conscription as essential if the war were not to be lost. Adrian Ciani, “‘An Imperialist Irishman’: Bishop Michael Fallon, the Diocese of London and the Great War,” *Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Historical Studies* 74 (2008): 73-94

⁴³ “Unprecedented Political Situation,” *Catholic Record*, 29 December 1917, 4. On Unionist anti-Catholicism see McGowan, *Waning of the Green*, 279.

darkness and light. Nationalism and the Catholic Church are necessarily and irreconcilably antagonistic.... the Catholic Church is the creator and preserver of civil liberty.”⁴⁴

The war did not change his view of imperialism and his belief in Canada’s need for a greater voice in its affairs. Canada “may suffer all the consequences of an unsuccessful war,” he wrote, “yet Canada has no more to do with the policies that led to war than Afghanistan.... either we set up for ourselves as a self-governing nation in reality or we enter into full partnership with a partner’s rights and duties and responsibilities. This we take to be the great political question confronting Canadians in the very near future.... The war has not changed our relations to the Empire; it has only revealed in a striking manner how anomalous they are.”⁴⁵ The issue required intelligent discussion, otherwise, “we may be hurried into ill-considered action, which will profoundly and radically affect the future of Canada.”⁴⁶

This was not a new idea for Foley. With the end of the war in sight Foley believed that Canada’s political future would inevitably change. He agreed that there were three options: imperial federation, full independence, or union with the United States. Few Canadians favoured the last option, but intelligent conversation was required to decide which of the other two options was best for the country. In Foley’s view, Canada could not remain in a state of “arrested development,” leaving the country with a status inferior to such countries as Holland, Switzerland or the South American republics.⁴⁷

During the war he had expressed concern lest Canada fall into a relationship with the empire that would negate Canadian autonomy. He had weighed into the debate between those who believed Canada’s influence could best be exerted through an imperial parliament, composed of members from the self-governing dominions and those who thought that Canada’s best course was as an independent nation within the British Empire-Commonwealth.⁴⁸ No money should be given to an imperial parliament in which the colonies had no representation, a principle “so fundamental, so essential that its surrender or violation would imperil the whole fabric of responsible self-government.”⁴⁹ Imperial federation required the free consent of the self-governing dominions; it could not be “foisted upon” any of them.⁵⁰ He noted the increasing use of the term “Commonwealth” as “Imperialism

⁴⁴ “Downfall,” *Catholic Record*, 16 November 1918, 4.

⁴⁵ “Imperialism,” *Catholic Record*, 13 February 1915, 4.

⁴⁶ “The Future of Canada,” *Catholic Record*, 11 November 1916, 4.

⁴⁷ “Canada’s Political Future,” *Catholic Record*, 19 October 1918, 4.

⁴⁸ On this issue see Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970).

⁴⁹ “Political Organization of the Empire,” *Catholic Record*, 6 January 1917, 4.

⁵⁰ “The One Great Question,” *Catholic Record*, 3 February 1917, 4.

had been so cheapened, so degraded, so prostituted by flag-waving political mountebanks to the basest partisan purposes.”⁵¹

Foley closely followed the gradual change in Canada’s status after the war. He believed that Canada’s delegates at the peace conference in Paris, where the Dominion successfully argued for representation separate from that of Britain, “have secured for Canada the status of a small nation....”⁵² “We cannot be useful citizens of the world,” he asserted, “without being ardent and devoted sons of Canada... in this way only can we, as Canadians, render the greatest service to the British Commonwealth of self-governing nations.”⁵³ However, there remained “the all-important matter of the extension of self-government to foreign relations. That is the fundamental question of Canadian politics which sooner or later must be squarely faced.”⁵⁴

Membership in the postwar League of Nations, he believed, gave Canada “international recognition as a nation among the nations of the world,” but that status must be clearly defined to reflect the constitutional changes that had been, and would be, made.⁵⁵ Public figures had stated that Canada and the other dominions were now equal to Great Britain, but the details, he believed, had not been worked out. An enlightened public opinion was needed to guide policy.

The first real test of this new status came in October 1922, when the Chanak crisis threatened war between Britain and Turkey over the latter’s reoccupation of territory granted to Greece by the Treaty of Sèvres. A British appeal for Canadian assistance appeared in the press before the government had received it. Canada’s new Liberal prime minister, Mackenzie King, and his Cabinet colleagues were extremely annoyed by this and rejected the request. Foley heartily supported this decision. He felt that the issue raised important questions:

Canada’s ‘effective voice’ in British foreign policy is sheer buncombe; we must consider if Laurier was not right when that great Canadian and sane Imperialist held that the Government of Great Britain must be wholly responsible for British foreign policy, for, though it necessarily affects Canada, no means can be, or have been devised, to give Canada

⁵¹ “The Round Table, Ireland and the Empire,” *Catholic Record*, 12 May 1917, 4. At the Imperial War Conference of 1917, a meeting of the dominion and British governments, the status of the dominions was defined (by Resolution IX), “as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth” with a right to a voice in foreign policy and other matters of common concern. C.P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict: A History of Canadian External Policies Volume 1: 1867-1921* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977), 213.

⁵² “Canada A Nation,” *Catholic Record*, 1 February 1919, 4.

⁵³ “Canadian National Sentiment,” *Catholic Record*, 19 June 1920, 4.

⁵⁴ “Is Canada A Nation?” *Catholic Record*, 15 November 1919.

⁵⁵ “The National Status of Canada,” *Catholic Record*, 22 April 1922, 4.

an 'effective voice' therein other than the assertion and maintenance of Canada's right to participate or not participate in a foreign war.⁵⁶

He stressed that Canada could only have an impact on imperial affairs by maintaining "her full traditional right of self-government.... On the specious pretext of reaching a higher national status we must beware of surrendering the essentials of self-government."⁵⁷

In the lead-up to the Imperial Conference of 1923, Foley reiterated his view that "consultation of the Dominions on British foreign policy is illusory.... There is just one fundamental principle that must govern in all cases: the Parliament of each Dominion is supreme." On this he expressed his faith in Mackenzie King, Laurier's self-professed disciple and an emerging champion of Canadian autonomy. Unlike Borden, who had sought to obtain for Canada a voice in imperial councils, King believed that a common imperial foreign policy would be injurious to Canadian autonomy.⁵⁸

Foley was pleased with the results of the 1926 Imperial Conference, which declared that Great Britain and the dominions were "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs." He believed that this was "something, a great thing, to have that status expressly recognized and defined. It determines for all time to come the stupendous and important fact that every British Government must respect the national sovereignty of Canada as scrupulously as they respect that of Belgium or France or Italy." This marked a defeat for the "narrower and more timid of Canadian imperialists... [who] have interpreted imperialism as setting limits to Canadian autonomy, and hitherto ... have too often condemned as savoring of treason the national aspirations of self-respecting Canadians."⁵⁹

While concerned with Canada's sovereignty during this period, Foley also paid close attention to the situation in Ireland, his ancestral homeland. After taking over the *Catholic Record*, he continued his predecessor's policy of supporting the achievement of Home Rule by constitutional means under the aegis of the Irish Parliamentary Party led by John Redmond. He was appalled by the "sinful and insane rebellion," the Easter Rising in 1916, which saw a small band of rebels occupy various areas of Dublin before being

⁵⁶ "What is Canada's Status with Regard to War?" *Catholic Record*, 7 October 1922, 4. On Chanak see Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict* 2, 17-27.

⁵⁷ "Canada's 'Effective Voice' in Foreign Policy," *Catholic Record*, 14 October 1922, 4.

⁵⁸ "Let Us Make Haste Slowly," *Catholic Record*, 18 August 1923, 4; Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict* 2, 66-67.

⁵⁹ "National Status Acknowledged," *Catholic Record*, 18 December 1926, 4. On the conference see Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict* 2, 83-89.

overpowered by the British military with extensive damage to the city and the loss of many innocent lives.⁶⁰ The blame was not entirely the rebels', given the obduracy of the Ulster Unionists, who were prepared to oppose Home Rule at all costs. He also decried the hypocrisy of the British government for denying Ireland what Britain claimed to be fighting for: "the rights of small nations, a war for liberty and democracy."⁶¹ Gradually, Foley's perception of the situation changed. As the more radical *Sinn Fein* party began to gain electoral support, winning several by-elections, he concluded that the Irish people "were done with constitutional methods,"⁶² though he continued to hope that a political solution could be found.

While Foley wanted to see Irishmen continue to fight for Britain during the Great War, he strongly opposed the proposed extension of conscription to Ireland, which, lacking the consent of the Irish people, would only increase "Irish distrust, discontent and resentment."⁶³ He referred to conscription in Ireland as an "insane policy,"⁶⁴ and now attributed the Rising in 1916 to the British stance on the draft. *Sinn Fein's* landslide electoral victory in December 1918 demonstrated that it now represented the will of the Irish people. Foley accepted this, welcoming the establishment of an Irish parliament, *Dail Eireann*, and wishing God's blessing on their battle for "the sacred cause of Irish liberty."⁶⁵ He continued to believe, however, that the best solution for Ireland was not an independent republic, but dominion status within the Empire.

The outbreak of violence in 1919, which marked the beginning of the Anglo-Irish war and Britain's repression of it, pushed Foley to an even more radical position. He reported atrocities committed by the rebels as British propaganda, and British atrocities as "blunders and crimes and murders" akin to those committed by the Germans.⁶⁶ Foley defended the use of hunger strikes by imprisoned rebels, the most famous of which was that of Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, which ended in his death. Foley considered that MacSwiney's goal was to bring the world's attention to "the barbarities

⁶⁰ "The Insane Folly of the Sinn Feiners," *Catholic Record*, 6 May 1916, 4. See Frederick J. McEvoy, "Canadian Catholic Press Reaction to the Irish Crisis, 1916-1921," in David A. Wilson, ed. *Irish Nationalism in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 121-39. There is an extensive literature on the Rising. See, for example, Charles Townshend, *Easter 1916: The Irish Rebellion* (London: Penguin Books, 2006).

⁶¹ "Why Ireland Is Opposed to Conscription," *Catholic Record*, 18 November 1916, 4.

⁶² "Developments in the Irish Question," *Catholic Record*, 19 May 1917, 4.

⁶³ "Ireland, Home Rule and Conscription," *Catholic Record*, 20 April 1918, 4.

⁶⁴ "Must Reverse Their Irish Policy," *Catholic Record*, 15 June 1918, 4.

⁶⁵ "The Dail Eireann," *Catholic Record*, 1 February 1919, 4.

⁶⁶ "The Latest Sinn Fein 'Outrage,'" *Catholic Record*, 10 January 1920, 4.

of English rule in Ireland”; his death was an “unintended consequence” and hence not contrary to Catholic moral teaching about suicide.⁶⁷

As the war dragged on, Foley wondered if the rebels could defeat “the might of the British Empire,” as he warned that persisting in an unwinnable war would in itself be sinful. Compromise was required as he thought Britain would not accept an independent republic. He believed that the Irish people would, on the whole, accept dominion status.⁶⁸ Thus, Foley enthusiastically greeted the ceasefire and the negotiations that led to the Anglo-Irish Treaty in December 1921, establishing the Irish Free State, even though six of the nine counties in Ulster remained in union with Britain. Foley believed that Ireland had become a republic in all but name and that reunion of the country would soon follow.⁶⁹ He had no sympathy for those who opposed the treaty, especially Eamon De Valera, or for the civil war that followed, but warmly welcomed the ultimate victory of the Free State.⁷⁰

Another editorial preoccupation during this period was much closer to home, though similarly controversial, that is, the issue of bilingual schools in Ontario. In 1912, just as Foley was succeeding to the editorship of the *Catholic Record*, the Ontario government issued the infamous Regulation 17, which confined teaching in French to the first two years of schooling. The issue became a source of a long and bitter conflict between anglophone and francophone Catholics. In Ottawa the French school board defied the government’s edict, even to the extent of closing its schools in June 1914. Bishop Fallon, whose diocese included bilingual schools, was one of the leading voices supporting the government.⁷¹ Many anglophones feared that the controversy would lead to an all-out assault on the separate school system and its possible destruction.

The English-speaking, Irish-Catholic Foley completely agreed with Bishop Fallon. He expressed his depth of feeling in a personal letter to Archbishop McNeil of Toronto. The French, he asserted, had attacked authority figures, especially Bishop Fallon, “the venomous bitterness of which [attack] has never been approached by the *Orange Sentinel*.” Decrying “their insane nationalism to which they prostitute religion” and “their arrogant claims and defiant lawlessness,” he argued that the French language had no rights outside of Quebec and the federal parliament and courts. It was his “most intimate conviction that our whole education

⁶⁷ “Was It Suicide?” *Catholic Record*, 6 November 1920, 4.

⁶⁸ “The Irish Impasse,” *Catholic Record*, 18 December 1920, 4.

⁶⁹ “Dominion Status for Ireland,” *Catholic Record*, 17 December 1921, 4.

⁷⁰ McGowan, *Waning of the Green*, 201.

⁷¹ See Jack D. Cecillon, *Prayers, Petitions and Protests: The Catholic Church and the Ontario Schools Crisis in the Windsor Border Region, 1910-1928* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2013).

system...is in very much greater danger from the illegal, unconstitutional, dishonest, and insufferable campaign of French Canadian agitators, mostly from the Province of Quebec, than it is or ever will be from the Orangemen of Ontario.”⁷²

Foley made his thoughts clear in the *Record*, if not quite so brutally. In December 1915 he stated that “in no country in the wide world has a conquered race been treated so generously as in the Province of Quebec. When the exceptional privileges with regard to the French language enjoyed in that province are made the basis for arrogant demands in the other parts of Canada it is at once a tribute to and an abuse of the generosity which was granted them.”⁷³ He accused the French of using their schools as “the medium of effectively promoting the plans of French-Canadian colonization by forcing English-speaking farmers to move elsewhere; or in the case of new districts to stay away. The terms ‘invasion’ and ‘conquest’ are appropriate.”⁷⁴ This was especially true of eastern Ontario, where there had been an influx of francophones from Quebec in recent years. On this issue, however, Foley and Fallon were on the losing side. Cooler heads prevailed, preferring rapprochement between French and English to continuation of the conflict. In 1927 the Conservative government of Ontario amended Regulation 17 in a way that met the concerns of francophones, though it was not repealed until 1944.⁷⁵

While Foley endorsed Mackenzie King’s policies on Canadian autonomy, he developed a profound hatred of King. So intense was this feeling that Foley came to support the Conservative party of R.B. Bennett. He shared this hatred of King with his good friend Charles Murphy. In September 1925 King ousted Murphy, who had served as Postmaster General since 1921, from cabinet by appointing him to the Senate and then denying him a cabinet seat on the grounds that he did not believe senators should serve as ministers, though previous prime ministers had included senators in their cabinets.⁷⁶ In congratulating Murphy on his senate appointment Foley declared that Irish Catholics “shall be accustomed to look to you as our competent lay representative in placing our position in its true light

⁷² Foley to McNeil, n.d., London Diocesan Archives, Bishop Fallon Fonds, Box 5, File 23.

⁷³ “Our French-Canadian Friends,” *Catholic Record*, 25 December 1915, 4. On this issue Foley did not extend the same sympathy to the francophone position as he did during the conscription crisis.

⁷⁴ “Language Not Religion,” *Catholic Record*, 10 June 1916, 4.

⁷⁵ Robert Choquette, *Language and Religion: A History of English-French Conflict in Ontario* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1975), 245-7.

⁷⁶ H. Blair Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King, Volume Two 1924-1932: The Lonely Heights* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 172-73.

before our fellow Canadians.” However, he added, “I resented deeply King’s dropping you as it were.”⁷⁷

A second bombshell was King’s decision to appoint N.W. Rowell to cabinet. Rowell was one of the leading Liberals who had abandoned Laurier and joined the Union government. Murphy and Foley, the staunchest of Laurier loyalists, viewed Rowell as a traitor of the worst kind, and also considered him to be virulently anti-Catholic.⁷⁸ In fact, Rowell had alienated so many Liberals on a variety of issues that King had to back down.⁷⁹

Another irritant involved a memoir published in 1929 by Beckles Willson, a journalist and prolific author. In it, he wrote that Laurier’s “religious opinions became unsettled in youth, and I think he was regarded by his intimates as an agnostic, although he was careful never to betray himself.”⁸⁰ Adding insult to injury was the book’s dedication to “my distinguished friend and fellow-countryman” Mackenzie King. Enraged by what he considered a slur on Laurier’s memory, Foley admitted in an editorial that Laurier had at one time ceased to be a practicing Catholic, but later became quite devout: “the present writer, a priest, knew Sir Wilfrid and talked with him about religion; he is utterly convinced of Sir Wilfrid’s simple, humble and sincere Catholic faith.” He demanded that King explain “the amazing dedication to him of this scurrilous book.”⁸¹ A week later, when King had not responded, Foley ominously stated, “We used to feel a pretty warm interest in one of the political parties. We think now that politicians of either or both parties can fall pretty low.”⁸²

King, in fact, paid attention to Willson’s “fool book.” In caucus on 12 March 1930, he recorded, “A great furore has been stirred up,” which he attributed to the machinations of Murphy.⁸³ In the House of Commons the next day, King denied knowing of the book, or the dedication, until he had actually received a copy. He clearly stated that he had not been asked for permission to dedicate the book to him, plaintively adding “I wish he had dedicated it to someone else.”⁸⁴ Foley was not particularly mollified,

⁷⁷ Foley to Murphy, 10 December 1925, LAC, Murphy Fonds, vol. 10, 4175.

⁷⁸ A contemporary journalist wrote, “There was never a better hater than Mr. Murphy,” and that he “almost savagely resented” those Liberals who had deserted Laurier. See Arthur R. Ford, *As the World Wags On* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1950), 71-2.

⁷⁹ Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King*, 173.

⁸⁰ Beckles Willson, *From Quebec to Piccadilly and Other Places: Some Anglo-Canadian Memories*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1929), 62.

⁸¹ “Blackguard Expatriate,” *Catholic Record*, 1 March 1930, 4.

⁸² “That Amazing Dedication, That Resounding Silence,” *Catholic Record*, 8 March 1930, 4.

⁸³ Diary entry for 12 March 1930, 5670, William Lyon Mackenzie King Fonds, LAC.

⁸⁴ Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 13 March 1930, 549.

wondering why King had waited so long to respond.⁸⁵ Some months later after the victory of Bennett and the Conservatives in the 1930 election, King described the issue as “the most diabolical plot to influence the catholic vote, thro [sic] circulation of Beckles Wilson [sic] libel from Catholic Record.... Bennett was a party to this.”⁸⁶

In the run-up to the 1930 election Foley had written an editorial that, while not openly breaking the policy of political neutrality, could be read as a subtle endorsement of the Conservatives. Noting claims that the Liberals were using “rumour of war” in Quebec to sway voters against the Conservatives, he asserted that this was not good either for Canada or the Conservative party and that “it would be better,”

for Quebec and better for Canada if Quebec Catholics and other Catholics were divided on grounds other than race or religion between the two great parties.... No matter which party is in power it is important – both for Quebec and for Canada – that French Canadians should be adequately represented not only in the number of Ministers but in their ability – something that is hardly possible if all Quebec is on one side.⁸⁷

Liberals read this as an attack on their Quebec stronghold.

For their part, Conservative operatives took Foley’s writing, tweaked it to make it more obviously pro-Conservative, and distributed it as a pamphlet purportedly coming from the *Record* itself. A number of subscribers cancelled their subscriptions, presumably because they either supported the Liberals or felt the paper had become entangled in partisan politics. On 9 August Foley disavowed responsibility for the pamphlet in an editorial, calling it “this unwarranted use of the *Catholic Record*’s name.”⁸⁸ Privately, he stated, “we have always had the moral courage to comment on things political when they are of Catholic interest. We stand by anything that appeared in the *Catholic Record* in the sense made evident by the context of the articles themselves. Beyond that our responsibility ceases.”⁸⁹

In the same issue, Foley commented on the Conservative victory in the election that July, particularly noting that their support in Quebec would prevent the “injection of racial and religious questions into the policy or

⁸⁵ “Is Willson the Ass or the Goat,” *Catholic Record*, 22 March 1930, 4. The gap between the first editorial and King’s statement was twelve days. King may not have been aware of the issue until 10 March when his secretary brought it to his attention, referring to the 8 March editorial as a veiled attack on the prime minister. H. Baldwin to King, 10 March 1930, King Fonds, microfilm reel C2316, 145824-5.

⁸⁶ Diary entry for 17 September 1930, King Fonds, 5841-2.

⁸⁷ “Politics and Religion,” *Catholic Record*, 5 July 1930, 4.

⁸⁸ “A Word in Season from the *Catholic Record*,” *Catholic Record*, 9 August 1930, 4. This was the actual title of the pamphlet.

⁸⁹ Foley to J.A. Boyd, 28 July 1930, King Fonds, microfilm reel C2326, 158506.

tactics of any party in the future.”⁹⁰ Writing later to Bennett, Foley made a rather grandiloquent claim of the *Record's* influence. Despite the paper's position of non-partisanship, Foley believed that it had “contributed very largely to your success in the last election. It was not because it loved R.B. Bennett or his political principles, but because it hated Mackenzie King and his total lack of all principle.” As he had done with Laurier, Foley now sought Bennett's patronage for Catholics, recommending the appointment of J.J. Leddy, a prominent Saskatoon Catholic, for a vacant senatorship in Saskatchewan. If this were done, he offered, the *Record* would praise the government, “which should have some political value.”⁹¹

Bennett thanked Foley for his frankness, but stated that, while he had promised his followers that he would appoint a Catholic from Northern Saskatchewan, Leddy was not popular with them and his appointment “would greatly increase our difficulties.”⁹² Despite this negative response, Murphy told Foley that the letter showed that “you enjoy his confidence and esteem. It is of prime importance that you retain both...”⁹³

Foley returned to the attack, reminding Bennett of Catholic strength, which could “make the difference in some ridings.” He now promised to praise the government and “congratulate Catholics on having such a representative.... it will please Catholics not only in Saskatchewan but in every one of the other eight provinces. That should have some political value.” However, he reasserted the paper's policy of non-partisanship and that he would not hesitate to criticize Bennett if necessary.⁹⁴

Leddy's prime rival for the senate position was a francophone, Arthur Marcotte, another example in the longstanding battle for control of the church between Irish and French Catholics. Foley, who was well versed in this situation, urged Bennett not to appoint a francophone, feeling that the French were already well represented in public life:

Protestants look upon a French-Canadian appointment as a *Catholic* appointment; French Canadians look upon the appointment of an English-speaking Catholic as an *English* appointment. So between the French Canadian Catholics on the one hand, and the Protestants on the other, English-speaking Catholics are ground between the upper and nether millstones.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ “Some Reflections,” *Catholic Record*, 9 August 1930, 4.

⁹¹ Foley to Bennett, 3 February 1931, Murphy Fonds, volume 10, 4290-1.

⁹² Bennett to Foley, 24 February 1931, Murphy Fonds, volume 10, 4281-2.

⁹³ Murphy to Foley, 4 March 1931, Murphy Fonds, volume 10, 4284.

⁹⁴ Foley to Bennett, 3 February 1931, Murphy Fonds, volume 10, 4290-1.

⁹⁵ Foley to Bennett, 16 March 1931, Murphy Fonds, volume 10, 4293-4. Italics in original.

Despite Foley's arguments, the appointment went to Marcotte.⁹⁶

Although Foley failed in this effort, he did impress Bennett, who later told Murphy that he could not recall any meeting "that gave him a higher opinion of his visitor" than the one he had with Foley. Murphy attributed this to Foley's "human side" and his ability to appreciate "the point of view of our separated brethren."⁹⁷

Foley had another issue with the government; he wanted compensation for the loss of subscribers caused by the Conservative circulation of their election pamphlet as if it came from the paper. R.M. Burns, the paper's business manager, learned from Arthur Ford, the editor of the London *Free Press*, that Bennett "acknowledged the unfairness of the pamphlets sent out by his party in this and other districts, and told him that we certainly will be put on the advertising lists of the various departments at Ottawa."⁹⁸ Murphy confirmed this and advised Burns that the *Record* would receive government printing contracts.⁹⁹ When no contracts had appeared by April 1931, Burns wrote directly to Bennett, threatening to make the situation public and asking "just what the Conservative Party plans to do for the *Catholic Record*."¹⁰⁰ Bennett advised the private secretary to the Minister of Immigration, who had forwarded Burns' letter to Bennett, that he had insufficient knowledge to speak to the situation and had never spoken directly to Burns.¹⁰¹ Some of the correspondence came into the hands of Mackenzie King, though Bennett did not know how. In the end Bennett was unwilling to correspond with Burns "in the light of what has transpired."¹⁰²

Little less than a year later, after a period of illness Foley died on 5 March 1932. After a funeral service in London the body was returned to Ottawa for burial. His death was widely noticed, with obituaries in all the Catholic papers, which the *Record* reprinted. The *Western Catholic* of Edmonton believed that during his tenure as editor the *Record* "has been the dominant influence in moulding Catholic public opinion in Canada."¹⁰³

⁹⁶ Michael Cottrell, "John Joseph Leddy and the Battle for the Soul of the Catholic Church in the West," Canadian Catholic Historical Association, *Historical Studies* 61 (1995): 41-51. Marcotte was actually from Gravelbourg in south-central Saskatchewan.

⁹⁷ Murphy to R.M. Burns, 22 March 1932, Murphy Fonds, volume 4, 1458.

⁹⁸ Burns to Foley, 18 August 1930, Murphy Fonds, volume 10, 4270.

⁹⁹ Murphy to Burns, 2 September 1930, King Fonds, microfilm reel C2326, 158493-4.

¹⁰⁰ Burns to Bennett, 6 April 1931, LAC, R.B. Bennett Fonds, microfilm reel M1208, 129425-6.

¹⁰¹ Bennett to M.J. Cullen, 10 April 1931, Bennett Fonds, microfilm reel M1208, 129429.

¹⁰² Bennett to Charles McCrea, 15 April 1931, Bennett Fonds, microfilm reel M1208, 129431.

¹⁰³ "Editorial Tribute Paid Doctor Foley," *Catholic Record*, 26 March 1932, 4.

The *Catholic Register* called him “the best-informed journalist of our day and generation.”¹⁰⁴ The *Canadian Freeman* noted, “Always he was a militant Canadian, loving his country with an intense earnestness and giving generously of his time and talent in her service.”¹⁰⁵ His intelligence and knowledge were praised. His good friend Father J.J. O’Gorman wrote, “A brilliant conversationalist and as inveterate a debater as he was a smoker, he loved to argue with those who, like himself, possessed a liberal education and a keen intellect.”¹⁰⁶ However, according to the *Catholic Register*, “he could on occasion manifest the haughty mood of the schoolmaster teaching a dull class.”¹⁰⁷ Charles Murphy praised “the literary gifts, the all-round education, and the sound political knowledge of my dear old friend, Father Foley.”¹⁰⁸

Memorialists also commented on Foley’s interest and expertise in educational matters. His concern for the future of Catholic schools went beyond the bilingual crisis of Regulation 17 to the battle for a fairer distribution of the taxes Catholics paid in support of the public school system. He was deeply concerned about the quality of the teaching of the catechism in school as well, prevailing upon Bishop Fallon to establish the Summer School of Catechetics in London, which was attended by teachers of religion, lay as well as religious.¹⁰⁹ One congregation of sisters believed that “the course gave impetus to a higher grade of Religious Instruction in our schools which must in a short time bear evident fruit.”¹¹⁰ Foley himself regarded it as “one of the most important events in the Catholic educational history of Ontario during the last half century.”¹¹¹ As memorialists noted, he had also served as an adviser to the bishops of Ontario on educational matters and on the board of the London public library.¹¹²

¹⁰⁴ “Rev. Dr. Foley Dead,” *Catholic Record*, 19 March 1932, 4.

¹⁰⁵ “Catholic Editor Passes,” *Catholic Record*, 19 March 1932, 4-5.

¹⁰⁶ “Rev. J.T. Foley, D.D. An Appreciation,” *Ottawa Journal*, 9 March 1932, 13.

¹⁰⁷ “Rev. Dr. Foley Dead,” *Catholic Record*, 19 March 1932, 4.

¹⁰⁸ Murphy to W.T. Kernahan, 21 March 1932, Murphy Fonds, vol. 14, 5719.

¹⁰⁹ “The Rev. J.T. Foley, D.D.,” *Catholic Record*, 12 March 1932, 4.

¹¹⁰ Archives of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Sister Genevieve Hennessy, “Chronicles of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Diocese of London, Ontario 1853-1928,” unpublished manuscript, 2014, 277. I wish to thank Mary Kosta, the Congregation Archivist, for this reference.

¹¹¹ “The Summer School of Catechetics,” *Catholic Record*, 20 July 1929, 4.

¹¹² “The Rev. J.T. Foley, D.D.,” *Catholic Record*, 12 March 1932, 4; “Death Comes to Father J.T. Foley,” *London Free Press*, 5 March 1932. Foley strongly believed in the importance of the public library, which “offers equality of opportunity to every citizen capable and desirous of taking advantage of it... In helping individuals it confers an unquestionable benefit on the entire community.” Father J.T. Foley, “A Public Library Confers a Benefit on Its Whole Community,” *Ontario Library Review*, vol. 1, no. 1 (June 1916), 12.

Foley's relationship with his old classmate, Bishop Fallon, who predeceased him on 22 February 1931, was key to his success as editor. Fallon could be intimidating or, as Father Charles Mea of Prescott, Ontario described him, "a very arbitrary superior. His [Foley's] great success as editor after his great ability in that line was due in large measure to the fact that he was one of the four persons whom I know whose personality overawed the audacious and vigorous Michael Fallon."¹¹³

James T. Foley's journalistic career shows how ethnicity and religion remained important factors in Canadian political culture; it also reveals the continuing importance of patronage to the workings of government during the period. His positions on key issues highlight the ongoing conflict between French and English for control of the church in Canada, with English Catholics caught between French Catholicism and Anglo Protestantism. As editor Foley commented widely on political affairs and Canadian status in the Empire-Commonwealth, though always from a Catholic perspective. Caught between his Canadian nationalism and his Irish heritage, he maintained a deep personal interest in the situation in Ireland, as did Murphy and Fallon, expressing his opinion of British policy in vitriolic terms. Under his editorship the *Catholic Record*, far from being parochial, brought the major issues of the day to the attention of its far-flung readership. In the process, he shaped the larger discourse in Catholic Canada in the early decades of the twentieth century.

¹¹³ Charles J. Mea to Murphy, Murphy Fonds, volume 20, 8260.

Strict Neo-Thomism in the Catholic High Schools of the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1940-1960

Joe STAFFORD

Abstract: *This paper analyses the impact of Magisterium-sanctioned strict Neo-Thomism on religious secondary education in the Archdiocese of Toronto in the context of Catholic education in North America between 1940 and 1960. Two key questions are posed: Why did Catholic high schools fail to transmit the richness of their faith and why did they fail to instill in their students a sense of wonder and curiosity? It is argued that this failure was the result of the strict Neo-Thomism that dominated Catholic education in North America. The Archdiocese adhered closely to the ordinances of Rome in its policies, in its mandated textbooks, and in its teacher-preparation and professional development courses. This paper also examines Catholic culture prior to Vatican II, a classicist culture wherein the larger community determined meaning and value, not individuals themselves. The extent to which the Archdiocese contributed to sustaining this culture and the subsequent Catholic world-view, the so-called Catholic mind, is also analysed.*

Resumé : *Cette communication analyse l'impact du néo-thomisme strict, sanctionné par le Magistérium, sur l'éducation religieuse au niveau secondaire dans l'archidiocèse de Toronto, pris dans le contexte de l'éducation catholique en Amérique du Nord entre 1940 et 1960. On pose deux questions : pourquoi les écoles secondaires catholiques ont-elles échoué à transmettre la richesse de leur foi et pourquoi ont-elles manqué d'inculquer à leurs élèves un sentiment d'émerveillement et de curiosité ? On soutient que cet échec était la conséquence du néo-thomisme strict qui dominait l'éducation catholique en Amérique du Nord. L'Archidiocèse se conformait étroitement aux arrêtés de Rome en ce qui concerne ses politiques, ses livres scolaires, ses cours de formation et de développement professionnel à l'intention des enseignants. Cette intervention examine également la culture catholique avant le II^e Concile du Vatican, une culture classiciste dans laquelle la grande communauté, et non les individus, portait des jugements de signification et de valeur. Nous analysons aussi la mesure dans laquelle l'archidiocèse contribuait au maintien de cette culture, et la vision du monde catholique qui en résultait, le soi-disant esprit catholique.*

Introduction

A “restless sense of intellectual curiosity” is needed! Such were the words of urgency uttered by Professor Lawrence E. Lynch of St. Michael’s College in a 1957 address, “Intellectual Curiosity in Catholic Schools,” to the English Catholic Education Association of Ontario.¹ Lynch was not alone in his criticism. In 1964, Gerard S. Sloyan, chair of the Department of Religious Education at the Catholic University of America, lamented that Catholic schools taught religion in a superficial manner, and had failed to transmit the “fullness” of the Catholic tradition, offering instead a “distillation from which the most precious residue is absent.”² Cardinal Emmett Carter of Toronto was also critical of religious education, once declaring that the religion class “has been known in many cases as the dullest, the most uninteresting and the most dreaded.”³ Why was this the case? Why had Catholic high schools failed to transmit the richness of their faith and why had they failed to instill in their students a sense of curiosity?

The answer lies within the nature of religious education in North America. A strict form of Neo-Thomism dominated Catholic education, a dominance that remained essentially unchallenged until the reforms of Vatican II, despite the increasing pluralism within the Neo-Thomist movement, which the Magisterium considered contrary to official church teaching. This form of Neo-Thomism strictly followed instruction from the Magisterium in Rome. When, in 1879, Pope Leo XIII adopted the philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas for Catholic education, giving birth to the modern Neo-Thomist movement, the Magisterium insisted that Catholic schools adhere to this philosophy. Obedience was required. Students were not expected to ask questions or to ponder. Rote-memory was the dominant pedagogy. Neo-Thomism held that the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas embodied religious truth – a truth that was immutable, objective, and devoid of any individual subjectivity. Religious education was thus only a matter of students learning these truths and the subsequent church teachings.

Prior to Vatican II Catholics in North America also shared in what Bernard Lonergan, a Canadian Jesuit theologian who taught for some years

¹ Quoted in Franklin Walker, *Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario*, vol. 3 (Toronto: Catholic Education Foundation of Ontario, 1986), 205.

² Gerard S. Sloyan, “Catechetical Crossroads,” *Religious Education* 59, no. 2 (1964): 147, doi: 10.1080/003440860590208.

³ Michael W. Higgins and Douglas R. Letson, *My Father’s Business: A Biography of His Eminence G. Emmett Cardinal Carter* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1990), 49. Cardinal Carter, best known for his role in obtaining full funding for Ontario Catholic schools in 1984, had a long history in religious education. In Quebec, he had been a school inspector and the Director of the Jacques Cartier Normal School. In 1947, he completed a Ph. D. in religious education.

at Regis College in Toronto, termed a classicist culture in which the larger community determined meaning and value, not the individuals themselves. Catholic belief permeated this culture – a culture that also inherited and absorbed much of the Greco-Roman classical tradition.⁴ The individual assimilated this meaning and value, and learned from great intellectuals of the past. Within this culture most Catholics shared a sense of certainty concerning their faith. By the early 20th century strict Neo-Thomism embodied this culture in North America, producing what scholars have called “the Catholic mind” – the acceptance of Neo-Thomism as a mode of thought that formed an integral part of Catholic self-identity.⁵

Catholic secondary education in the Archdiocese of Toronto exemplified this acceptance. The policies of the Archdiocese and the mandated textbooks indicate that the Archdiocese enforced a strict Neo-Thomism in obedience to Rome. At the high school level, religious education focused on transmitting the essential precepts and content of Catholicism to the students without permitting any serious inquiry. Mandatory final religion exams at each grade level made it difficult for schools to stray from this policy since they had to prepare their students to pass the exams. Teacher-preparation courses also emphasized Neo-Thomism and focused on how to use the prescribed textbooks effectively in the classroom. These policies of the Archdiocese also contributed to maintaining the so-called Catholic mind. The degree to which Catholics actually shared in this Catholic mind is extremely difficult to measure, but the impact of the reforms of Vatican II provides some indication. Bernard Lonergan argues that one fundamental change after Vatican II was the shattering of the Catholic classicist culture that sustained the Catholic mind, and thereby undermined the sense of certainty that most Catholics possessed about their religion: that the fundamental precepts of the faith were the “truth.” In the empiricist culture which replaced it, individuals determined meaning and value for themselves – a culture that in the non-Catholic world had gradually developed since the beginning of the seventeenth century. The confusion and the lack of certainty in Catholic education reflected the confusion and lack of certainty that enveloped the entire Church in the years immediately after Vatican II.

⁴ Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas That Have Shaped Our World* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1991), 209-219, 246. Tarnas outlines the complex intellectual tradition embodied in the Church, highlighting in particular the role of the Jesuits in terms of education, and their role in both conserving and promoting the “humanistic program” from the classical era and the Renaissance.

⁵ Gerald A. McCool, “Neo-Thomism and the Tradition of St. Thomas,” *Thought*, 62, no. 245 (1987): 134, doi: 105840/thought198762223, 134.

Strict Neo-Thomism in North America

Pope Leo XIII's 1879 encyclical, *Aeterni Patris*, On the Restoration of Christian Philosophy, had an enormous impact on Catholic education. It was his attempt to restore what he considered to be the epitome of Christian philosophy, that of St. Thomas Aquinas, as an answer, or an antidote, to what he considered the "dangers" of modern philosophy. Neo-Thomism also reflected the Church's understanding of the complex relationship between faith and reason, articulated in the First Vatican Council decree, *Dei Filius*, the Apostolic Constitution on Faith. Since faith was an "operative habit inhering in the intellect," natural reason could prove the existence of God and the "reasonableness of the act of faith."⁶ Furthermore, chapter two, "On Revelation," states, "God, the source and end of all things, may be known...with certainty from consideration of created things, by the natural power of human reason."⁷ God can also be known by faith through God's revelation because the "divine mysteries" are by their very nature beyond complete understanding and are accepted on faith.⁸ *Dei Filius* argues, then, that natural reason and revelation can co-exist in harmony since God is the source of both.⁹ Thus, objective truth could be discovered within the context of the Church's interpretation and authority. Neo-Thomists also contended that no significant change had occurred in Christian theology and philosophy since the days of the Church Fathers. And so, religious "truths" were immutable and had "crystallized into assertions in Scripture and in doctrines of tradition,"¹⁰ which theologians then supported through deductive reasoning. Neo-Thomists also contended that immanence and subjectivity played no part in the search for the truth and the establishment of doctrine.¹¹ Instead, they emphasized the role of the intellect and the will.

⁶ Gerald A. McCool, *Nineteenth-Century Scholasticism: The Search for a Unitary Method*. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989), 7.

⁷ Owen Cummings, *Prophets, Guardians, and Saints: Shapers of Modern Catholic History* (New York: Paulist Press, 2007), 104.

⁸ Cummings, *Prophets, Guardians, and Saints*, 104.

⁹ The Church understood natural reason as "created reason" and thus subordinated to "uncreated Truth" as revealed by God. Faith and natural reason are interrelated. The church distinguished between two orders of knowledge: the "order of natural reason" and the "order of faith." The first order could only grasp truths that can be obtained from natural reason. Divinely revealed truths could not be grasped by natural reason without assistance from the first order of faith. Faith played the critical role. The church did not believe that natural reason was autonomous, but was dependent on faith. Jurgen Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Theologie – New Theology: Inheritor of Modernism, Precursor of Vatican II* (London: T&T Clark International, 2010), 19.

¹⁰ Gabriel Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence: A Study in Catholic Modernism and Integralism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 19.

¹¹ Daly says Vatican I may not have intended to close the door completely on an "immanent dimension to the preparation for faith," and the importance of the "subjective

The Neo-Thomists believe that St. Thomas Aquinas took these truths and doctrines and organized them into a coherent philosophy.

This official position of the Church met with some serious criticism, especially during the “modernist crisis” of the early twentieth century. “Modernist,” although an imprecise term, generally applied to anyone who criticized the beliefs and methods of Neo-Thomism,¹² and increased their knowledge of God by the historical-critical method.¹³ The use of this method led the modernists to criticize some of the fundamental positions of Neo-Thomism, in particular the belief that no change had occurred in Church philosophy and theology, since they contended that both were developed within a specific historical context and thus were influenced by history and subject to change.¹⁴ Some modernists also adopted a subjective perspective, emphasizing the personal component of religious experience.¹⁵ In the face of such modernist ideas, the Church took draconian measures to silence any opposition, even imposing on priests an anti-modernist oath that upheld the essential tenets of Neo-Thomism – an oath that remained in effect until 1967. In the oath five “truths” were declared: that God’s existence could be known by the light of divine reason; that miracles and prophecies were “certain proofs” of Christianity’s divine origins; that the Church and the authority of Peter were of “divine institution”; that dogmas constitute “the divine deposit of the faith” and were immutable; and that faith was not connected to any sentiment of the heart but the result of “a genuine assent of the intellect to the truth received by hearing from an external source.” The oath also denied that the historical-critical method could be used to discover religious truth.¹⁶

dispositions of the believer” were key to the process that led the individual to belief. A leading figure at the council, Archbishop Victor Deschamps, championed this position. Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence*, 21-22.

¹² Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence*, 5.

¹³ Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Theologie*, 21. This method focused on the analysis of church teachings and doctrine in terms of historical context. In other words, they were not all immutable.

¹⁴ It is important to note that the modernists were critical mainly of the dominant form of Neo-Thomism during this period: “strict Thomism” or Roman Thomism, that is, the Thomism adhered to by the Magisterium. Between 1920 and 1950 different forms of Neo-Thomism would emerge.

¹⁵ For example, Maurice Blondel examined the “inner drives” of the human being and the dynamics of the mind, leading him to conclude that human beings can only be content with God. Robert Royal, *A Deeper Vision: The Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the Twentieth Century* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2015), 45.

¹⁶ Royal, *A Deeper Vision*, 126-27. Pius X also seemed to believe that there were “enemies” everywhere. A network of informers, a Catholic “fifth column,” the *Sodalitium Pianum*, worked mainly in France and Italy to seek out modernist reformers within the Church. St. Pius X also removed anyone that he believed was not entirely loyal to the official Neo-Thomist philosophy from positions of authority in Catholic institutions. Censors were given wide powers to ensure that Catholic publications were not tainted with

Between 1920 and 1950, however, a certain degree of pluralism developed within Neo-Thomism, leading to different interpretations of St. Thomas' philosophy. The overall result was the emergence of distinct forms of Neo-Thomism that became identified with specific intellectuals: the strict Thomism of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange; the historical Thomism of Etienne Gilson; the transcendental Thomism of Joseph Marechal; and the intuitive Thomism of Jacques Maritain.¹⁷ Gilson discovered that not all medieval scholars accepted the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas and that other medieval philosophies existed. He also ascertained that, contrary to what strict Neo-Thomists contended, there had been considerable development in philosophical thought since the classical Greeks.¹⁸ The transcendental Thomism of Joseph Marechal, in particular, challenged the official position of the Church, since it adopted the subject as the point of departure, asserting that the subject possessed "a dynamic openness to absolute being." His philosophy of knowledge focused on the subject's intellectual activity of abstracting and judging, which allowed for a plurality of conceptual frameworks and, thus, a plurality of metaphysics and theologies.¹⁹ Yet, despite these challenges to orthodoxy, the Magisterium in Rome nonetheless adhered to a strict interpretation of Neo-Thomism, which permeated the manuals that were distributed throughout the world and gradually adopted in most seminaries. These manuals presented certain assertions as "divine truth," and after 1907, repudiated any "experiential, affective or intuitive mode of thought." Religious truth was revealed as "eternal, immutable – untouched by the 'flux of history.'" In the words of Gabriel Daly, the "massive objectivity of the system" reduced the educator to a "simple communicator."²⁰ Interpretation was left to the Magisterium.

Priests everywhere were educated in strict Neo-Thomism, but it was in North America that it emerged as the dominant philosophy and had its greatest impact on Catholic education. The 50th anniversary of *Aeterni Patris* in 1929 stimulated an intense interest in Neo-Thomism in North America. A number of North American colleges and universities strengthened their

modernist ideas and conferences of priests and laity were kept to a minimum to "protect" them from modernist views. Diocesan "Watch Committees" were also established.

¹⁷ McCool, "Neo-Thomism and the Tradition of St. Thomas," 138. See also, J. Mettenningen, *Nouvelle Theologie-New Theology*, 26-27. Maritain contended that the human being possessed an eidetic intuition able to grasp the immutable, objective truths. Classical Thomism is not used here because it was characterized by two major forms: strict Thomism and the Thomism of Maritain, who criticized the former, especially the manuals used in seminaries. See Royal, *A Deeper Vision*, 85.

¹⁸ Royal, *A Deeper Vision*, 59-62.

¹⁹ Gerald A. McCool, "Jacques Maritain: A Neo-Thomist Classic," *The Journal of Religion*, 58, no.4 (1978): 386, doi: 10.1086/486651.

²⁰ Daly, *Transcendence and Immanence*, 19-20.

departments of philosophy with an increased emphasis on Neo-Thomism. That year, too, a leading Neo-Thomist, Etienne Gilson, established the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto, which in its early years focused mainly on philosophy and whose professors occasionally spoke at educational conferences.²¹ The various religious orders, particularly through their philosophical journals, such as *The Modern Schoolman*, played such a critical role in promoting Neo-Thomism, that G.A. McCool, suggests that the Neo-Thomist movement in North America would not have become “the powerful movement which it became after 1930” without “the expertise, the resources, and support of the religious orders.”²² The overall result was that Neo-Thomism had “a stronger and more lasting influence on philosophy in general and on Catholic higher education than it had in Europe.”²³ By the late 1920s, Neo-Thomism had reached “the level of a popular ideology among American Catholic educators.” The leading proponents of strict Neo-Thomism exuded supreme confidence in their beliefs in any debate with scholars who questioned Neo-Thomism. There was a simple truth about God: St. Thomas’ philosophy was “not just one theology among others; it was an exposition of the mind of God.”²⁴ As Bishop Emmett Carter of London, Ontario – who would become a key figure in Catholic education in Ontario – commented in his 1961 study of Catholic education, *The Modern Challenge to Religious Education*, visitors to North America, especially from Europe, were surprised at “our strict adherence and observance of even the minutiae of Church discipline.”²⁵

²¹ G.B. Flahiff, “The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies at Toronto,” *Speculum* 24, no. 2 (1949): 251-255. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2848565>. The evidence suggests that the Institute was a source of professional development material for teachers. Its scholars were guest speakers at the annual Catholic Education Conference sponsored by the English Catholic Education Association of Ontario. For example, in 1952 Gilson delivered a lecture entitled, “The Breakdown of Morals and Christian Education,” and in 1954 Gerald B. Phelan, the president of the Institute from 1929 to 1946, spoke on “Education and Culture.” On both occasions, the Association published the lectures and distributed them to Ontario Catholic teachers with an accompanying “Dear Teacher” letter explaining the purpose of the publication. Sisters of St. Joseph Archives, Toronto. 200. 6-4.

²² Gerald A. McCool, “The Tradition of Saint Thomas in North America: At 50 Years,” *The Modern Schoolman*. 65, No. 3 (1988): 193, doi: 10.5840/schoolman198865328.

²³ In “The Tradition of Saint Thomas in North America,” 186-87, McCool asserts that the tradition of St. Thomas had less impact in Europe, in part because European Catholic institutions of higher education were “relatively rare.” In Europe, particularly in France, Catholic education was mainly restricted to the secondary level, where philosophy played only a “minor role.”

²⁴ McCool, “The Tradition of Saint Thomas in North America,” 194, 203.

²⁵ Emmett Carter, *The Modern Challenge to Religious Education* (New York: Palm Publisher, 1961), 1.

The Imposition of Strict Neo-Thomism and Education in the Archdiocese of Toronto

Bishop Carter highlighted the “great reluctance to consider or accept change in methods of teaching religion and to admit the need for re-evaluation of the content of religious education.” He noted how the dominance of strict Neo-Thomism was also reflected by the failure of the catechetical revival movement in Europe, which after World War II began in earnest to affect North America. Carter observed that even though Catholic educators were willing to consider new methodologies, new content, and the needs of learners in other subject areas, they regarded innovation in religious education as bordering on heresy.²⁶

An examination of the policies of the Archdiocese of Toronto supports Carter’s overall assertion. The archdiocese had made a concerted effort to impose strict Neo-Thomism on Catholic high schools in obedience to the Magisterium in Rome. Its response to the Sacred Congregation of the Council’s 1935 Decree on the Better Care and Promotion of Catechetical Education illustrates this effort. Expressing serious concern about what it considered as the deplorable state of religious education, the Council cited several canon laws to justify its call for improvement, especially in the critical importance of effective teacher-training and in the treatment of religious instruction as the most significant subject offered in Catholic schools.²⁷ The Church demanded complete obedience and emphasized the power of local religious authorities to enforce the decree and to “inflict on the obstinate and the negligent the ecclesiastical penalties prescribed,” including those involving suspension of duties and excommunication.²⁸ In order to highlight the importance of religious instruction, the Council called for the institution of a Diocesan Catechetical Office to “control the entire catechetical instruction in the diocese,” particularly to ensure that in all parishes, schools and colleges, “properly prepared teachers” taught Christian doctrine “according to the traditional form of the Church.” The Council also commanded the Bishops to establish in all parishes, according to canon law,

²⁶ Carter, *The Modern Challenge to Religious Education*, 2.

²⁷ *The Sacred Congregation of the Council Decree on the Better Care and Promotion of Catechetical Education*, National Center of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C., Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto (hereafter ARCAT), MGS025.65 a. p. 12. The Council issued the Decree mainly because of its deep concern with the quality of education as is clearly indicated by the strong language in the decree: “faith in our day is sickly and almost to be accounted dead, for no other cause than the careless, negligent teaching of Christian doctrine, or the omission of this duty altogether.” (4-5) The Decree clarified Church policy and insisted on its implementation.

²⁸ *The Sacred Congregation*, 7. In this instance, the decree refers to canons 1330, 1331, and 1332, all of which deal with punishment.

the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, which “should embrace all who are capable of teaching and enkindling love for the catechism, especially teachers in schools.” In addition, the Council called for the establishment of a Catechetical Day to celebrate Christian Doctrine, according to the specific instructions on its organization that it provided, and ordered the Bishops to complete a detailed questionnaire every five years concerning the “state of the diocese” in terms of the teaching of Christian doctrine.”²⁹ In 1941, the Archdiocese of Toronto obediently completed the questionnaire, reporting the existence of a Catechetical Office known as the Office of Religious Instruction, and an annual Catechetical Day celebration according to the precise instructions from Rome.³⁰ The establishment of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in every parish greatly helped in catechetical efforts since it trained lay teachers who instructed students attending public schools.³¹ To enhance the importance of religion education at the high school level, annual diocesan exams in religion were instituted.³² The grade 12 exam was given a special status;³³ in 1944, for example, the graduation exercises for all those who passed it were held at St. Michael’s Cathedral on Catechetical Day.³⁴

An analysis of the textbooks provides further evidence that the high school religion curriculum adhered to strict Neo-Thomism. The mandated textbook in the 1940s, *Religion: Doctrine and Practise*, emphasized a major tenet of strict Neo-Thomism: since the death of the last apostle there had been no change in the “deposit of faith,” that is, the “sum of revealed doctrines,” inherited by St. Thomas Aquinas. Furthermore, “no new revelation has been proposed by the Church,” and “whenever there is a question of settling or defining a disputed point of faith, the Church always decides according to the teaching of tradition.”³⁵ The textbook was organized around a series

²⁹ *The Sacred Congregation*, 8, 10, 11-13.

³⁰ Questionnaire on the Teaching of Christian Doctrine, the Archdiocese of Toronto Office of Religious Instruction, ARCAT, GSO25.65 (b). For years, the Director of Catechetics was Monsignor Vincent Foy. He strongly supported the Magisterium, and after Vatican II opposed the new catechetical approach, calling liberal Catholicism the new “modernism.” Monsignor Vincent Foy, “Catechetical Chaos in Canada: Cause and Cure,” St. Joseph’s Workers for Life & Family(www.sjw.ca). (1999): 1-5, https://msgfrfoy.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/scan_20140303-4.jpg.

³¹ Questionnaire on the Teaching of Christian Doctrine, the Archdiocese of Toronto Office of Religious Instruction, ARCAT, GSO25.65 (b).

³² Questionnaire on the Teaching of Christian Doctrine, 12.

³³ The Archdiocese of Kingston also had such exams. The 1957 final senior exam consisted mainly of “memory-recall” questions that required little analysis, such as “What is the sacrament of Holy Orders? Under what circumstances did Our Lord institute this sacrament?” The Archives of the Sisters of Providence, Kingston, 13B2, 309.5.

³⁴ Report on “Diocesan Catechetical Activities” for 1944-45, ARCAT, EDSC04.66.

³⁵ Francis B. Cassilly, S.J., *Religion: Doctrine and Practise* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1934), 350-51.

of questions and answers. One such question dealt with two new and controversial doctrines, papal infallibility and the Immaculate Conception of Mary. It asked “Does not the Church define new doctrines?” It answered: the Church “does not define new doctrines, but... from time to time it gives more explicit knowledge and exposition of what was revealed to the Apostles.”³⁶ Another question was, “Do the doctrines of the Church change?” And the answer, “No, the doctrines of the church do not change.”³⁷

In the 1950s, this strict Neo-Thomist perspective continued to rule. One of the most popular series of textbooks in North America was *The Quest for Happiness*, published in 1951. In 1957, Msgr. P.C. Marcinkus, Secretary for the Apostolic Delegation in Rome, asked the Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Msgr. T.P. Fulton, for a list of textbooks used in the Archdiocesan high schools. Fulton replied that only the *Quest for Happiness* textbooks were used, and that he was quite certain that this series was used throughout English Canada.³⁸ *The Quest for Happiness* reflected the self-assured, confident Neo-Thomist perspective, and expected students to accept Church teachings and doctrines without question. The first unit of the grade 9 textbook, *Our Goal and Our Guides*, focused on the relationship between faith and reason, adhering to the Neo-Thomistic belief that human reason is a guide in terms of determining religious truth, but that it cannot be “trusted too far,” for without faith, the “better guide,” serious errors will be committed. The root cause of such “errors of reasoning” is “original sin, which darkened our understanding and weakened our will.”³⁹ The authors of the grade 12 textbook, *The Eternal Commencement*, declared that “the only proof needed by a Catholic that the Blessed Virgin was preserved from original sin... is the official, infallible definition of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX, on December 8, 1854.”⁴⁰ The authors also claimed that the Gospels were “reliable authentic historical documents,” and that historical biblical criticism reflects “outdated” ideas. Near the end of the book, the authors warned students not to bother arguing with anyone who still held such ideas and emphasized the “guaranteed

³⁶ Cassilly, *Religion: Doctrine and Practice*, 350. This question-answer method of pedagogy was based on the 1941 revised Baltimore Catechism, first published in 1885, which used the same method. Gerard S. Sloyan, “Religious Education as a Correlate of ‘Religious Education’: Some Problem Areas,” *Religious Education*, 61 no.4 (1966): 286-87, doi: 110.1080/0034408660610407.

³⁷ Cassilly, *Religion and Doctrine*, 350.

³⁸ ARCAT, MGDS59.07A and MGDS5907B.

³⁹ Clarence Elwell, *Our Quest for Happiness, Book One, Our Goal and Our Guides* (Chicago: Mentzer, Bush, and Company, 1951), 38.

⁴⁰ Elwell, *Our Quest for Happiness*, 30.

certainty” found in Gospels written by eyewitnesses who were willing to die for their faith.⁴¹

Strict Neo-Thomism is also reflected in another popular textbook used at the elementary level during the 1950s. Originally published in 1881 with a letter of praise from Pope Leo XIII, *Bible History* adopts a literal interpretation of the Bible and a question-answer method of instruction.⁴² In the 1956-1957 Program of Christian Doctrine Studies of the Archdiocese of Toronto, *Bible History*, the mandatory text for the senior elementary grades, prepared students well for the high school *Quest for Happiness* series.⁴³ Despite increasing pluralism within Neo-Thomism, these textbooks adhered to its strict form.

Lastly, the impact of strict Neo-Thomism and the strict adherence to the ordinances of Rome appears in professional development for teachers, which fell under the jurisdiction of the Inspector for Catholic Separate Schools, John M. Bennett. His responsibility was the “supervision and visitation of all classes” to ensure that the policies of the Ministry of Education and the Archdiocese were upheld.⁴⁴ This included ensuring that teachers were properly prepared to teach Church doctrine. In a lengthy paper distributed to teachers at a catechetical conference on October 12, 1953, Bennett commented that “many teachers are not satisfied with their results of teaching Christian Doctrine.”⁴⁵ Part of his instructions on improving their teaching included explaining the Church’s position on faith and reason, emphasizing that “faith is greater than reason,” and the need to remain on the offensive against “Atheism and Materialism” with the “Sword of the Spirit” by implementing the weapons of “Prayer, Work (teaching), and Sacrifice.” Teachers were also entrusted with the “task of imparting supernatural truth,” so Bennett provided suggestions on how to accomplish this. For example, he advised teachers to strengthen the will of the students through “encouragement, reprimands, reminders” and “inspiration,” and to “have children seek the Grace of God” by praying, attending Mass, and using the sacraments.⁴⁶ Quoting Cardinal James C. McGuigan of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Bennett emphasized that “the purpose of education is... the effort

⁴¹ Elwell, *Our Quest for Happiness*, 494-95.

⁴² Richard Gilmour, *Bible History* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1894). This textbook was used in Trenton, Ontario, when Father Brian Price, archivist for the Archdiocese of Kingston, was in grade nine.

⁴³ Program of Christian Doctrine Studies, ARCAT.

⁴⁴ Duties of Inspectors, Report of John M. Bennett, Inspector for Division XVIII, Metropolitan Catholic Separate Schools of Greater Toronto, January 1954, ARCAT, EDSCO4.38 c.

⁴⁵ “Teaching of Religion,” prepared by J.M. Bennett for the Catechetical Conference for Kingston, Archives of the Sisters of Providence, Kingston, 13B2, 304.5, 1.

⁴⁶ Bennett, “Teaching of Religion,” 2.

to perfect an intellect and will to think correctly and to act rightly.⁴⁷ Anyone intending to teach in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese had to attend religious instruction classes offered at an Ontario Normal School, where they were instructed on the effective use of mandated textbooks to teach strict Neo-Thomism and thus prepare their students for their final religion exams.⁴⁸ Bennett also provided in-service courses for practising teachers. In the 1958 Catechetical Instruction Course, for example, teachers learned about the “Guiding Principles in Christian Education,” focusing on the works of St. Thomas Aquinas, Etienne Gilson, and Jacques Maritain.⁴⁹ Over ten one-hour sessions the teachers also examined the teachings of Pope Pius XI and Pius XII, the reigning Pope.

A major focus of this course was Pius XI’s 1929 encyclical, *On Christian Education*, the most important papal statement on education until Vatican II. This encyclical, which was permeated by Neo-Thomism, “set the agenda” for Catholic education;⁵⁰ emphasized that Christ “conferred infallibility” on the Pope, “commanding” the church to teach His doctrine; and, reflecting Neo-Thomistic philosophy, declared that Christ had entrusted the church to “keep whole and inviolate the deposit confided to her...in accordance with revealed doctrine.” This “deposit” was immutable.⁵¹ The encyclical also reflected the dominant “theological anthropology” articulated in the 1854 definition of the Immaculate Conception, which emphasized the sinful nature of humanity. Original sin has affected human nature with two major failings: “weakness of will and disorderly inclinations,” both of which cannot be corrected without the “supernatural truth” and the “grace” provided by the Church. Without the Church “it is impossible to control the evil impulses.”⁵² Because all forms of education must consider the impact of original sin, the church opposed any form of progressive education that diminished the role of the teacher by recognizing the “self-government and unrestrained

⁴⁷ *The Toronto Telegram*, September 19, 1953, quoted in “Teaching Christian Living,” Catechetical Conference, Kingston, Oct 11th 1953, Archives of the Sisters of Providence, Kingston, 13B2 304.5.

⁴⁸ Memorandum on the Training of Catechists, ARCAT.

⁴⁹ Catechetical Instruction Course for School Teachers, 1958, ARCAT, SC04.38 d.

⁵⁰ Brian J. Kelty, “Toward a Theology of Catholic Education,” *Religious Education*, 94, no. 1 (1999): 11, doi: 10.1080/0034408990940102, 11.

⁵¹ The important role of the family in education is also emphasized – a role that supersedes that of the state. Relying on statements from St. Thomas Aquinas and Leo XIII, the family is understood as patriarchal in nature with the father as the head of the family, whose “power is of such a nature that it cannot be destroyed or absorbed by the State.” Thus, the State must respect and uphold the right of Catholic parents to send their children to Catholic schools

⁵² Pope Pius XI, 1936 *Divini Illius Magistri*, sections 58 and 59.

freedom” of the child.⁵³ The teacher assumed an essential role in Catholic education as the moral and intellectual guide to the youth, upholding the ultimate purpose of education: spiritual perfection and salvation. In the final analysis, the encyclical emphasized the role of the Church in education as the defender and interpreter of the “deposit” of doctrine and religious truth, a vital role given the perceived innate weaknesses of human nature. Thus, the teachers in the Archdiocese were instructed to adhere to the strict Neo-Thomism, especially as articulated in Pope Pius XI’s encyclical.

A Classicist Culture, Certainty and the Catholic Mind

This predominance of strict Neo-Thomism in the Archdiocese of Toronto, and across North America, was also a major factor in strengthening the Catholic classicist culture. Bernard Lonergan argues that this culture does not understand itself as one culture among many, but as “the only culture any right-minded and cultivated person would name as culture.”⁵⁴ Within this culture, theology is understood in terms of the overall culture, which permitted an educated individual to “assimilate the substance of the cultural superstructure and to follow intelligently and critically the work of pioneers.”⁵⁵ Essential to this culture was the deeply embedded respect for antiquity, in particular the Greco-Roman classical era that had been assimilated into Christian culture.⁵⁶ As well, the different academic disciplines were integrated, infused with Catholic theology and philosophy, while remaining distinct disciplines.⁵⁷ This integration of arts and sciences by Christian philosophy, “aided by the light of faith,” was a tradition dating to the time of Clement of Alexandria and Origen.⁵⁸ Central to this tradition, was the conviction,

based on both faith and reason that the world makes sense, and that the human mind has the power to understand it. That understanding can be brought about if the liberal arts, science and philosophy are unified by a sound and believing mind under the light of faith. Once human knowledge

⁵³ Pius XI, *Divini Illius Magistri*, section 6 (Washington D.C. National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1936).

⁵⁴ Richard Rymarz, “Conversion and the New Evangelization: A Perspective from Lonergan,” *The Heythrop Journal*, 51, no. 5 (2010): 754, doi: 10.1111/j1468-2265.2009.00545.x.

⁵⁵ Rymarz, “Conversion and the New Evangelization,” 755.

⁵⁶ Bernard Lonergan, “The Future of Christianity,” in *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William F.J. Ryan, S.J., and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974), 160.

⁵⁷ Gerald A. McCool, “Spirituality and Philosophy: The Ideal of the Catholic Mind,” *The Sacred Heart Review*, 10: Issue 1, Article 3(1989): 26-43, <http://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/shureview/vol10/iss1/3>.

⁵⁸ McCool, “The Tradition of Saint Thomas in North America,” 185.

has been integrated by a coherent education, it will enable the believing mind to understand God's revealed word.⁵⁹

Catholic acceptance of this culture resulted in what was called "the Catholic mind." In North America, between 1920 and 1960, this classicist culture became identified largely with Neo-Thomism, particularly strict Thomism.⁶⁰ This identification is evident, for example, in George Bull's *The Function of the Catholic Graduate School*, where he states that a "distinctive *Catholic life of the mind*" exists, that no further research is needed since "wisdom has been achieved," so the Catholic graduate student should focus on contemplation, not research.⁶¹ Furthermore, demonstrating his profound attachment to the classical era, Bull declared that "it is not part of our culture to expect one greater than Homer."⁶²

The goal of Neo-Thomism in Catholic education was "integral wholeness." The major role for educators was a practical one of "bringing home to the faithful the full realization of what this unity meant to them personally."⁶³ As late as 1960, the "Thomistic establishment reigned" in the vast majority of those American colleges and universities where an "explicitly Catholic point of view" was evident in the teaching of most secular subjects.⁶⁴ Various Catholic associations promoted this integral Catholic culture among their lay members. In the 1940s and the 1950s, self-assured ordinary Catholics were content to belong to the "one true Church."⁶⁵ Novelists and essayists also portrayed a "Catholicism of clear and clean definition."⁶⁶ Nor did ordinary Catholics question the authority of the church and its representatives, the priests, brothers, and sisters. Questions were not needed, only devotion.⁶⁷ North American Catholics confidently accepted this classicist culture, resulting in the Catholic mind – the acceptance of

⁵⁹ McCool, "Spirituality and Philosophy," 28.

⁶⁰ McCool, "The Tradition of Saint Thomas in North America," 188-89.

⁶¹ George Bull, S.J., "The Function of the Catholic Graduate School," *Thought*, 13, no. 3 (1933): 364, 368, doi: 10.5840/thought13343.

⁶² Bull, "The Function of the Catholic Graduate School," 377.

⁶³ Philip Gleason. "In Search of Unity: American Catholic Thought, 1920-1960," *The Catholic Historical Review*, 65, no. 2 (1979): 185-205, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25020551>.

⁶⁴ James Hitchcock and David J. O'Brien, "How Has American Catholic Intellectual Life Changed Over the Past Thirty Years?" *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 4, no. 2 (1985): 176-187, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25153726>.

⁶⁵ Patrick McNamara, *Conscience First, Tradition Second: A Study of Young American Catholics* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), 17.

⁶⁶ McNamara, *Conscience First*, 18.

⁶⁷ McNamara, *Conscience First*, 29. This type of Catholicism has been termed "devotional Catholicism," a "firm and long-standing tradition." It is an expression of Catholic classism and the Catholic mind.

Neo-Thomism as a mode of thought that formed an integral part of Catholic self-identity.

This Catholic mind permeated the educational community in the Archdiocese of Toronto and in the other Ontario dioceses. In his “Teaching of Religion” paper, Inspector John Bennett, directly referred to it in a section entitled “Some Practical Activities for Consideration,” as he asked what he considered an urgent question: “Can we work the truths of faith so deeply into the minds and hearts of our youth by means of activities in Christian study in early youth that they will be men and women of Christian principles throughout life?” After referring to the efforts of the Catholic University of America to accomplish this task by issuing the “Faith and Freedom Basic Readers” and a Curriculum Guide, “Guiding Growth in Christian Social Living,” Bennett stressed that it was a “difficult task to carry the cross and only definite principles and the Grace of God” will help teachers develop within the students the necessary “Catholic mind.”⁶⁸ He suggested classroom activities that could help to facilitate the deepening of the “truths of faith” into the minds of the youth.⁶⁹ When discussing the overall curriculum of a Catholic school, Bennett emphasized that there is a “Catholic culture to impart,” and that such academic subjects as poetry, music, and literature should be integrated with Catholic theology and philosophy.⁷⁰

Thus, the Catholics educated in strict Neo-Thomism were totally unprepared for the “massive breakthrough” of the Second Vatican Council, when an empiricist, individual-centered culture replaced this Catholic classical culture. Confusion reigned. Lonergan concluded that confusion arose because the classical culture “made no provision for the possibility of its own demise.”⁷¹ Philip Gleason, the President of the American Catholic Historical Association, personally testified to the “profound shock” and the “identity crisis” experienced by most Catholics in North America once this classical culture and the certitude that they possessed disintegrated.⁷² One question haunted many of them: Who are we? This lack of certitude,

⁶⁸ Bennett, “Teaching of Religion,” 4.

⁶⁹ It is important here to be cautious in any assessment as to the extent to which the “Catholic mind” was actually developed among the youth or teachers, for that matter, even though it appears to have been a priority for the Archdiocese. The minutes of an April 11, 1955 meeting of the chaplains of the Provincial Teacher-Training Colleges and representatives of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers’ Association indicate that “many of the student-teachers have a very inadequate knowledge of their religion,” and that “in some cases there was a definite lack of interest in religious instruction on the part of the student-teachers, especially when extra classes were held outside of school hours.” ARCAT, EDS011. G2.

⁷⁰ Bennett, “Teaching of Religion,” 3.

⁷¹ Lonergan, “The Future of Christianity,” 160.

⁷² Gleason, “In Search of Unity: American Catholic Thought, 1920-1960,” 186-88.

and an overall sense of bewilderment, was also present in Ontario Catholic schools. Even the major Vatican II document on education, the *Declaration on Christian Education*, failed to provide a clear direction for the future.⁷³ Strict Neo-Thomism was abandoned, but it was not replaced by another educational philosophy. The textbook series, *Quest for Happiness*, was no longer acceptable, but no other series replaced it. Brother Domenic Viggiani, President of the Toronto private Catholic school, De La Salle, recalls that there was no consistency in terms of curriculum. A 1973 report from the National Office of Religious Education on adolescent religious education confirmed this. Its author, Father Wilfred Murchland, found that there was no agreement as to how religion should be taught, so establishing a national program would be premature.⁷⁴ Individual religion departments in each school often developed their own curriculum using whatever resources they could find.⁷⁵ In the case of some private schools, the religious order responsible determined the curriculum and selected the textbooks.⁷⁶ In a 1976 keynote address, “Catholic Education in Ontario in Context,” Bishop Emmett Carter stated that the Second Vatican Council did not intend “to confuse the basic teachings of the Church,” but that was its result.⁷⁷ According to Carter, teachers were especially “uncertain” in what they taught and shared in what he termed as a crisis in faith shared by many Catholics.⁷⁸ As late as the 1980s, confusion and uncertainty prevailed in Catholic education and in the larger Catholic community because the Church was still struggling with the collapse of the classicist culture and had yet to develop a new Catholic mind appropriate for the post-Vatican II era.⁷⁹

⁷³ In 1966 Joseph Ratzinger, the future Pope Benedict XVI, commented that the Declaration was a weak document that “wasn’t treated by the council fathers with any special affection.” Don J. Briel “The Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum Educationis*,” in *Vatican II: Renewal within Tradition*, ed. Matthew L. Lamb and Matthew Leverin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 384.

⁷⁴ Matt Hoven, “‘Rare Beauty’ and Renewal: The Consortium Project for Alberta Catholic High School Religious Education,” *Historical Studies*, 81 (2015): 53-71.

⁷⁵ Interview with Brother Viggiani, 12 February 2015.

⁷⁶ According to Brother Viggiani, the period from 1968 to 1980 was one of confusion. Interview with Brother Viggiani, 12 February 2015.

⁷⁷ G. Emmett Carter, “Catholic Education in Ontario in Context,” *The Spotlight: News and Views on Catholic Education*, November, 1976, ARCAT, ED5008.15b, 4.

⁷⁸ Carter, “Catholic Education in Ontario in Context,” 4.

⁷⁹ G.A. McCool, “Spirituality and Philosophy: The Ideal of the Catholic Mind,” 39-42. According to Gerard Sloyan, this development will take time. Sloyan argues that only after the modernist crisis did the “Catholic mind comfortably make the necessary distinction between the transcendent human spirit as it confronts the transcendence of God who reveals himself and the human spirit that creates, fashions, and projects these truths. It took such thinkers as Newman and Blondel to make these distinctions, but it will take even longer for this thought to penetrate the reflective consciousness of Catholic thought and life.” Gerard S. Sloyan, “Religious Education as a Correlate of ‘Religious

Conclusion

Since the 1980s some of this confusion and uncertainty has disappeared in secondary religious education in Ontario. In 1986, the Ontario Institute for Catholic Education was established with the mission to promote Catholic education. One of its mandates was to provide curriculum materials for Catholic teachers. A standard curriculum was eventually developed. In 1999, the *Ontario Catholic Secondary Policy Document on Religious Education* was released. Then, in 2006, the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops sponsored the publication of the *Ontario Catholic Secondary Curriculum Policy Document for Religious Education*. This document provided the framework for secondary religious education, detailing the curriculum expectations for each grade level, and authorizing a standard series of textbooks. Yet, it remains an open question as to whether or not Catholic schools have developed a religious curriculum suitable for the 21st century. Society has become more secular – a process that has weakened traditional religious faith, affiliations, and practices.⁸⁰ The dominant secular culture has permeated Catholic schools, culminating in a “secularisation of consciousness,” whereby Catholic teachers and students unconsciously adopted secular values.⁸¹

In addition, religion is often not considered as a serious academic subject. For that reason, the Sacred Council of the Congregation insisted on exams for religion courses. Emmett Carter agreed on the need for exams if only to avoid giving the impression that “religion is not a subject of very much importance since it is not sanctioned by an examination.”⁸² When

Knowledge’: Some Problem Areas, *Religious Education*, 61, no. 4 (1966): 290-91, doi: 110.1080/0034408660610407.

⁸⁰ James Arthur, “The de-Catholicising of the curriculum in English Catholic Schools,” *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 5 no. 1 (2013): 89, doi:10.1111/milt.12000.

⁸¹ In this context, secular values are understood as being different from Catholic values, which are based on a world view centred on God and Christian belief. James Arthur, “Secularisation, Secularism and Catholic Education: Understanding the Challenges,” in *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 1, no. 2 (2009), 228-239, DOI: 10.1080/19422530138226, 228-239. This internal secularization also occurred in American schools. See Christian Smith, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 214-16. No such study has been completed for Ontario Catholic schools, but given the international nature of secularism, it stands to reason that a similar process occurred in Ontario.

⁸² Carter, *The Modern Challenge*, 329. Further research is needed, but the evidence suggests that in the late 1960s, religious education overall was not considered as a serious academic subject in many countries. In Italy, for example, religion did not count as a subject credit necessary for graduation. Vincenzo Sinistreo, “Catholic Education in Italy,” in *Catholic Education in the Western World*, ed. James Michael Lee (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), 191.

Ontario adopted the credit system in the early 1970s, religion courses did not count towards the number of credits needed to graduate until Catholic educators protested.⁸³ The problem persists. In Ontario, the bishops declared in their 2006 policy document that religious instruction must appear “as a scholastic discipline with the same systematic demands and the same rigour as other disciplines. It must present the Christian message and the Christian event with the same seriousness and the same depth with which other disciplines present their knowledge.”⁸⁴ Nevertheless, religion courses in Ontario are not academically rigorous. Whereas many subjects such as English and Mathematics offer different streams for students of different abilities, the single non-streamed grade 9 and 10 religion courses do not challenge academically talented students. At the senior level, religion courses are not offered at the university-preparation level.⁸⁵ If the schools do not consider religious courses as academically important, why should the students?

This study of the Archdiocese of Toronto suggests that Catholic secondary religious education therefore faces two serious problems: the effects of secularization and the lack of academic rigour. It is still valid to ask if Catholic high schools are transmitting the richness of their faith and instilling in their students a sense of wonder and curiosity about their religion. Although further research is needed, it is highly probable that the key problem is the lack of academic rigour. Modern society is now secular. This is not going to change. Academically rigorous courses, however, could challenge students, stimulate their curiosity, increase their understanding of Catholicism, and provide them with both the necessary content and skill to enable them to be practising and active Catholics in a secular world. Before Vatican II several scholars called for such courses. For example, Jacques Maritain advocated a secondary religious education curriculum that focused on the development of the intellect and the powers of reason.⁸⁶ Emmett Carter insisted that the students’ interests must be stimulated if any serious learning

⁸³ This issue is discussed in Walker, *Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario*, Vol. III.

⁸⁴ *Ontario Catholic Curriculum Policy Document for Religious Education* (Toronto: Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006), 2. This is a direct quotation from the General Directory for Catechesis (1997), article 73.

⁸⁵ At the senior level, religion courses are offered at the open and at the “M” level, a designation for courses that may be used to qualify students for either college or university. These courses are not as academically challenging as university-preparation courses. In Ontario, university admittance is based on the student’s six best grade 12 marks. Most universities permit students to include only two M courses in their best six.

⁸⁶ Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroad* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 28.

was to occur;⁸⁷ the content must not be “watered-down.”⁸⁸ Shortly after Vatican II, another leading Catholic scholar, Gerard S. Sloyan, highlighted a key component of religious education that is still needed: student inquiry. The teachers’ essential task is to “find the existentially important questions which are alive in the minds and the hearts of the students” instead of providing both the questions and the answers.⁸⁹ Such an inquiry approach would instill in them a “restless sense of curiosity” and, perhaps, a sense of wonder. A secondary religious education curriculum suitable for the twenty-first century will no doubt rely on a variety of curricular improvements since the days of Neo-Thomist dominance, but it would be unwise to neglect the ideas of educational reformers such as Maritain, Carter, and Sloyan. Nor should all of pre-Vatican religious education be rejected out of hand. What needs to be done is to determine which of its aspects should be reconsidered, which should be modified to contemporary conditions, and which should remain where they belong – in the past.

⁸⁷ Carter, *The Modern Challenge*, 212.

⁸⁸ Carter, *The Modern Challenge*, 108.

⁸⁹ Sloyan, “Religious Education,” 289.

Essential Recovery, Rural Resilience, and Energizing Communities from St. Peter's Abbey in Muenster, Saskatchewan

Christopher HRYNKOW, Brigid WARD, and Caitlin WARD

Abstract: *Contemporary rural communities in Saskatchewan face multiple challenges concerning social and ecological sustainability. This article employs the framings of “essential recovery,” “rural resilience,” and “energizing communities” to explore responses emerging from the history and socio-geographic location of St. Peter’s Abbey, a Benedictine monastery, in Muenster, Saskatchewan. After introducing these central concepts and cogent issues, the article surveys the abbey’s agricultural and social history, as well as that of the communities comprising its former territorial abbacy. It then introduces the work of Trevor Herriot and Ellen Davis, respectively a naturalist and a biblical theologian, whose reflections deepen the paper’s theoretical discussion. This combination of history and theory provides a basis to demonstrate how members of the monastic community in Muenster have rallied to the cause of social and ecological resilience in rural areas by offering new, rediscovered, and recontextualized paths and projects. These alternatives reject a dominant industrial agricultural complex relying on ecologically, and, ultimately, socially unsustainable practices. In summary, this article’s fusion of history, theory, and theological reflection situates the historical roots and related contemporary processes by which St. Peter’s Abbey navigates the complexities of socio-spiritual and ecological sustainability as part of its many efforts to energize rural communities.*

Resumé: *Les communautés rurales contemporaines en Saskatchewan affrontent de multiples défis en ce qui concerne la survie sociale et écologique. Cette communication emploie les notions de « rétablissement essentiel », « résilience rurale », et « stimulation des communautés » afin d’explorer les réactions émergeant de l’histoire et de l’emplacement socio-géographique de l’Abbaye St. Peter, un monastère bénédictin, à Muenster, Saskatchewan. Suite à la présentation de ces concepts centraux et des questions pertinentes qu’ils soulèvent, cet article fait le bilan de l’histoire agricole et sociale de l’abbaye, ainsi que celle des communautés qui constituaient son ancien territoire abbatial. L’article présente ensuite*

les recherches de Trevor Herriot et Ellen Davis, naturaliste et théologienne biblique respectivement, dont les réflexions permettent d'approfondir la dimension théorique de la communication. Cette combinaison d'histoire et de théorie fournit les bases d'une tentative pour démontrer comment les membres de la communauté monastique à Muenster se sont ralliés à la cause de la résilience sociale et écologique en milieu rural en offrant de nouveaux projets et trajectoires. Ces alternatives rejettent le complexe agricole industriel qui se fie à des pratiques qui se révèlent, en fin de compte, intenables. En somme, au moyen de ses multiples réflexions historiques, théoriques, et théologiques, cette communication décrit les racines historiques et les pratiques actuelles au moyen desquelles l'Abbaye St. Peter parvient à se retrouver face aux complexités socio-spirituelles et à la survie économique, au sein de son effort de stimuler les communautés rurales.

Introduction: A Confluence Between Essential Recovery and Rural Resilience

In both its social and ecological incarnations, rural resilience is an increasingly urgent concern in Saskatchewan. The province, once primarily driven by a family farm-based agricultural economy, is experiencing an extractive, industry-based economic boom and bust cycle that has accelerated urbanization, while rural communities that were already in crisis continue to decline in population.¹ Within this context, members of the male Benedictine monastery at St. Peter's Abbey in Muenster have drawn on more than a century of experience to navigate the often complex relationships among economy, ecology, social responsibility, and resilience. "Resilience" in this context describes the ability of systems to respond to change in creative and adaptive ways while maintaining their core principles. In the case of St. Peter's Abbey, the core principles are care of the land and its people as interpreted through a Benedictine spiritual lens.

Sustainability can be fostered through acts of "essential recovery" in which past practices are re-contextualized to meet present challenges. In the case of Saskatchewan, historical, sustainable ways of life have been rediscovered, not simply to clone or appropriate past practices, but rather as a renewing *ressourcement*, a return to the sources, in the spirit of Vatican II.² The shared history becomes a potential source of wisdom for living out

¹ On the policy response to these shifts see David McGrane ed., *New Directions in Saskatchewan Public Policy* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2011).

² On essential recovery see Christopher Hrynkow, "The New Story, Transformative Learning and Socio-Ecological Flourishing: Education at Crucial Juncture in Planetary History" in Frank Deer, Thomas Falkenberg, Barbara McMillan, and Laura Sims, eds., *Sustainable Well-being: Concepts, Issues, and Educational Practices*.

proper human-Earth-divine relationships,³ as opposed to something to be discarded in favour of narrowly understood manifestations of progress. In line with the eco-ethical imperatives laid out in Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*, this energizing movement is about rediscovering green roots that can be cultivated to branch out in a contemporary context.⁴ Drawing on the example of St. Peter's Abbey, this paper activates the interpretive relevance of essential recovery as an etic framing to explore energizing rural communities as a method to build rural resilience through two theoretical lenses: those of Catholic nature writer Trevor Herriot, and biblical scholar Ellen Davis.

St. Peter's Abbey: a History of Rural Resilience

The contemporary contributions of St. Peter's Abbey to social and ecological resilience in South-Central Saskatchewan's parkland must be set against the larger historical narrative of the community. Historian Raphael Samuel champions the use of unorthodox sources and describes history as "a social form of knowledge" that shouldn't be limited to the academic, official work of the historian.⁵ While studying English local histories, he perceived a problematic pattern in the narratives, attributing this to the type of sources available to their authors: "churchwardens' accounts," "school log books," and "parish censuses," among others.⁶ A similar critique can be made of local histories in Saskatchewan, except that the sources here are homesteading records, electoral rolls, and the pioneer questionnaires collected by the Saskatchewan Archives (with remarkable insight and initiative) on the 50th anniversary of the province in 1955. The histories of many towns can be read: there were pioneers; they settled; they farmed; these are the cities and towns they founded. To learn more, there are statistics: who arrived from where? how many people homesteaded in this township? These sources answer the *who*, the *where*, and the *when*, but the *why* is elusive. Even more elusive is

(Winnipeg: Education for Sustainable Well-Being Press, 2014), 109, <http://www.eswb-press.org/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899389/sustainable_well-being_2014.pdf>, accessed 2 June 2017; on the spirit of Vatican II see John W. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II?* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008).

³ On that ethical formula see Christopher Hrynok, "Laudato Si', Transformative Learning, and the Healing of Human-Earth-Divine Relationships," *The Ecumenist: A Journal of Theology, Culture, and Society* 53, no. 4 (Fall 2016), 10-15.

⁴ Compare, for example, Francis, *Laudato Si'*: Encyclical Letter of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 18 June 2015), no. 2; Christopher Hrynok, "No to War and Yes to So Much More: Pope Francis, Principled Nonviolence, and Positive Peace" in Heather Eaton and Lauren Michelle Levesque, eds., *Advancing Nonviolence and Social Transformation: New Perspectives on Nonviolence Theories* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2016), 135-152.

⁵ Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory* (London: Verso, 1994), vol. 1, 8.

⁶ Raphael Samuel, "Local History and Oral History," *History Workshop* (Spring 1976), 192.

the legacy of these people – in the present example of the monastic settlers, their lasting impact on the landscape, and their relationship to the land as viewed through the theoretical perspectives that inform this article.

What follows immediately below is a brief history, which provides some context by drawing primarily on the work of Jerome Weber, OSB, the abbot from 1960 to 1990; Paul Paproski, OSB, monk at St. Peter's; and Colleen Fitzgerald, who wrote a centennial history of the abbey and abbacy.⁷ Fitzgerald and Weber, the earlier chroniclers, both scoured the archives of St. Peter's Abbey, constructing a concrete timeline from their sources. Building on this, Paproski uses the local, non-academic, histories of the Abbacy's communities as primary sources for his second chapter.⁸ He observes the value of "stories that were unique to the local community,

⁷ Jerome Weber, OSB, "In the Beginning," in *A Journey of Faith: St. Peter's Abbacy, 1921-1996* (Muenster, SK: St. Peter's Press, June 1996); Jerome Weber, "St. Peter's Abbey 1903-1921," *CCHA: Report* 16 (1949): 37-49; Paul Paproski OSB, "The German Catholics of St. Peter's Colony: 1903-1930" (master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2011); Colleen Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work* (Muenster, SK: St. Peter's Press, 2003).

These three authors prioritize different aspects of the history, and address it from different perspectives, but all pay some attention to the relationship among the settler community, their faith, and the land they settled on. Weber, who was Abbot from 1960 to 1990, focused on the period of 1903 to 1921, from the community's founding to the time it became a territorial abbacy. In 1953 he published a paper in *Reports*, the journal of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association, portions of which were republished in installments in the *Prairie Messenger* that same year, and the paper was again reprinted in 1988 along with Abbot Bruno Doerfler's *Across the Boundary*. In 1955, he wrote an article on the territorial abbacy to commemorate the Province's Jubilee, and he periodically contributed to other local history publications produced by St. Peter's Press.

More recently, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the abbey in 2003, members of St. Peter's Abbey commissioned Fitzgerald to write *Begin a Good Work* while she was president of St. Peter's College. Based on archival research at St. Peter's Abbey and St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, Fitzgerald's book presents a narrative of the Abbey's history crafted around Benedictine themes such as "Stewardship and Hospitality" and "Leadership through Service." For the sake of full disclosure, it should be noted that Colleen Fitzgerald is the mother of two of the authors of this paper – Brigid Ward and Caitlin Ward.

The third of these authors, Paproski, is currently a monk at St. Peter's Abbey. His 2011 Master's thesis addresses tensions between the dominant Canadian and German Catholic identities in the communities around St. Peter's Abbey between 1903 and 1930. Paproski studied the struggle to celebrate "Germanness" and Catholicism in the area;

"Abbacy" refers to the larger area served by the monks, while "Abbey" is the specific site of the monastery and often refers in a limited sense to the monastic community. An Abbacy could be likened to a diocese, while the Abbey would be limited to the church, grounds, cemetery, and rectory of the Cathedral of the diocese. As several primary sources cited by this paper can attest, referring to the area around St. Peter's as simply "the Abbacy" is common practice in the community. As discussed more fully below, this appellation is related to the fact St. Peter's was territorial abbacy from 1921-1998.

⁸ Paproski, "The German Catholics of St. Peter's Colony," Ch. 2.

signifying the influence of local events and personalities in shaping the life of each.”⁹ This kind of knowledge is significant to the focus of this article, which concerns itself with the founding, evolution, and the current life of St. Peter’s Abbey as viewed through framings of essential recovery, rural resilience, and energizing communities.

The Benedictines were part of the Muenster colony community from the very beginning, though historians do not agree about their role in its founding. One interpretation suggests that German immigrants who came via Minnesota¹⁰ “felt the need for German-speaking priests since the missionaries in Western Canada were French-speaking members of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate,” and “wrote ...of their concerns to the pastors of the parishes they had left.”¹¹ Another interpretation suggests that the German Land Company and the Catholic Settlement Society included the pastoral care of the German Catholic immigrants from its conception.¹² In either case, Abbot Peter Engel, of St. John’s Arch Abbey (Collegetown, MN), recognized the specific cultural and religious needs of this community and addressed them.¹³

Clara Hermle, whose family were early pioneers in Leofeld, Saskatchewan, recalled both the relationship between the monks and the colony and the start of regular Catholic worship in the area. The settlers were so keen to have the Benedictines come that they contributed \$10 for each quarter section of land they held to support the church and some “contributed wood.”¹⁴ The decision to found a Benedictine Abbey as the cornerstone of a larger farming community represents the adaptability of the Benedictine Order, especially in North America. Though farming has always been an aspect of their Benedictine charism, pastoral service to lay people of the sort that energizes communities has not.¹⁵

Moving to Muenster, however, had an advantage for the Benedictines. At the time, their abbey at Cluny, Illinois was in trouble.¹⁶ Founded in 1892 by Benedictine monks from St. Vincent’s in Pennsylvania, Cluny’s abbey farm struggled to thrive in the muddy landscape and wet weather that made

⁹ Paproski, “The German Catholics of St. Peter’s Colony,” 80.

¹⁰ On this interpretation compare with Bill Waiser, *Saskatchewan: A New History* (Calgary: Fifth House, 2005), 69.

¹¹ Weber, “In the Beginning,” 2-12, 2.

¹² Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 25-26.

¹³ Weber, “In the Beginning,” 2; Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 25-27.

¹⁴ Saskatchewan Archives Board. Saskatchewan Archives Pioneer Questionnaires: No. 4: Pioneer Churches, Hermle, Clara, S-X2 1669.

¹⁵ George Cyprian Alston, “Rule of St. Benedict,” *Catholic Encyclopedia*. (New York: Robert Appleton, 1907), 2: 48.

¹⁶ Weber, “St. Peter’s Abbey 1903-1921,” 40; Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 17-18.

malaria a concern.¹⁷ Additionally, the relatively small Catholic population in that area of Illinois hindered development of a religious community.¹⁸ The proposed colony in Canada emerged as a viable and desirable solution to the growing crisis in Illinois.¹⁹

In August 1902, Abbot Engel sent his confrere, Fr. Bruno Doerfler, to Saskatchewan to find the best location for a new German Catholic settlement to be centred upon a Benedictine monastery.²⁰ As a hostile landscape had undermined their settlement in Illinois, Engel wanted to examine the social and ecological contexts of the area – both potential and actual – before he committed to a site. Doerfler was well-suited to the reconnaissance mission: raised a farm boy in Minnesota, he understood farm land.²¹ He undertook his mission with almost academic dedication. As well as visiting the Territorial Experimental Farm at Indian Head,²² he researched the governance and society of Saskatchewan, and the reputation and role of the Catholic Church at possible locations. After his return to Collegetown, *The Record* published his account of his journey in serial form.²³ This rich and fruitful source of insight into Doerfler's frame of mind describes the landscape, its wild life, and the geological influences that shaped it.²⁴ He describes his first glimpse of the area that became the colony:

Suddenly we emerged from the hills and a beautiful panorama spread out before us. A plain, about six miles in diameter, lay before us, sloping uniformly towards its center which contained a circular lake over a mile in diameter, whilst the outer edge of the plain seemed to rise gradually to the very summit of the chain of hills by which it seemed bounded. Small groves of poplars were scattered about on the plain in profusion. Mr. Ens halted the horses, jumped up and throwing down his coat cried out enthusiastically that any man who did not think this a splendid country would have to fight him.²⁵

¹⁷ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 22-3; Weber, "St. Peter's Abbey 1903-1921," 40.

¹⁸ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 22-23.

¹⁹ Weber, "St. Peter's Abbey 1903-1921," 40; Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 21-23; 6.

²⁰ Weber, "St. Peter's Abbey 1903-1921," 38; Peter Windschiegel, *Fifty Golden Years, 1903-1953: A brief history of the Order of St. Benedict in the Abbacy Nullius of St. Peter, Muenster, Saskatchewan* (Muenster, 1954), 7.

²¹ Windschiegel, *Fifty Golden Years*, 7.

²² Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 26. On this point compare with Lyle Dick, *Farmer's "Making Good": The Development of Abernethy District, Saskatchewan, 1880-1920* (Ottawa: Ministry of the Environment, 1989).

²³ Peter Novocosky, "Introduction," in *Quest for a New Homeland: the founding of St. Peter's Colony in Saskatchewan* (Muenster: St. Peter's Press, October 1988), ii.

²⁴ Bruno Doerfler, OSB. "Across the Boundary," in *In Quest for a New Homeland*, 1-107.

²⁵ Doerfler. "Across the Boundary," 95.

The following spring, eight men, including Alfred Mayer from Cluny, went from St. John's to the parcels of land that would become St. Peter's Abbey. On 21 May 1903, in a tent, Mayer celebrated the first Mass in the community that would become the territorial abbacy.²⁶

That marked the birth of the settlement, but only after Bishop Albert Pascal (then Vicar Apostolic of Saskatchewan) and Pope Pius X gave their approval, did the monastic community officially come into being in September 1893.²⁷ Mayer was Prior of the new community, named St. Peter's as a "sign of gratitude" to Abbot Peter of St. John's Abbey.²⁸ In 1906, the Canadian Census records the monks as Family Number 197, made up of a total of 19 individuals.²⁹ This "family" would be the kernel that helped to seed vital rural Catholic communities in South-Central Saskatchewan. Agricultural production would be a cornerstone of this effort, the rock upon which this German Catholic set of energized communities would be built.

Notwithstanding this trajectory, the earliest farming at St. Peter's was solely to aid survival. Because the farming equipment arrived too late from Cluny to put in any crops, that first year the monks planted only a vegetable garden.³⁰ The area that would become the abbacy attracted around 700 homestead claims by German Catholics in 1903 alone,³¹ however, as happened elsewhere in the new world, some sold their land and returned home as soon as they had title.³² The monks at St. Peter's took out homesteads individually, but once they met the homestead requirements and took ownership, it became the property of the community.³³ Fr. John Balfrey, for example, claimed homestead rights for NW 20-37-21-W2, while Fr. Leo Ojdowski filed for SE 20-37-21-W2, and Fr. Bernard Schaeffler for SW 18-3-21-W2.³⁴ This process was facilitated by an unusual arrangement

²⁶ Weber, "St. Peter's Abbey 1903-1921," 41-42.

²⁷ Paproski, "The German Catholics of St. Peter's Colony," 18; Weber, "St. Peter's Abbey 1903-1921," 41.

²⁸ Weber, "St. Peter's Abbey 1903-1921," 41.

²⁹ Libraries and Archives Canada, District Number 13, Sub-District Number 17, Townships 37 to 42 inclusive in ranges 19, 20, 21, 22 west of the 2nd Meridian, 25, Microfilm T-18359, Reference RG31, Statistics Canada, 1906 Census of the Northwest Provinces, <<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1906/Pages/1906.aspx>>, accessed 28 May 2016.

³⁰ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 88, 38.

³¹ Paproski, "The German Catholics of St. Peter's Colony," 18.

³² Paproski, "The German Catholics of St. Peter's Colony," 89-90; 97; compare with Saskia Sassen, "The Making of Migrations," in Agnes M. Brazal and María Teresa Dávila, eds., *Living With(out) Borders: Catholic Theological Ethics on the Migration of Peoples* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2016), 16.

³³ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 89.

³⁴ Saskatchewan Archives Board, Homestead Index, Balfrey, John J. (Rev.): NW 20-37-21-W2, <<http://sab.minisisinc.com/sabmin/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/>>

that allowed the monks to live as a religious community while meeting the homestead requirements.³⁵ When some settlers challenged the arrangement, the Benedictines were told they must farm more actively to maintain their homesteads.³⁶ Despite these difficulties, the community held 20 quarter-sections by 1911 or so.³⁷

Initially, the farm was fundamentally a cooperative venture. As there was no farm manager, apart from monks who managed the farm on an *ad hoc* basis, each monk helped out where and when he could. For example, Fr. Rudolph Palm, who had been in the first group of monks to arrive at Muenster from Collegetville, ran the farm in 1906.³⁸ By then, according to the census, the abbey owned fourteen horses, thirteen milk cows, eighty-four other horned or meat cattle, and four hogs.³⁹ As the farm grew, the monks hired help. In 1911, three farm labourers lived at the monastery and in 1916, two farm hands and one “farm foreman.”⁴⁰ Occasionally, the monks chose to rent out land rather than farm it themselves.⁴¹ Both practices – employing members of the community beyond the monastery and renting land to local farmers – continue to this day.⁴² They are also, at base, decisions to reach out to the community, a small but practical demonstration of essential recovery. Though the context and style of farming at St. Peter’s Abbey changed dramatically over the century, the core value of adaptability sustained the farm’s viability through periods of scarcity and abundance. The monks’ mindset of communal living, communal ownership, and the welcoming of strangers extended their social system beyond the cloister to the wider

HOMESTEADS?DIRECTSEARCH>, accessed 27 May 2016; Saskatchewan Archives Board, Homestead Index, Ojdowski, Leo: SE 20-37-21-W2, <<http://sab.minisisinc.com/sabmin/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/HOMESTEADS?DIRECTSEARCH>>, accessed 27 May 2016; Saskatchewan Archives Board, Homestead Index, Schaeffler, Bernard (Rev.): SW 18-37-21-W2, <<http://sab.minisisinc.com/sabmin/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/HOMESTEADS?DIRECTSEARCH>>, accessed 27 May 2016.

³⁵ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 89.

³⁶ Paproski, “The German Catholics of St. Peter’s Colony,” 24.

³⁷ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 89; Paproski, “The German Catholics of St. Peter’s Colony,” 18. Paproski and Fitzgerald give different dates.

³⁸ Martin Brodner, OSB, “St. Peter’s Abbey,” in *A Journey of Faith: St. Peter’s Abbey, 1921-1996* (Muenster: St. Peter’s Press, 1996), 232-244, 238.

³⁹ Libraries and Archives Canada, “District Number 13.”

⁴⁰ Library and Archives Canada, Item: Berane [sic] Doerfler, Library and Archives Canada: Census of 1911, <<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1911/Pages/item.aspx?itemid=7833079>>, accessed 28 May 2016; Library and Archives Canada, Item: Bruno Doerfler, Library and Archives Canada: Census of 1916, <<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1916/Pages/item.aspx?itemid=1191469>>, accessed 28 May 2016.

⁴¹ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 90.

⁴² Basil Schaan, interview by Christopher Hrynkow and Caitlin Ward, 19 March 2016.

community in a variety of ways and contributed to the resilience of the Abbey and the larger community.⁴³

The community became an “Abbey of the American Cassinese Congregation” under the newly-elected Abbot Bruno Doerfler in 1911,⁴⁴ thus giving the community an official status within the ruling body of North American Benedictine abbeys. Around this time, the farm became a source of income, though not a steady one. In 1914, the farm was a “financial drain,”⁴⁵ and in 1918 Abbot Bruno called it “a leech which sucked out of the treasury more than it returned.”⁴⁶ Yet, there were times when the farm proved its worth. During the severe winter of 1907, more than a thousand Canadian Northern Railway passengers were stranded at nearby Humboldt; there was sufficient food in storage so no one starved. In 1912, the harvest was so plentiful that the Muenster elevator “was forced to store about 10,000 bushels of wheat on the ground” for lack of storage space.⁴⁷

The year 1921 was important for St. Peter’s. Not only did it become the centre of a territorial abbacy (thereby gaining independence from the Diocese of Prince Albert)⁴⁸ it also opened St. Peter’s College and the farm was officially christened the “St. Peter’s College Farm.”⁴⁹ Because Abbot Michael Ott wanted Catholic children in the region to be educated in explicitly Catholic schools,⁵⁰ he made education a priority for the monastery and the mission of St. Peter’s shifted from primarily pastoral and agricultural to include, and prioritize, Catholic education. The naming of the farm can be read as a symbolic act, underlining Ott’s mission. The farm was now responsible for feeding the monks and the boys who were their students. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s students could earn their tuition and board by working on the farm.⁵¹ The farm emerged as a means to support the Abbey’s mission, not an end in itself.

The farm, now established, began to expand. In 1928, Fr. Leonard Benning was appointed farm manager, assisted by Br. Bruno Konescni, Br. Gregory Brodner, and Br. John Brodner.⁵² The farm itself became an

⁴³ Habermann, “Rule of St. Benedict,” 33-34, 53.

⁴⁴ Weber, “St. Peter’s Abbey 1903-1921,” 45; Paproski, “The German Catholics of St. Peter’s Colony,” 23-24.

⁴⁵ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 55-56.

⁴⁶ Bruno Doerfler, quoted in Brodner, “St. Peter’s Abbey,” 234.

⁴⁷ Paproski, “The German Catholics of St. Peter’s Colony,” 26- 27.

⁴⁸ Weber, “St. Peter’s Abbey 1903-1921,” 48; Jerome Weber, “Early History of St. Peter’s Abbey: Covering the Period of 1903-1921 as a Unit,” *Prairie Messenger*, 21 May 1953, 2.

⁴⁹ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 91-92.

⁵⁰ Paproski, “The German Catholics of St. Peter’s Colony,” 49-50.

⁵¹ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 91-92.

⁵² Brodner, “St. Peter’s Abbey,” 238; Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 91.

educational project in the 1930s, hosting the provincial Department of Agriculture's "field days," which sought "to demonstrate good farming practices to farmers in the area."⁵³ The prosperity continued into the 1940s. In addition to Brs. Bruno, Gregory, and John, hired hands from the lay Catholic community worked at the abbey. After the Second World War, the Extension Division at the University of Saskatchewan used the land for experimental plantings of unconventional crops, such as borage and hemp. In 1947, Benning gained another monastic assistant: Br. Bernard Lange.⁵⁴ The monks grew grain, raised registered Lacombe and Yorkshire hogs, and started what was later known as the "Wolverine Herd" of pure-bred cattle named after a creek on the main Abbey site.⁵⁵ This practice of modelling agriculture as an education and research activity is being recovered today in order to energize rural communities in the Muenster area.⁵⁶

Pastoral care was an unconventional role for a Benedictine monastery, but one of the principal reasons for founding St. Peter's.⁵⁷ The Benedictines' willingness to adapt continued as they remained the primary source of pastoral care in the region. In the 1960s, prompted by Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (1961), on Christianity and social progress, this effort became more socially activist. This new emphasis corresponded to the spirit of the times that was energizing community-based efforts to end oppression and marginalization around the world.⁵⁸ Focussing on projects fostering rural resilience, for example, in 1962, Fr. Philip Loehr, OSB, organized "the first Catholic Rural Life Conference in St. Peter's Abbey."⁵⁹ Loehr was the territorial abbacy's Rural Life Director and, throughout the 1960s, was an outspoken activist for the rights of farmers – especially in the face of large-scale corporate farming.⁶⁰ At the 1962 Rural Life Conference, which focussed on the preservation of the family farm, Abbot Weber delivered the opening remarks and Fr. Florian Renneberg spoke on *Mater*

⁵³ Brodner, "St. Peter's Abbey," 239.

⁵⁴ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 91-92.

⁵⁵ Brodner, "St. Peter's Abbey," 239; Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 92-93.

⁵⁶ Though framed differently this point was made by Basil Schaan during his 19 March 2016 interview by Christopher Hrynkow and Caitlin Ward, March 2016.

⁵⁷ Weber "In the Beginning," 2; Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 25-26.

⁵⁸ On this effort to end oppression and marginalization see David Cortright, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁵⁹ "Abbacy to hold first Catholic Rural Life Conference, March 16," *Prairie Messenger*, 21 February 1962, 10.

⁶⁰ "Abbacy to hold first Catholic Rural Life Conference, March 16," 10; Philip Loehr, "People or Products? - Open Letter to Federal Agricultural Committee," *Prairie Messenger*, 2 April 1969, 15. One of the contemporary low input agricultural projects at St. Peter's Abbey has been named the Loehr Organic project in honour of this monk's contribution to rural resilience.

et Magistra.⁶¹ Almost three hundred people attended.⁶² Meanwhile, the *Prairie Messenger*, which the Abbey published, regularly printed articles by Bob Von Pilis, Saskatoon's diocesan "lay director of the Catholic Rural Life Movement," another champion of farmers' rights.⁶³ The monks of St. Peter's Abbey had again synthesized a traditional charism (farming) with a less traditional calling (pastoral care of lay people), to serve the Church as it, too, adapted to a changing world.

When Fr. Leonard Benning died in 1970, he was succeeded as farm manager by Br. Bernard Lange. Lange had worked with Benning and had studied the latest commercial farming practices at the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan. When he accepted the responsibilities of the farm, the abbey was already following the dominant trends of technology, science, and machinery.⁶⁴ In this, their motives were moral rather than economic, responding to the concern about global hunger. In 1965, the *Prairie Messenger* reprinted an article from the *Western Producer* that read:

Gunnar Myrdal, the well-known Swedish economist, and Senator George McGovern of Food-for-Peace fame, both insist that the old concept of limited production in agriculture must give way in the next decade to the concept of unlimited abundance. Myrdal says the U.S., Canada, Australia and the other major food producers in the world must produce all the food they possibly can.⁶⁵

The reprinted editorial emphasized that effort on this front was needed to outstrip "the cold war, the Viet Nam struggle, the Berlin issue and other military-political questions."⁶⁶ The *Prairie Messenger* continued its concern with prioritizing maximum food production throughout the 1970s, though Loehr recognized the ethical tension between feeding everyone and ensuring that Canadian farmers were adequately paid for their products.⁶⁷

He did not, however, foresee how modern commercial agriculture challenged rural resilience. In 1975, the *Prairie Messenger* implied that it

⁶¹ "Abbacy Rural Life Conference to Discuss Plight of Farmers," *Prairie Messenger*, 28 February 1962, 1; "Welfare of Family Farm to be Discussed at Abbacy CRL Meet," *Prairie Messenger*, 7 March 1962, 1.

⁶² "Abbacy Rural Life Conference Discusses Welfare of Farms," *Prairie Messenger*, 21 March 1962, 10.

⁶³ "Rural Life Conference," *Prairie Messenger*, 19 February 1964, 10; "Rural meet wins interest," *Prairie Messenger*, 16 March 1966, 10; "Abbacy Rural Life Conference to Discuss Plight of Farmers," 1.

⁶⁴ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 97.

⁶⁵ "War on Hunger Comes First: Editorial in the Western Producer," *Prairie Messenger*, May 1965, 6.

⁶⁶ "War on Hunger Comes First: Editorial in the Western Producer," 6.

⁶⁷ Philip Loehr, "Canadian Agriculture in the Seventies," *Prairie Messenger*, 5 March 1972, 15.

was wrong for farmers to reduce their acreage for economic reasons and “better conservation of their soils,” given worldwide poverty and famine.⁶⁸ Its many articles on the subject give some context to the transition to a more industrial, chemically based farming model at the monastery. Although this change would later evoke social and ecological concerns for rural health, St. Peter’s farm was still striving to synthesize the Benedictines’ traditional and adopted charisms for the greater good of the world and its people.

As the 1980s drew on, the monks became aware of the tension between the high-input model of farming (termed “conventional farming” in general parlance) and “the call to environmental stewardship, market practices grounded in social justice, and the growing evidence of climate change and global pollution.” Some members of the monastic community began to question: should they continue to pursue a high-input, industrial model of farming, or should they pursue organic or other low-input method? Was the farm to be “an economic undertaking supporting the activities of the abbey?” Was it to be “a true apostolate with a sound theological and philosophical base?”⁶⁹ Whereas Abbott Michael Ott had seen the farm as a means of serving the Abbey’s educational mission, the monks of the 1980s began to envision it as a standalone apostolate (that is, a spiritual and practical project informed by their core Benedictine principles). This dichotomy was problematic, as the majority of those actually involved in the day-to-day operation of the farm believed profoundly in modelling the latest conventional farming methods as an apostolate in service of the larger rural community. Lange, in particular, felt this deeply. He told the Chapter in January 1980, that the farm was “a living example to others by demonstrating moderation in size, co-operation as a community, and helping the less fortunate.”⁷⁰

Changes to farms and farming practice in Western Canada in general, and in the way Saskatchewan Catholics were being called to relate to the land, caused a discernible shift in the St. Peter community’s approach to agricultural production. In November 1987, Saskatchewan’s Catholic bishops conferred at St. Peter’s College on the changing face of agriculture. During these meetings, Abbot Weber delivered a sermon in which he asserted that “people who work the land must love the land.”⁷¹ This moral sentiment was in opposition to what had been the dominant, high-intensity approach to agriculture on the prairies. Tellingly, Weber made the connection between the location of the meeting and the subject of his homily, emphasizing the

⁶⁸ P. W. N., “In Our Opinion: Food Production Involves Farmers,” *Prairie Messenger*, 2 March 1975, 4.

⁶⁹ Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 98-99.

⁷⁰ All quotations from Fitzgerald, *Begin a Good Work*, 98-99.

⁷¹ Jerome Weber quoted in Zita Maier, “Farmers are called to ‘love the land,’” *Prairie Messenger*, 23 November 1987, 3.

long relationship of the Benedictines with agriculture and the specific growth of St. Peter's out of a relationship to the land.⁷² The *Prairie Messenger* reported Abbot Weber as saying:

From the beginning God has turned the land over to us. He placed Adam in the garden to cultivate it. That was God's first charge We are still in charge but the land is still his. We are really stewards, and the gifts we have received are intended for all."⁷³

There was a clear understanding from the conference that this was an early step on a more "integral" path, which, as discussed more fully below, is buttressed by a worldview that understands the land as having relational and spiritual significance. The *Prairie Messenger* that week noted that the bishops provided "principles, but not solutions. These, they say, must come from the people – those who know the land and know farming, not only as a business but also as a way of life."⁷⁴ As had become the tradition at St. Peter's Abbey, the monks acted, not for, but with the lay community. For example, in January 1988, St. Peter's College and Abbot Weber hosted "a workshop for parish facilitators and organizers" in response to the bishops' statements that were designed to support and motivate all residents of the territorial abbacy.⁷⁵ Thus, the origins of an essential recovery, one informed by the Benedictine tradition, emerged in the myriad ways monks sought to energize rural communities in south central Saskatchewan today.

Herriot's *Jacob's Wound*

The green emergence coupling social and ecological concerns, traced in the previous section is emphasized in the work of Saskatchewan writer Trevor Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, published in 2004.⁷⁶ Herriot, who has personal and professional ties to the St. Peter's Abbey community, writes in the context of a larger Canadian literary movement concerned with the spiritual and the land. Many of these authors, including Herriot, are closely connected to the monastic community and its cultural geography through writing retreats facilitated by the Saskatchewan Writers Guild.⁷⁷ Herriot,

⁷² Maier, "Farmers are called to 'love the land,'" 3.

⁷³ Jerome Weber paraphrased in Maier, "Farmers are called to 'love the land,'" 3.

⁷⁴ Andrew Britz, "Editorials: Bishops speak on agriculture," *Prairie Messenger*, November 1987, 4

⁷⁵ Zita Maier, "Abbacy prepares for agricultural study," *Prairie Messenger*, 1 February 1988, 1.

⁷⁶ Trevor Herriot, *Jacob's Wound: A Search for the Spirit of Wildness* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2004), xii, 153.

⁷⁷ See Philosopher and poet Tim Lilburn's *Kill-Site* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2003), Lilburn's *Living in the World as if it Were Home* (Toronto, ON: Cormorant Books, 2002); Mari-Lou Rowley's *Suicide Psalms* (Vancouver: Anvil Press, 2008); Barbara

a self-taught naturalist and rediscovered Catholic, wrestles with these concepts in the context of *The Rule of St. Benedict*, St. Peter's Abbey, and the surrounding community.⁷⁸ Indeed, the second part of *Jacob's Wound* is thematically placed at a hill some 30 kilometres west of St. Peter's Abbey, and it deals extensively with his experiences visiting the Abbey.⁷⁹

Read from a green perspective, *Jacob's Wound* speaks to the essential recovery of ways of being that once allowed us to walk lightly on the Earth, which is crucial in the contemporary "socio-ecological crisis,"⁸⁰ wherein the health of people, the prospects for social justice, and the vibrancy of the Earth community are seen as both intertwined and endangered by the summative effects of anthropogenic exploitative practices.⁸¹ The history of St. Peter's Abbey farm offers many sources for such recovery.

As previously noted, essential recovery is not meant to rob past practices of their own contexts or to ignore present realities. Rather, it seeks to revitalize our human heritage of integral being with the natural world, wherein human interaction with all aspects of the natural world would constitute mutually enhancing relationships.⁸² Such integral relationships are emphasized for their contextual cogency in *Jacob's Wound*, which advocates

Langhorst's *restless white fields* (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 2012); ed. Sean Virgo's *The Eye in the Thicket: Essays at a Natural History* (Saskatoon: ThistleDown Press, 2006), among others.

⁷⁸ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 40-43; 153, 244.

⁷⁹ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 144-351.

⁸⁰ On this point compare the leading Canadian ecofeminist theologian from Saint Paul University (Ottawa), Heather Eaton, "Forces of Nature: Aesthetics and Ethics," in Sigurd Bergmann, Irmgard Blindow and Konrad Ott, eds., *Aesth/Ethics in Environmental Change: Hiking Through the Arts, Ecology, Religion and Ethics of the Environment* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2013), 109. The history of the term is to speak of responding to the "ecological crisis." The prime source of that term is Lynn White, Jr., the medieval historian, son of a Calvinist minister and holder of a graduate degree in Theology from Union Theological Seminary, who wrote arguably the most significant article on Christianity and Ecology in the 1960s. See Lynn White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203-1207. Adding the hyphenation helps emphasize social dimension, and invokes language associated with the social gospel movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. On this movement see Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991); Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1917). On progressive politics in this vein in the Canadian context compare Bill Blaikie, *The Blaikie Report: An Insider's Look at Faith and Politics* (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 2011).

⁸¹ See Christopher Hrynokw, "'A True Ecological Approach Always Becomes A Social Approach': A Green Theo-Ecoethical Lens, Pope Francis' Teaching, and Integral Social Justice," *Heythrop Journal*, doi:10.1111/heyj.12350.

⁸² On this ethical formulation compare Thomas Berry, *The Dream of the Earth* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1988), xiii; E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered* (London, UK: Vintage Books, 1993), 109.

an integral vision of rural resilience that challenges a world of fast food, cell phones, and the grind of the commute in large cities. Throughout the book, Herriot speaks to the Catholic experience in North and South America with a mix of reverence and suspicion, valuing the tenets of charity and justice found in scripture, but never turning away from the Church's dark colonial past in that part of the world.

By wrestling with this tension, and its relationship to the land, Herriot offers a different vision that can be applied to energizing communities, one in communion with the land wherein the rhythms of daily human life are not dictated by an electronic satellite's imposition of standardized time on a smart phone, but instead follow ecological cues generated by the natural world. This vision is informed in part by his experiences at St. Peter's Abbey, where he finds an impressive resiliency, but he also particularly notes the relationship the monks of St. Peter's Abbey have to larger communities "that ripple away from it in ever-widening circles."⁸³

The book's pace is the pace of nature, erratic yet harmonious, as he skips back and forth in short chapters and sections between the patriarchs and prophets of the ancient Near East and the challenges of rural life in Saskatchewan, which, writing before the economic boom in the late 2000s and early 2010s, he characterizes as "distilling down to a population of those who can't leave and those who want to stay."⁸⁴ Yet, he leaves the reader pondering how the ecological world can be energizing for the human members of the Earth community. Herriot generates a vision that can be read as essential recovery, which allows humans to discern sustainable and energizing ways forward for their communities. In referring to the myths of commercial-industrial-military progress, Herriot exposes the separation in contemporary Western society as it fractures between the rhythm of being of our ancestors and the disharmony of many human lives in the 21st century.⁸⁵ This is the disharmony of Jacob's wound – the pain of the separation from the spirit of the wilderness – that, for Herriot, was felt by the first agriculturalist and today has been amplified by the crisis affecting the family farm in places such as the former territorial abbacy.⁸⁶ In this light, he recasts the biblical story of Jacob and the angel to understand the former as wrestling with a wilder past, represented by the latter; Jacob is left limping by taking to sedentary agriculture. According to Herriot's terms of analysis, that biblical narrative is a powerful myth that traces the path we took, forsaking our

⁸³ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 226, 227.

⁸⁴ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 167.

⁸⁵ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 262-266; On this ethical separation compare with Thomas Berry, "Earth as Sacred Community," chapter in *Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006).

⁸⁶ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 81-86.

original lifeways and driving out our wilder, pre-agricultural brethren only to discover that the betrayal, subjugation, and disenfranchisement leave us wounded, longing to be blessed, and in need of a new identity that will place us once again in the presence of God in Eden.⁸⁷

One strategy to address such disharmony is to correct it by training, both cognitive and practical. It involves a search for something that can make us whole: the spirit of the wilderness.⁸⁸ In describing many aspects of his own quest for the spirit of the wilderness, Herriot includes a strong ecological narrative reflecting his time in and around St. Peter's Abbey. He combines this with research into ancient Hakkarmel, the Mount Carmel in the Holy Land, and connects it to a site of pilgrimage within the former territorial abbacy, also named Mount Carmel, 30 kilometres west of St. Peter's Abbey.⁸⁹ As a link here, Herriot cites the reminder of the Passionist priest Thomas Berry, that the natural world defines, shapes, and renews *homo sapiens* in their humanity. For Berry, establishing mutually enhancing relationships among all members of the Earth community is not an abstract proposition, but a necessary adaptation of the human venture in recognition of the seriousness of its situation.⁹⁰ Accordingly, it may be that a recovery of integral ways of being can point the way for "progress" to be decoupled from its narrow associations with economic growth.⁹¹

In such a socio-ecological light, Herriot's reading of the Saskatchewan context shows the potential to overcome the unsustainable nature of contemporary Western culture, allowing humans to renew their life-force like the pincherry seeds, which for eighty years lay dormant below the oak forest in Herriot's grandfather's homestead, awaiting a prairie fire for their chance to grow.⁹² Through Prairie images framed in this manner, Herriot attempts to couple the farmers' care for the land and the spirit of the wilderness as a combination that can energize Saskatchewan communities. Herriot reads this potential as both latent and actualized at St. Peter's Abbey, noting the Abbey's relationship with organizations in the surrounding community

⁸⁷ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 94.

⁸⁸ See Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 92.

⁸⁹ E.g., Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 148-150.

⁹⁰ Thomas Berry, "An Ecologically Sensitive Spirituality," chapter in Mary Evelyn Tucker, ed. *The Sacred Universe: Earth, Spirituality, and Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 137. This essay was previously published in *Christian Spirituality Bulletin: Journal of the Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality* 5, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 1-6.

⁹¹ On this point about progress compare with Ivone Gebara, "Eco-Feminism: An Ethics of Life," in John Mihevc, ed. *Sacred Earth, Sacred Community: Jubilee, Ecology and Aboriginal Peoples* (Toronto: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiative, 2000), 29-46; Berry, "An Ecologically Sensitive Spirituality," 132.

⁹² See Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 346-351.

looking towards socially and ecologically sustainable ways of living such as the Centre for Rural Studies and Enrichment⁹³ and the local Genesis land trust, which both served to promote rural resilience.⁹⁴

It is significant to note, however, that Herriot names the second part of *Jacob's Wound* "From Mount Carmel." Dividing the book into two sections discussing the biblical Mount Carmel and the local Mount Carmel creates a pleasing literary symmetry, but equally important is that Saskatchewan's Mount Carmel is largely unbroken land, and in Herriot's view, wild. By contrast, St. Peter's Abbey is farmed and as a result, tamed. Despite Herriot's attempt to couple agricultural care for the land and the spiritual wildness, he does not quite resolve the accompanying tensions between the human and natural communities.

Davis' Re-Membering

In contrast, the theo-ethical reflections of Ellen Davis, the Amos Ragan Kearns Distinguished Professor of Bible and Practical Theology at Duke Divinity School, demonstrate how agrarianism itself can provide transformative energy, particularly for rural communities. Unlike Herriot, she has no direct relationship with St. Peter's Abbey, but her work speaks more directly to the theo-ethical foundations the monks have worked to cultivate. She writes from a more explicitly theological and historical context than Herriot, developing and synthesizing the ethical sequence of American conservationist Aldo Leopold's land ethic and the American evangelical Wendell Berry's agrarian philosophy in robust and prescient ways. Her *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture* can be read as developing a different understanding of essential recovery. Davis' interpretation of "re-membering" is active participation in "a way of life that honors the wholeness of

⁹³ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 242. In 1997, the Centre for Rural Studies and Enrichment (CRSE) was opened at St. Peter's College under the direction of Diane J. F. Martz. The CRSE, which has since closed, was a rural sociology and human geography research centre with a particular regional interest and a general interest in farming. Martz, a geographer by training, spearheaded projects looking at the resources available to rural communities, the position of farm wives, and the work that all members of farm families undertake to keep their family farms going. Because of the CRSE and Martz's work, the 2002 Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation conference was held at St. Peter's College. This brought in experts from across Canada, as well as offering a platform for local experts on rural sustainability and farming. For the sake of full disclosure, one of the authors of this paper, Brigid Ward, was an employee of the CRSE as a student at St. Peter's College between 2001 and 2003, and has been employed by Dr. Martz in the International Office at the University of Saskatchewan since February 2015.

⁹⁴ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 272. Since the time of Herriot's writing the Genesis land trust has been transferred to Earthcare Connections, an ecumenical group dedicated to sustainable farming. See Forum on Religion and Ecology, "Genesis Land Conservatory," <http://fore.yale.edu/religion/christianity/projects/genesis_land/>, accessed 11 April 2017.

creation.”⁹⁵ To “re-member” is to recognize that humans are embodied members of the Earth community. This ethical formulation represents a more integral moral approach to the problems spawned from the socio-ecological crisis. As such, in Leopoldian terms it can be understood to be engaged in a task of enlargement of the moral community “to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land.”⁹⁶ This task of re-membering, involves changing social roles so that humankind’s part in the ecological world shifts from being “conqueror of the land-community to a plain member and citizen of it.” This shift “implies respect for ... fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such.”⁹⁷ Specifically, Davis proposes that such re-membering is fostered by an agrarian approach to the Hebrew Scriptures. This contribution can be read as akin to the essential recovery of ecologically sustainable practices articulated by diverse eco-ethical thinkers such as those represented in the ecofeminist project,⁹⁸ Thomas Berry’s critical-historical approach,⁹⁹ and renewals in Indigenous spirituality in the Latin American context.¹⁰⁰ Such an aim for transformative processes is a key path for an action-response in accordance with Pope Benedict XVI’s observation that “humanity needs a *profound cultural renewal*; it needs to *rediscover those values which can serve as the solid basis* for building a brighter future for all.”¹⁰¹

Crucially for this discussion, Davis expands the eco-ethical conversation to include the concept of “covenantal economics,” which supports mutually enhancing relationships among people, God, and the land community in

⁹⁵ On these framings see Ellen Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 21.

⁹⁶ Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” in E.H. LaFollete, ed. *Ethics in Practice: An Anthology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 635.

⁹⁷ Leopold, “The Land Ethic,” 635; on this point, see Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1977).

⁹⁸ See Heather Eaton, *Introducing Ecofeminist Theologies* (London: T & T Clark, 2005).

⁹⁹ See Thomas Berry, “The Catholic Church and the Religions of the World,” chapter in Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, eds. *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 24. This essay was originally published in 1985 in the *Riverdale Papers*, vol. X, as well as the *Teilhard Perspectives* 18, no. 1 (August 1985): 1-5.

¹⁰⁰ On this renewal movement see Marilú Rojas Salazar, “Experiences and Reflections on a Latin American Feminist Theology of Liberation Using an Ecofeminist Key Towards an Indigenous Women’s Perspective,” *The Ecumenical Review* 62, no. 4 (Dec 2010): 411-422.

¹⁰¹ Pope Benedict XVI, “Message of his Holiness Pope Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 1 January 2010: If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation,” (Vatican City, VA: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 2009), no. 5. Emphasis in the original.

the face of the proliferation of agri-business.¹⁰² She postulates that local economies based on respectful agrarianism, such as those explored at times at St. Peter's Abbey are supported by positive ethical ways of being in the Hebrew Scriptures. Poignantly in this regard, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, though not explicitly mentioning the central province on the Prairies, resonates with the Saskatchewan experience of the disappearing family farm. In this regard, Davis provides an interesting counter thesis to Herriot's Prairies-centred book, which at one point argues that Jacob's limp from wrestling with the angel represents the wound that humanity acquired when it began to practise agriculture.¹⁰³

Although Herriot invokes several agrarian practices as a means of moving towards healing the wound, Davis' argument is both more consistent and practical, as it is firmly placed within the dynamics of proper, agriculturally energized relationships with God, neighbour, and the land. The contrast between the two authors on this point is most evident in the way in which Davis characterizes the Judeo-Christian prophetic tradition as agrarian,¹⁰⁴ while Herriot considers it to be preserving a now-obscured spirit of the wilderness.¹⁰⁵ Davis' work calls into question Herriot's implied proposition that a morally and spiritually consistent ethic of eating is necessarily based on the consumption of wild food, with the advantage of not breaking Mother Earth with what some wild food advocates consider the violence of the plough.¹⁰⁶

Davis does not exclude the redemptive possibilities of eating wild food. Bearing in mind that Saskatchewan holds 38.5% of Canada's farmland,¹⁰⁷ particularly in the south-central part of the province, it is also fruitful to consider her emphasis on the inherent possibilities of a sustainable and just agrarian relationship with the land, one another, and God. In this regard, as Davis acknowledges, proper relationships with the land will take different

¹⁰² Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, 7.

¹⁰³ Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 83; compare Herriot's preference for the Métis farming style "village and farm flanked by prairie river on one side and prairie wilderness on the other" at Fish Creek over the grid pattern of the family farms that he characterizes as "well-suited to industry." (Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 286). That is, grid patterns recall and enforce industrial efficiency.

¹⁰⁴ Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, 120-21.

¹⁰⁵ E.g., Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 15.

¹⁰⁶ On the violence of the plough compare with Alan H. Cadwallader, "Swords into Ploughshares: The End of War? (Q/Luke 9.62)," in Norman C. Hable and Vicky Balabanski, eds., *The Earth Story in the New Testament* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 57.

¹⁰⁷ Percentage derived from dividing total agricultural acreage in Saskatchewan by total agricultural acreage in Canada sourced from Statistics Canada, 2011 Farm and Farm Operator Data, <<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/95-640-x/2011001/p1/p1-01-eng.htm>>, ch. 1, table 2, accessed 20 August 2016.

forms in local contexts.¹⁰⁸ In the ethical world of the Hebrew Scriptures, this relationship was defined in covenantal terms: turning away from the covenant would signify ruin not only for the people of Israel, but also the land of Israel. Healthy farm culture signifies the strength of the land community in a holistic sense,¹⁰⁹ and is inclusive of the nonhuman members of the Earth community.¹¹⁰ Taking the covenant seriously, therefore, would require an economy that is very different from those that support empire or export trade, or even the ambitions of Israelite kings for land.¹¹¹ This covenantal, ethical framing represents one way to read the relationships among land, community, and rural resilience in the history of the abbacy.

Though different in focus, the visions of both Herriot and Davis stand in sharp contrast to the large scale commercialization of food production associated with a globalizing economy, which too often dictates that food be produced cheaply in an extractive manner that does not adequately account for negative externalities such as water table degradation and soil erosion.¹¹² Both Herriot's embrace of an integral worldview and Davis' covenantal ethics encourage a dialogue about the effects of modern agribusiness on the health and energy levels of rural communities.¹¹³ These factors are certainly active within the former territorial abbacy today.

Conclusion: Essential Recovery at Muenster

Throughout its history, St. Peter's Abbey has navigated the complexities of socio-spiritual and ecological sustainability, as identified by Herriot and Davis, as part of its effort to energize rural communities in an increasingly commoditised environment. Within their more than 100-year history, beginning as the heart of a colony for the mass immigration of German Catholics, the monks at St. Peter's Abbey have both informed, and been informed by, their larger community, often acting as reflective participants within the latter. They have constantly negotiated traditional spiritual principles with contemporary values. At times, this has been to the detriment of mutually enhancing human-Earth relationships, but it has always been with the intention of energizing the rural communities the Abbey has served, working from an expansive Benedictine understanding of pastoral care.

¹⁰⁸ Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, 45.

¹⁰⁹ Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, 106.

¹¹⁰ Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, 179.

¹¹¹ Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, 114.

¹¹² See Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, 23; on the costs of high intensity food production compare Herriot, *Jacob's Wound*, 278.

¹¹³ Davis, *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture*, 104.

As twentieth-century North American agriculture became progressively more intertwined with technology, the monks not only adopted, but they intentionally modeled high-input farming with the aim of improving productivity in order to feed more people. In the general Western Canadian context, this approach drove the process of corporatization through the resulting demand for chemical fertilizers and bigger machinery. This process is representative of what Gerry Buckland names a “technology treadmill,” encouraged by an neo-liberal economics that forces more money through the farm operation, yet often leaves the small farmer’s financial return unchanged or even weakened relative to low-input farming methods.¹¹⁴ In the larger context, it has devastating side effects for the land, and seriously compromises the sustainability of traditional rural communities through the loss of family (read: smaller) farms. In recent years there has been a consistent trend towards corporate ownership of farmland on the prairies, as the average farm size increases, and the number of farms and farm families decreases.¹¹⁵ In accordance with a calling to energize rural communities, many of the monks at St. Peter’s Abbey have turned their back on this corporate, agri-business model. Instead, they work for rural health and renewal in part by recovering a more traditional means of farming that is in keeping with the Rule of St. Benedict, which promotes balance in all things. Rather than simply returning to a former way of life in a fundamentalist manner, however, these monks have incarnated the principle of essential recovery, working to foster best practices from the past, presenting and modeling the case for low-input agriculture as supportive of resilient rural communities.

At the time of writing St. Peter’s Abbey is a World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) site, mentoring people from its own and other bioregions on best practices in sustainable agriculture. This is the essential recovery of the Abbey farm’s twinned apostolate of education and agriculture, first expressed when the farm became a means to feed and educate students, again in the 1930s when the farm became a site for Field Days, and in the 1960s when St. Peter’s Abbey held the Rural Life Conferences. In all of these cases, the Abbey farm addressed the spiritual, cultural, and physical nourishment of St. Peter’s Abbey community in an integral manner that addresses the whole person.¹¹⁶ Today, volunteer WWOOFers stay in one of the oldest buildings in the monastery and are

¹¹⁴ See Jerry Buckland, *Ploughing up the Farm: Neoliberalism, Modern Technology and the State of the World’s Farmers* (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2004).

¹¹⁵ E.g., Statistics Canada, Farm and Farm Operator Data, ch. 2.

¹¹⁶ Pope Benedict XVI, “Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 2007: The Human Person, the Heart of Peace,” (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 8 December 2006), no. 9.

delighted by its spacious and artistically decorated living quarters and strong Wi-Fi signals. In this manner, St. Peter's Abbey combines the old and the new within the architecture of an essential recovery. Other Abbey activities support a college affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan, a campus ministry, an active press, two libraries (college and monastic), retreatants of various faith traditions (including Prairie Buddhists), oblates, artists, writers, the Muenster post office (which otherwise would have closed), the *Prairie Messenger*, and impressive athletic facilities, providing energizing opportunities at the heart of the old St. Peter's Colony.¹¹⁷ The Abbey's reach extends far beyond the boundaries of the former territorial abbacy. The monks also work with heirloom seed specialists such as the father-and-daughter team of Jim and Rachele Ternier, who are known locally for their involvement in seed-sharing ventures, to ensure the vitality of heritage varieties in a globalizing world.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, St. Peter's College has recently been awarded grants totaling over a million dollars to build infrastructure for biomass production, harvesting, and processing. Of this amount, \$815,000 is being allotted to St. Peter's from a Government of Canada grant through the University of Saskatchewan, while an additional \$250,000 is coming from the Government of Saskatchewan.¹¹⁹ These grants can be taken as re-contextualizing the monks' history of seeking to model future directions for agricultural production in south central Saskatchewan, this time in support of green technology projects.

The simple goal here is to model the feasibility of such projects in order to strengthen rural resilience in its social and ecological varieties. Participating in such initiatives, along with the concomitant presence of various new constituencies on the monastery's grounds, has influenced some of the monks' integrated approach to fostering socio-ecological resilience. In this case, it is expressed through an acknowledgment of the fundamental interconnection among Benedictine spirituality, relationship to the land, concern for those on the margins of society, and the Catholic intellectual tradition, brought into the service of energizing rural communities. As applying Herriot's and Davis' eco-ethical reflections to the historical narrative above demonstrates, there is something significant afoot at St. Peter's, an essential recovery and re-membering of a contextual sort that contributes to a vital future marked by resilient sustainability.

¹¹⁷ See Brother Webmaster, "St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster, SK," <<http://stpetersabbey.ca/wp/>>, accessed 20 August 2016.

¹¹⁸ Karen Morrison, "Food Security Sprouts From Prairie Seeds," *Western Producer*, 19 February 2015, <<http://www.producer.com/2015/02/food-security-sprouts-from-prairie-seeds/>>, accessed 20 August 2016.

¹¹⁹ Philip Proulx, "News Release: Canada and Saskatchewan Invest in Post-Secondary Infrastructure," Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, <<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1114009>>, accessed 30 August 2016.

BOOK REVIEWS

Frank A. Abbott. *The Body or the Soul? Religion and Culture in a Quebec Parish, 1736-1901*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016. xxvii, 356 pages. \$100 cloth

Brilliant. This is the word that springs to mind when reading this book. Frank Abbott, a retired professor of history formerly at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, has written a subtle, textured parish history that is light-years from the standard parish history filled with badly-identified photographs and few facts. Using the parish of St-Joseph-de-Beauce as his starting point, Abbott examines the parish registers, the annual reports to the archbishop of Quebec, censuses, and the rich, often over-looked ethnographic resources gathered by generations of folkore field researchers at Laval University. Along with these rich primary sources, he weaves his deep knowledge of Quebec religious historiography, secondary sources, and theoretical analyses from a wide range of philosophers and social scientists to offer fascinating insights into Quebec rural society. Popular culture and individual as well as community agency are important counterweights to the idea of clerical hegemony.

There are eight chapters in 250 pages, with another hundred pages of appendix, notes, bibliography and index. Chapter 1, "Habitants and religion in nineteenth-century Québec," is an overview of the rise of the institutional Church to prominence in nineteenth-century Quebec. In important ways, Abbott invalidates Louis Rousseau's thesis of a sudden religious revival in the mid-nineteenth century at least in this part of rural Quebec. He also throws doubt on René Hardy's arguments for a gradual religious revival and increase in clerical control (18). Abbott does not see evidence for either position. An increase in Easter communions did not mean that piety increased, but that clerical rigorism had softened, due to the influence of Saint Alphonsus Liguori's moral theology (149). Popular support for church buildings was certainly present, as the second chapter, "Development and transformation: St-Joseph-de-Beauce, 1736-1901," shows, but did it mean clerical control? Abbott argues that the French-Canadian farmer was not backward, but an agent who reacted to changes in the market economy, took advantage of opportunities and, rather than seeing religion as a hindrance, used it to advance well-being, both on earth and in heaven. The Church itself saw no opposition between the market economy and religion; neither

did the individual farmer. The clergy actively promoted roads and rails; the habitants supported buildings that attracted more wealth. Chapter 3, “Render unto God: Buildings and Belief,” examines the enormous sums spent on church buildings – churches, rectories, convents – and the little spent on educational institutions. Basically, those with the means to do so sent their children elsewhere for education or built local private academies. Those without means saw no need for children to get more than a basic education. Despite clerical urgings, neither group favoured spending on school buildings. Chapter 4, “Ministering to a Rural Parish: The Curés of St-Joseph, 1761-1901,” demonstrates how little power the clergy had, how one was removed by local complaints, and how all of them accomplished what they could primarily through moral suasion, in partnership with local parishioners, who participated in the definition of what was required of the clergy. Chapter 5, “‘Holy Water and Candles’: Catholicism in St-Joseph,” doubts the “social control” theory of religion by emphasizing the mutually shared beliefs of both clergy and people in a reality beyond the material. This chapter is “deeply interesting” (174) and fun: there is, for example, a description of curse words in popular parlance. For this, Abbott uses the work of Jean-Pierre Pichette (formerly a professor of folklore at the University of Sudbury) to good effect. Chapter 6, “Beliefs, Superstitions, and Popular Spirituality,” describes local folk beliefs, many of which dovetailed with Catholic orthodoxy, although some, such as Ouija boards, seemed to have been imported from Protestant circles. Chapter 7, “Holy Water versus Fire Water: Habitant Sociability and the Curés,” and chapter 8, “Sociability and Sexuality: ‘On danse pour le plaisir de danser,’ look at two ways in which the clergy tried to control parish behavior, in drinking and in dancing, and how they failed. A brief, dense conclusion, “The Body *and* the Soul,” again emphasizes how parishioners balanced body and soul.

Abbott goes beyond asking whether the average French-Canadian habitant was as submissive to clerical control as popular opinion describes him (xx), since this myth has been abandoned by recent historiography. He asks “how institutional Catholicism interacted on the mundane level with the ordinary faithful.” Looking at the interrelationship between religion and popular customs, it is clear that Catholicism is important in daily life. Abbott, more than anyone else, digs as deeply as possible to find out what people actually believed in the past and has, I believe, reconstructed the moral compass of the Quebec habitants.

Aside from the two dozen or so typographical errors (the article “the” often disappeared from the text or was misplaced when it was needed) and the fact that Jean du Berger was also spelled Du Berger in the bibliography (and thus appeared in two different places ... and why not? He was definitely an important folklore scholar who needs to be read by historians), the book

was well edited. I would doubt Abbott's statement (135) that "In Québec there was no strong anticlerical tradition." Did Marcel Trudel's two-volume study of Voltaire in Quebec not testify to the antecedents of later Catholic liberal and Protestant anticlericalism?

Nonetheless, no brief book review can do real justice to this extremely well constructed and argued monograph. The book itself should be required reading in courses relating to Quebec, Canadian religious history, and the social history of Canada. Abbott sums up his work in the conclusion: "The social history of rural popular culture and its encounter with modernity in this small and relatively unimportant rural Québec parish over the course of the nineteenth century tells us a number of things about larger human issues such as the agency of ordinary people in the face of powerful institutions." (248) They survived and thrived. And that was the point of it all, to keep body and soul together.

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Toronto, The Belfast of Canada: The Orange Order and the Shaping of Municipal Culture. William J. Smyth. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. xv, 306 pages \$29.95 paper

As a graduate student studying in Belfast, Northern Ireland, I frequently walked past the statue of Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, that stood on the grounds of Belfast City Hall. Depicting the former Governor-General of Canada (1872-78) and Viceroy of India (1884-88), the monument exhibited all the trappings of Empire, including a romantic Canadian Voyageur sitting confidently at the foot of Lord Dufferin, with musket in hand and a freshly slain moose at his side. The statue was emblematic of imperial power, but it also symbolised the role that Ulster played in governing and populating the Empire.

In a very accessible and thoroughly researched book, William Smyth examines Northern Ireland's two most important exports to the city of Toronto: people and the Orange Order. Despite its modern multicultural composition, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Toronto was unquestionably a British, Protestant city and an "Ulster outpost in the Canadian heartland" (278). The Canadian context, he notes, was that of a colonial outreach in which "British law, the English Language, and Protestant religion provided at the macro level a supportive and familiar environment for the settlers" (18). By 1871 thousands of Toronto's British citizens hailed from Ulster, and, consequently, Belfast and Toronto shared a common inheritance and culture.

The Orange Order, of course, was organized in 1795 in response to sectarian clashes with native Catholics in County Armagh. When in 1798, the United Irish organized an uprising against British rule in Ireland, members of the fledgling organization fought against the insurgency, gaining social distinction and growth. Many of these early Orange veterans eventually migrated to Toronto and carried the Orange banner with them. Orangeism helped defeat William Lyon Mackenzie's 1837 rebellion in Upper Canada, and by the time of Canadian Confederation, one-third of all adult male Protestants were members of the organization at some point in their lives.

Placing both Canada and Ireland in its imperial context, Smyth compares Toronto and Belfast, and explores the growth of the Orange Lodges in Ontario as they influenced "politics, religious and public morality" (116). He also examines the structure of the organization, which, although dominated by Ulstermen, was full of non-Irish Protestants. This was a reality throughout British North America, and illustrates the appeal of the organization on Protestant and monarchical terms and not merely ethnicity (The colony of Newfoundland, for example, had almost no Ulster migration and yet had a particularly strong Orange Order).

Smyth's portrayal of the Order as purveyors of patronage, which reached all levels of political and economic life in Toronto, is extremely interesting. It was, Smyth notes, the "closest Canadian equivalent of the machine politics of American cities," and "Orange Tories" controlled many publicly funded posts (119). Through patronage and the "twelfth parades," the Order also displayed its more ominous sectarian character. As in Belfast, social tensions with Irish Roman Catholics (who were also loyal British citizens) frequently resulted in violence, which led to Toronto's designation as the "Belfast of Canada."

Yet, as scholars of the Orange Order have noted, these sectarian features were not always the primary attraction for new members. Much like the Catholic Knights of Columbus or the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Orange Lodges were places of fraternity, communal engagement, meetings, dinners, and social networking. As Smyth notes, the salted fish suppers of the Newfoundland-dominated Lodges and the spaghetti dinners hosted by the Italian Protestants of Giuseppe Garibaldi LOL 3115 were "renowned throughout the city" (114).

Throughout this exploration, Smyth is making a case that Old World animosities and prejudice lurked behind the scenes in Ontario well into the 1950s (despite the organization's decline), and that Catholics remained "marginal to 'official' Toronto" (36). This challenges studies like Mark McGowan's *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto* (MQUP, 1996) and, more recently, McGowan and Michael Vance's

Irish Catholic Halifax: From the Napoleonic Wars to the Great War (CCHA, 2015), in which Catholics are presented as integrated and loyal members of the Empire by 1922.

Although these debates on identity will continue (perhaps an examination of a wider and more inclusive loyalist culture is required), there is little dispute that the Orange Order had an important effect on the development of Toronto (and Canada). Not only did the organization forge a bridge across the Atlantic, uniting the New World with the Old, it had a tremendous effect on the daily life of thousands of immigrants.

Peter Ludlow
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St. Joseph's Colleges, University of Alberta. Kenneth Munro. Victoria: Friesen Press, 2015. 557 pages, illus. \$59.99 cloth.

Historically, there have been two kinds of Roman Catholic colleges in Canada: those that pursued an independent existence and those that sought to plant a Catholic presence within a larger, explicitly secular university. The first kind tried to mould young Catholics in relative isolation; the second integrated Catholicism into lives lived beside and among other belief systems. St. Joseph's College, created in affiliation with the University of Alberta, falls into this latter category.

In an equally simplistic manner, it may be said that there are two sorts of university history in Canada. The traditional approach adopts a top-down perspective that privileges the decision-makers. Such histories typically present a standard narrative of struggle and triumph, leavened with episodes of crisis, often financial in nature but occasionally existential. Generally commissioned by their subjects, such histories are unsurprisingly respectful and often celebratory in tone. A more recent trend has been to regard colleges/universities as social organisms ripe for dissection. Both approaches are interested in power relationships and track them down and across hierarchies. Both necessarily are concerned with educational philosophies, physical growth, and curricular development. But the "new" university histories go deeper into the dense web of relationships that define an educational community: relationships between student and teacher, Administration and Faculty, administrator and (rarely) staff; between school and constituency; between what is taught and what is learned. With varying degrees of success, they also explore the students' perspective. Though not entirely "bottom up" in approach, they seek a more holistic profile of the institution under study.

Kenneth Munro's baldly titled *St. Joseph's College, University of Alberta* can be classified as a "traditional" university history. A retired historian

of French Canada, trained by the Jesuits, Munro spent four decades at the University of Alberta, including a term as Academic Dean at St. Joseph's. He is thus both insider and outsider. By his own account he volunteered himself for the job (vii), and has undertaken it with admirable zeal.

Munro tracks the story of St. Joseph's from its inception in 1926 through the principal agency of Henry O'Leary, third Archbishop of Edmonton, to the very recent past. In a political and popular climate that militated against a stand-alone Catholic university, O'Leary opted for a denominational college, affiliated with the secular University of Alberta, which would allow Catholic students to learn about their faith by studying philosophy, history, theology, and ethics in a Catholic environment within their larger course of study at the provincial university.

Munro's Preface sketches out a familiar plotline: "This is truly the story about a little Catholic College 'that could' and enjoys the admiration and respect from not only the Roman Catholic community, but the larger community of Christians throughout the province and beyond" (vi). The pivot of the story comes in 1963, with the reluctant departure of the Christian Brothers de La Salle, who initially staffed St. Joseph's, in favour of the more scholarly – and thus, more desirable – Basilian Congregation. The thirty-seven years of the Christian Brothers' era elicit 107 pages. The Basilian period (fifty-two years at time of publication) gets over three times the space. As Munro's account draws nearer the present, the level of detail increases dramatically. Chapter Five, for instance, takes sixty-pages to move the story from 1978 to 1983. In contrast, the conclusion is barely one page long!

The blow-by-blow micro-narrative that dominates the second half of the book can be daunting, but also provokes, perhaps because Munro pulls no punches in chronicling feuds and foibles and the sometimes byzantine workings of university politics. Consider, for example, one of the villains of the piece, Frank Henderson, who "loved to stir the pot of dissent but offered little in the form of practical action" (147). Other historical actors are described, variously, as "petulant," "foolish," and guilty of "disastrous oversight." Paradoxically, the exhaustive detail that will undoubtedly set some readers skimming is also one of the book's strengths. It reminds us that the relationship between affiliated colleges and their parent institutions, a relationship complicated by personalities as much as by differing world-views, requires ongoing negotiation.

Munro's narrative takes a magnifying glass to St. Joseph's threefold mission: academics, Catholic residence, and campus ministry to a community that straddles both the university and nearby neighbourhoods. The shifting emphasis on each component is carefully charted. By the 1990s, a fourth, sometimes controversial element had been added, "bioethical guidance"

(341). A recurring theme is the struggle to earn – and in return be accorded – the academic respect of peers at the University of Alberta, who periodically argued that St. Joseph’s orthodox Catholicism compromised the spirit of free inquiry that lies at the heart of a university’s mission, and so, should disbar it from offering for-credit courses in certain subjects. The trajectory of that quest for professionalization and respect is reflected in the successive re-titling of St. Joseph’s chief administrative officer, from rector, to principal, to, finally, president.

The other relationship that permeates the text involves personnel. There are many moments of friction and tension, originating in personality clashes, management styles, lapses of diplomacy, and conflicting visions. Along the way, an essentially hierarchical administrative structure struggles to adapt to a staffing landscape where low-paid clerical faculty are gradually replaced by lay people who expect comparable salaries and benefits to those accorded other University of Alberta faculty. That issue plays off and into another major theme, the fiscal uncertainty that – as in Catholic schools everywhere – shadows St. Joseph’s dreams and ambitions.

What is largely absent from Munro’s St. Joseph’s are the voices of the students. In his predominantly top-down narrative, they are seen but seldom heard. And they are seen largely through the eyes of management. They are caught out in pranks, are occasionally overtaken by tragedy, are sometimes disgruntled. But the reportage comes mostly from administrators. A handful of reminiscences provide much of what is told of the pre-1963 student body. There are no student union files or student newspapers to mine, and no attempt to reach current or former students with a questionnaire that might probe their experiences or perceptions. Occasional enrolment statistics are provided, but there is no effort to identify the College’s natural constituency or to categorize the student body by, for instance, geographic origin, gender, ethnicity, economic status, post-graduation careers. Such an endeavour would admittedly be complicated because as both a residential college and a program of study, its students include those living in residence and those who merely enrol in St. Joseph’s classes.

Munro ends his history at the point when a women’s residence finally opened, thus completing Archbishop O’Leary’s original vision. That it took until 2003 to even broach the idea of a co-ed residence (rejected in order to maintain the “distinctiveness” of the existing residence [442]), exposes another under-developed theme, the place of women. They are acknowledged: the first female member of the Board of Governors (1968); the integral, sometimes outspoken, members of chaplaincy teams; the “lovely girlfriends” of male residents (358); the first female faculty member to receive tenure (2015). But their numbers and impact go largely unexplored. This is essentially a male story.

Of course, books should be reviewed for what they do, not for what they might have done. Kenneth Munro's detailed, delightfully opinionated, yet devout history of St. Joseph's will appeal certainly to the College's friends and supporters. But its utility goes beyond the local. In the nearly half century since Laurence K. Shook's watershed study, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English-speaking Canada* (1971), many of the country's Roman Catholic colleges have vanished or become unrecognizable as Catholic institutions. That St. Joseph's College has survived, adapted – and prospered – merits broader attention.

Edward MacDonald
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Alexandre Vachon: The Scholar's Cleric and the Clerics' Scholar. André N. Vachon. Ottawa: Petra Books, 2015. 398 pages, \$28

By any measure, Alexandre Vachon was an extraordinary son of the Church. Born in 1885 near Chute Panet, Quebec, he was the last of thirteen children of a French-Canadian father and a Scottish mother. He remained devoted to his family. Though scattered throughout Canada and the United States he visited them regularly, provided spiritual sustenance and, occasionally, financial aid.

Duality marked Vachon's life's work. His first language was English, but in school he quickly mastered French and was very much at ease in any cultural milieu, in Quebec, in Canada, in the world. Before his elevation to the episcopate, he was both priest and scientist, an unusual combination, as detailed in this biography by distant relative, André Vachon.

Vachon was a scientist of note. After his ordination in May 1910, he taught at the Grande Seminaire and later, Laval University and did advanced studies in science at Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His specialty was chemistry, but he taught biology, geology, and oceanography and published widely, including articles on earthquakes, hydrography and Albert Einstein as well as a chemistry textbook. He served as President of the Chemical Institute of Canada and was a long-time supporter of the Canadian Chemical Association.

With his solid scholarly reputation, Vachon encouraged the advancement of French Canadians in all scientific fields. The federal government appointed him to the Board of Governors of the CBC, the National Research Council and the Biological Board of Canada. He supported the creation of the Scientific Research Institute of Quebec. Vachon was in great demand at academic conferences, and throughout the 1920s and 1930s, he travelled

extensively, representing Laval, the Canadian government, and the church at international meetings; seeking new staff for the university; attending the Eucharistic Congress in Budapest in 1938; and visiting his extensive network of like-minded friends and peers. His scientific work was recognized with his election to the Royal Society of Canada in 1934 and honorary degrees from Queen's, McGill, Ottawa, and Montreal.

In 1938, Vachon became Dean of the new Faculty of Science at Laval and, a year later, Rector of Laval University and Superior of the Grande Séminaire, two institutions that had been intimately linked with his spiritual and intellectual life for four decades. His life changed dramatically when he was appointed Archbishop of Ottawa in 1940. It was difficult for him to relinquish his connections to *academe*, scientific research, and his wide circle of friends outside the church, but he was an inspired choice for Ottawa. His bilingualism was a huge asset in an archdiocese where French-Canadian and Irish Catholics were not always on the best of terms; it was both a challenge and a new opportunity at an auspicious time.

Turning his attention to the needs of his flock, the new archbishop recognized the need to renew the spiritual and religious life of the Catholic community, especially concerning education and vocations. As a devoted priest Vachon had supported the Knights of Columbus, promoted Marian devotions, and advocated the strengthening of the Catholic family. In Ottawa, he fought the provincial and local governments over separate schools taxation, while pressing his own flock to send their children to Catholic schools. He encouraged Catholic unions in an effort to keep Catholic workers from straying into what were thought to be Communist-led unions. He still travelled extensively, especially on church related matters. But work took its toll. After suffering a severe physical breakdown, he spent about eighteen months in 1943-1944 seeking treatment and rest in the United States.

Vachon ordained more than 500 priests during his thirteen-year tenure, but was never satisfied with the number of vocations. In 1944, he embarked on an ambitious program to build a grand seminary on the banks of the Rideau River. The project burdened the archdiocese with incredible debt. To raise the funds to complete its construction, the building was rented to the federal government. Soon after his death the archdiocese sold it.

The post-war years were difficult. Vachon was deeply concerned about what he perceived as moral laxity brought on by the war, especially increasing secularism and popular culture, and its damage to Catholic family life. To revitalize the faith in the archdiocese, he organized a Marian Congress in June 1947 that, despite not being an international congress, was, by all accounts, a tremendous success. Its lasting impact on the Catholic faithful, however, is difficult to discern.

Pope Pius XII appointed Vachon President of the Commission for International Eucharistic Congresses, a clear acknowledgement of his contributions to the archdiocese and to the Canadian church. The new appointment required yet more travel. Vachon sailed across the Atlantic more than 35 times and, by the end of his life, travelled by air to attend meetings, especially in the United States. His final journey is a case in point: he departed Ottawa on 16 February 1953, and sailed from New York to Rio de Janeiro to announce that a Eucharistic Congress would be held there in 1955. He then flew to Lima, Peru, Panama City, Jamaica and Miami, Florida, to confer with fellow bishops. From Miami, he boarded a flight for Australia via San Francisco, but during a stopover in Dallas, he collapsed and died.

With the objective of presenting Vachon in his own words, the author includes many long extracts from letters, reports, and other documents. All very interesting, but not all aspects of his varied career are discussed in detail. Nevertheless, the author has mapped out with broad strokes the challenges, successes, and failures of the Archbishop's life and career. Unfortunately, Vachon directed in his will that all personal papers and writings be destroyed, but André N. Vachon, the author, has made excellent use of official records in the diocesan archives. Alexandre Vachon was an extraordinary man, always searching, always praying, and always seeking a better way to God and salvation for his church, for its members and for society at large.

Glenn Wright
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Fernand Dumont: A Sociologist Turns to Theology. Gregory Baum. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015. 135 pages. \$65.00 cloth

The Oil Has Not Run Dry: The Story of My Theological Pathway. Gregory Baum. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017. 256 pages. \$37.95 cloth

These volumes by Gregory Baum can fruitfully be read together. *Fernand Dumont: A Sociologist Turns to Theology* is a longer essay examining Dumont's 1987 work *L'Institution de la théologie*, while in *The Oil Has Not Run Dry: The Story of My Theological Pathway*, Baum offers his own theological memoir.

Fernand Dumont: A Sociologist Turns to Theology is an offshoot of Baum's 2014 work, *Truth and Relevance: Catholic Theology in French Quebec Since the Quiet Revolution*, in which he promised to explore Dumont's theology more deeply. Baum's purpose is twofold: he continues

his efforts to introduce Quebecois theology to English speakers, but he is additionally convinced that Dumont presents ideas and insights that are helpful in constructing a contemporary theology.

As the title indicates, Fernand Dumont (1927-1997) was a sociologist and Quebec's most significant public intellectual of the twentieth century, who at the age of 60 turned to the academic study of theology and published his dissertation as *L'Institution de la théologie*. This work was informed by his training in sociology and phenomenology, but also by his work as President of the Commission for the Study of the Laity and the Church, more popularly known as the Dumont Commission, which undertook an extensive study of the Church in Quebec during the Quiet Revolution.

Baum both summarizes and explains Dumont's work. The chapters in Baum's essay parallel those in Dumont's oeuvre: separate chapters explore the role of theologians through their critical relations to the community of believers, the magisterium, tradition, and culture. Throughout, Baum highlights key concepts that this original Quebec thinker brings to theological discourse, ones that help to make sense of the dynamic nature of both the human person and theology. For example, through the concepts of first and second culture – his own construction – Dumont explores how individuals and institutions move from the knowledge and culture that they have inherited to novel forms of knowledge created as people deal with new circumstances. In large part these concepts grew out of Dumont's own experience of the Quiet Revolution and the rapidly changing place of the Catholic Church in Quebec. These concepts provide tools for theologians grappling with modern concerns such as secularization, Christian activity in the world, and religious pluralism.

In fact, Baum uses some of these concepts in his memoir, *The Oil Has Not Run Dry: The Story of My Theological Pathway*. The oil in the title refers to the story from 1 Kings in which Elijah and the widow of Sarepta do not run out of food even during a famine. Baum identifies with the widow, seeing his own life as a story of abundance in a century of violence and privation, insisting that this fundamental experience of salvation and grace has marked his Christian worldview. The book is divided into two parts: the lengthier first part, "My Theological Pathway," is comprised of twenty-five short chapters, five to ten pages each, in which Baum recounts a moment, issue or book that shaped his theological development. In the second part, "Questions and Answers," he responds to questions posed by his friend Philip McKenna that are more personal and intimate. They range from his prayer life to his homosexual orientation to his thoughts about death. The chapters can stand alone as short essays on a particular issue, though taken together they guide the reader more or less chronologically through Baum's life. As McKenna notes, Baum is a man of "many affinities." Born in Weimar

Germany in 1923 to a bourgeois Protestant German family that was originally Jewish, Baum left Germany in 1939 at the age of sixteen and eventually ended up in Canada. At the age of twenty-three he was baptized into the Roman Catholic Church and a year later entered the Augustinian family. He was appointed a *peritus* (specialist) at the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity during the Second Vatican Council. Most of his academic career was spent teaching at St. Michael's College in Toronto. In 1976 he resigned from the priesthood. After retiring from St. Michael's, he became a professor at Montreal's McGill University, where he immersed himself in Quebec's religious and social concerns.

It is instructive to see how Baum incorporates Dumont's theological insights into his own story. Not only does Baum include a chapter on Dumont, but he also uses some of Dumont's categories to explain his own theological positions. For example, Baum uses Dumont's *référence*, or "identification with the witnesses of faith and the redemptive events in the Catholic past and present," (204) to explain the way in which he understands himself as rooted in the Catholic tradition, despite his very clear disagreement with some Catholic teaching, disagreements that some Catholics would see as nullifying Baum's Catholic belonging. Baum's own life is replete with what Dumont calls *dédoublement*, a "splitting open" of one's first culture when it encounters new obstacles. This "splitting open" challenges people to find a creative response that is both faithful to the truths of the first culture, but open to new ways of understanding. Baum recounts numerous instances of this *dédoublement* in his theological journey and the new insights these challenges afforded him. He has grappled with anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, ecumenical concerns, women's rights, economic injustice locally and globally, and Quebecois nationalism, to name but some issues. All of these encounters have changed his understanding of the Catholic tradition.

The two volumes offer historians of Catholicism in Canada an account of progressive Canadian Catholicism in the twentieth century. Baum and Dumont were both born in the 1920s, their childhood was shaped by the Depression and World War II, and they both embraced with hope the long revolutionary Sixties: Vatican II, the Quiet Revolution and various manifestations of liberation. The book on Dumont is more abstract and theological, but it reveals the changes in conceptualizing theology and the Church that have occurred among many Catholics, a shift from a hierarchical and monarchical Church, with a heavy emphasis on Catholic belief as assent to doctrinal statements, to a Church in which belief and experience form the foundations of belonging for every believer, and where theologians act as mediators of Catholic faith – mediating between believers, the magisterium, tradition, and contemporary culture. Baum's memoirs put flesh on the theory, revealing how Baum as a theologian navigates and is transformed by this mediation.

There is some, perhaps unavoidable, repetition, both between the two books and within Baum's memoir. The memoir's indexing could have been done more carefully: for example, the entry on Dumont noted p. 50, though there was no reference to Dumont on that page, while other references to Dumont (e.g. p. 204) do not appear in the entry. These are, however, minor issues.

In both books, Baum writes personally. He is never the all-knowing expert delivering knowledge in the third person. Even when examining Dumont, Baum includes observations in the first person. Thus, Baum also underscores the importance of our humanity in our works as scholars. Baum exhibits humility. He readily admits when he has found authors, and Dumont in particular, difficult to comprehend, and humbly relates instances when he had to take recourse to secondary literature to start to comprehend a thinker. He also reminds historians of the unreliability of human memory by recounting how he himself was long convinced that he had never communicated with a particular French historian, only to have another scholar find Baum's own letters to this historian in the archives, a sobering anecdote for all of us in the business of reconstructing the past.

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