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**EXPLORING EFFORTS ON TWO COLLEGE CAMPUSES TO CULTIVATE
A CULTURE OF VOCATION**

by

MARK PETERS

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy
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May 2009

Dissertation Committee

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Donald Godwin, Ed.D.**

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ABSTRACT

Young adults today experience an extended adolescence, a period of time now commonly referred to as emerging adulthood, in which they delay undertaking the roles traditionally associated with becoming an adult in contemporary society. College has the potential to become the mentoring environment needed for emerging adults to consider their future life choices grounded in the context of their deepest beliefs, shared values, and personal passions.

Since 2000, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. has invested over \$2 million in 88 select religiously affiliated colleges to fund Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation (PTEV). These Programs were designed to help students consider a sense of God's call in their life, or vocation, and to assist them in exploring their vocation during their undergraduate years.

This qualitative comparative case study explores the PTEV initiatives that were developed at one Jesuit college and one non-Jesuit Catholic college in order to discover the extent to which their initiatives helped to support (or impede) a culture of vocational exploration on campus. In comparing the two cases, a similar theoretical framework for understanding their Programs' effectiveness emerged from the data. In each case, the success of their Programs rested upon factors related to structure, culture, and agency. The structural elements consisted of the curricular and co-curricular programs put into place to help their campus communities explore the idea of vocation, both individually and as a community. The cultural factors influencing their PTEV initiatives entailed both the pre-existent campus culture shaped by each college's founding religious order and the culture of vocation that their Programs shaped. Finally, the individual actions or agency

involved in these case studies refer to the leadership exercised by those who were responsible for the Programs that enabled each Program to be a truly collaborative and effective agent for cultural change on campus. While case studies of just two colleges, the study has the potential to become a useful heuristic tool for other colleges that wish to create a mentoring environment on campus that supports students in their exploration of vocation.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wonderful family: my Dad, Ray Peters, who always encouraged me to “do what I love”; my Mom, Patty Peters, whose compassionate heart for those most in need inspired me to seek and serve “the world’s deep hungers”; my big brother Dr. Eric Peters, his lovely wife Dr. Rachel Kimmich, and their adorable newborn son Ethan Christopher, who have been an anchor in my life after moving to San Diego and a sympathetic support during the dissertation writing process; my soul sibling Krista Ann Haggerty, her husband Matt Haggerty, and their beautiful children: Matthew, Ryan, and my godchild Katelyn, who have been a constant source of joy and laughter in my life; my incredible sister Major Laura Peters, with whom I have the privilege of sharing some of this San Diego experience and whose generosity and commitment to serve the less fortunate of this world seems to know no bounds; and my beloved “baby” sister Maria whose courageous life has given me hope in God’s constant love and providence and whose brilliant daughter Julia has been our guardian angel throughout these past five years. Words cannot express my love and gratitude for all that you have given me and all that you are.

I would like to further dedicate this work to the youth and young adults, with whom I have had the privilege to minister, teach, coach, and mentor. Most of all, I’m grateful for the opportunity to learn with and from these students about this “journey we call life.” Their compassion, courage, and creativity in serving the reign of God inspire me on a daily basis. It has been truly a privilege and a pleasure to work with young women and men in San Diego, Philadelphia, Boston, and places abroad. My deepest hope is that this study will help us to better encourage, equip, and inspire one another to seek

and follow God's call in our lives to build God's reign of justice and mercy in the peace
and joy that God intends for each one of us.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background to the Study

During their undergraduate experience, young adults have a unique opportunity to define for themselves what is most important to them. It should not be surprising, therefore, that the college years have been called the critical years for young adult faith and vocational development (Parks, 1986). In fact, it could be argued that the whole purpose of higher education is to prepare young adults for the rest of their lives, by helping them make meaning of their experiences, their world, and their lives. Young adults seek participation, purpose, meaning, and a faith to live by (Parks, 2000). College is a time for asking big questions and exploring worthy dreams.

Seniors in college often find themselves facing some challenging questions as they approach graduation: What do I want to do? Where do I want to live? With whom will I spend my time; with whom will I work; and with whom will I build a home? Which causes are worthy of my time, talent, and energy? More poignantly, who do I want to become? In short, as they are about to graduate, college students are confronted with the all encompassing and rather intimidating question: What should I do with my life?

Many students may not consciously answer the questions listed above; rather, they may let the circumstances of their lives answer the questions for them. However, some college students choose to exercise leadership in their lives and make conscious choices with respect to some of the bigger questions that life poses. College can provide the

mentoring environment that may assist them in their search for meaning, purpose, and passion in their lives.

Since 2000, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. has awarded over \$200 million in grant money to 88 liberal arts colleges and universities to fund Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation (PTEV). Grant awardees were charged with designing programs that would assist undergraduates in exploring the role that faith might play in their life choices following college, particularly “vocational choices.” As described by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.:

Schools were asked to establish or strengthen programs that 1) assist students in examining the relationship between faith and vocational choices, 2) provide opportunities for gifted young people to explore Christian ministry, and 3) enhance the capacity of a school's faculty and staff to teach and mentor students effectively in this arena. (Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation, 2007a, para. 1)

Historically, vocation often has referred narrowly to a particular call to religious life and/or ordained ministry in one's religious traditions. However, over the course of implementing the Lilly Endowment Inc. funded programs, a much broader definition for vocation has emerged. While there is no consensus on one definition of vocation, there is a generally accepted assumption (implicit in the root meaning of vocation coming from the Latin word—*vocare*—to call) that all people have a unique call in their life, whether specifically to religious ministries or to more secular affairs.

For the purposes of this study, vocation, or calling, is defined in the broad sense. A compelling and helpful definition of vocation comes from Frederick Buechner (1973) who recognizes that our sense of meaning, purpose, and passion in life comes from both

deep within and within the context a larger community that both affirms and challenges our vocational choices, as he says, “the place where God calls you is the place where your deep gladness meets the world’s deep hunger” (Buechner, 1973, p. 83). This broader concept of vocation, one that encompasses both the individual’s unique desires and the world’s needs, is the way the term vocation will be employed in this study.

Purpose of the Study

College graduates might fare better as they face the developmental challenges of adulthood, if they were informed, equipped, and inspired to cultivate a habit of lifelong discernment regarding vocational issues. Discernment, for the purposes of this study, refers to the process of conscientious decision making that is informed and guided by an individual’s deepest beliefs, shared values, personal passions, and previously chosen commitments to communities and causes. How to cultivate these lifelong habits of discernment and how to create a mentoring environment on campus that would educate and encourage students in their lifelong pursuit of meaning, purpose, and faith were a primary focus for the 88 colleges receiving grants to develop Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation.

The challenge for college students, as well as for people of all ages and life stages, lies in hearing and heeding the call of vocation. The PTEV colleges have produced an array of creative strategies to help students discover their vocation. Both curricular and co-curricular elements of these vocation initiatives have been implemented to encourage college students to consider the idea of vocation during their undergraduate years. While there does not seem to be a definitive consensus concerning best practices, some common

strategies that developers and foundation officials believe are effective include:

“mentoring, peer learning, texts (movies, books, works of art, lectures, music), hospitality (especially food), and opportunities for service or experiential learning accompanied by reflective exercises” (Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation, 2007a, Program Development section, para. 1).

Each Program for the Theological Exploration of Vocation has undertaken some form of self-evaluation. In addition, the Coordination Office for PTEV has organized symposia where PTEV schools have shared strategies and best practices. However, cultivating a culture of vocation on campus is a complex and challenging process, which seems to depend upon many variables. Some initial studies have been conducted to determine the efficacy of particular programs in helping students to explore vocation in their lives. For example, one research effort at Santa Clara University employed a research tool called the Vocational Identity Questionnaire to try to assess and measure growth in a student’s sense of vocation for his or her life (Dreher, Holloway, & Schoenfelder, 2005).

Additionally, it appears as if the formation of formal programs was only the first step as each college sought to support students more fully in their vocational journey. According to Craig Dykstra, Senior Vice President, Religion, Lilly Endowment, Inc., the PTEV programs have been most effective in cultivating “whole environments for the exploration of vocation.”

I have come to recognize that you have done something much more significant—and much more difficult—than simply create programs for the theological exploration of vocation. You have created not just programs, but,

indeed, whole environments for the theological exploration of vocation. . . . You have drawn on, renewed and reshaped the deep cultures of your institutions in ways that make such exploration both more likely and more profound. . . . If I am right that you have used your grants to go far beyond simply developing clusters of discrete programs and activities, but instead have created, enlarged and deepened expansive environments in which your students and your community are enabled to engage in the theological exploration of vocation—and if I am right to claim that such environments are, in fact, essential for that exploration—then, it seems to me crucial that we investigate the breadth, substance, and dynamics of those environments as part of our effort to understand what we mean by the theological exploration of vocation and what it actually consists of empirically. (Dykstra, 2007, Section 3, para. 3 and para. 8)

As Dykstra points out here, encouraging students to consider their vocation in deep and meaningful ways is a complex matter that requires more than just a few additional co-curricular programs. For PTEV to be most successful, colleges needed to find a way to integrate the idea of vocation into their very culture. The most successful colleges were those who found a way to cultivate a culture of vocation. What is needed at this point is a series of studies to elucidate how different colleges have attempted to cultivate a campus culture where vocation, broadly defined, is studied, valued, and explored deeply by all members of the university community. Such studies, collectively, could then be used heuristically by other colleges and universities that wish to cultivate a culture of vocation. A conversation with Dr Chris Coble, the Director responsible for PTEV programs at the Lilly Foundations, affirmed the need for further study in this area, particularly regarding the question of how colleges might create the mentoring environment necessary to encourage, equip, and inspire college students to explore their vocation in deep, meaningful, and lasting ways (personal communication, Chris Coble, 2008).

I conducted a study of one of the eight Jesuit PTEV colleges and one of the non-Jesuit Catholic PTEV colleges, which were awarded roughly \$2 million apiece to develop Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation. I studied all of the Catholic colleges' PTEV initiatives, reviewing their efforts to support and enhance a culture of vocation on campus. In the end, I selected two Catholic colleges for a comparative case study. The particular Jesuit college chosen for this study was praised by the Lilly Foundation, which awarded the PTEV grants in a competitive process involving hundreds of schools, for their unique approach to PTEV. I selected the second Catholic PTEV college for this study, Saint Norbert College, because it has a similarly exemplary character. Particularly important for the comparative aspect of the study, Saint Norbert College implemented their comprehensive PTEV initiative by grounding their efforts in the Norbertine traditions, a Catholic spiritual tradition significantly different from the Ignatian tradition. Including a second college in a cross case study comparison allowed the opportunity to distinguish the influence of the founding religious orders' educational philosophy and spiritual traditions upon each school's PTEV initiative.

Research Questions

The study presented here is one small step toward accomplishing the research agenda articulated by the Lilly Foundation, Inc. referenced earlier. The purpose of the study is to explore two colleges' efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation. The ultimate research questions that will guide the study are:

1. How did Santa Clara University and Saint Norbert College, which received Lilly Endowment funded PTEV grants, attempt to help students explore the notion of vocation?
2. What is the relationship between Ignatian spirituality and the vocational development efforts at Santa Clara University?
3. What is the relationship between Norbertine spirituality at Saint Norbert College and their vocational development efforts on campus?
4. What are the similarities and differences between the colleges' spiritual foundations and how did they impact their vocational efforts?
5. What lessons and implications from the colleges' efforts might be useful for other Jesuit and non-Jesuit Catholic colleges wishing to support students in exploring vocation?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction and Organization of the Literature Review

Research on young adult development among college age students in North America reveals that the transition to adulthood is particularly difficult in contemporary western society. In the midst of the developmental challenges faced by adolescents as they emerge into adulthood in an increasingly complex, interdependent, yet fragile and fragmented world, there is a unique opportunity for them to ponder and explore vocational choices. This exploration and reflection upon important life choices made in young adulthood offers the prospect of a more fulfilling adult life, one imbued with meaning, purpose, and passion.

In this review of the literature, I wish to explore the nature of young adult development and the contemporary challenges that they face as they take up roles of responsibility in society. In the context of these developmental challenges of young adults, I will examine the special needs that college students have for guidance and education surrounding key life choices that they face as they graduate college. I will focus upon the overarching question facing all young people, namely: "What should I do with my life?" I will then contrast a more secular approach to answering this question, which focuses upon career counseling and development, with scholars approaching the same question from a more faith-based perspective. Faith developmental theorists rephrase the question of "What should I do with my life?" into a more theologically centered question, namely: "What is my vocation?" I will review faith development literature highlighting

the faith and spiritual developmental challenges facing young adults. I will continue the discussion by reviewing recent writings on the nature of vocation and vocational exploration. Then I will review recent research on the spiritual lives of contemporary college students to frame a discussion of the nature of vocation and recent efforts on some college campuses to create an environment where vocational questions are explored deeply and systematically throughout the undergraduate college experience. This leads us to a discussion of the Lilly funded Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation (PTEV).

I will discuss what the PTEV grants hoped to accomplish, focusing in upon the Catholic colleges that received grants. I will introduce the PTEV initiatives at the two Catholic colleges that are the focus of this study, Santa Clara University and Saint Norbert College. I will conclude with a discussion of the spiritual foundations of each college, namely, the Ignatian spiritual tradition at Santa Clara University, and the Norbertine spiritual tradition at Saint Norbert College. I will discuss the Jesuit approach to education grounded in their founder's spirituality, called Ignatian, and how such an educational philosophy uniquely equipped Jesuit colleges to implement and deeply integrate their Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation (PTEV). Finally, I will examine the roots of Norbertine spirituality in an effort to understand how Norbertine spirituality could have impacted the PTEV initiative at Saint Norbert College. The introduction to these two Catholic spiritual traditions will set up the cross case study comparison described in the study methodology outlined in Chapter 3.

Emerging Adulthood and Challenges Facing Contemporary Young Adults

As human lifespan and opportunities for education have expanded in western society, so has our thinking about human development, particularly in the newer stages of life that have evolved. With the advent of the industrial revolution, observes Erikson (1968), a new stage in life developed, a time of apprenticeship into adult life known as adolescence. Now, as society and our process of socialization adapts to the changes brought on by an arguably more momentous revolution, known as the information revolution, new stages in life are again evolving to meet the demands of an information society.

Erik Erikson (1968) names the major developmental crisis of adolescence as identity development. For Erikson, each stage of life entails some developmental “crisis” which is either resolved in a satisfactory way or must be revisited in subsequent stages in life until some resolution is achieved. The adolescent, then, must come to some clarity with respect to psychosocial identity before realizing full mature adulthood. This identity is tied up both with work and in relationships and requires some deeper commitments than the more fleeting identifications made in childhood. Erikson calls the last stage before adulthood adolescence and therefore roughly corresponds with contemporary notions of emerging adulthood.

In his most recent publication, “Emerging Adulthood as an Institutionalized Moratorium: Risks and Benefits to Identity Formation,” James Côté (2006) expands upon Erikson’s theory surrounding the transition to adulthood that societies offer their young people. Originally coined by Erikson (1980), an institutional moratorium is a socially

constructed delay from traditional adult responsibilities providing additional time for working through identity issues and resolving the developmental crisis named by Erikson (1980) as “identity versus identity diffusion” (p. 94). Erikson sees this as the role of adolescence in an industrial society, a sanctioned period of time in which an individual can negotiate the developmental challenges entailed in the transition from childhood to adulthood. It is a time for apprenticeship, trying on roles without a long-term commitment.

Updating Erikson’s theory to speak to emerging adults in America in the 21st century, Côté (2006) “characterizes the recent prolongation of youth in terms of (a) the changed education-to work transition whereby large numbers of youth are now required to postpone aspects of their identity formation, and (b) the diminished normative structure governing the transition to adulthood” (p. 86). What we see today are young adults who take a much longer time to transition to socially defined adult roles with respect to work, family, and community commitments, along with a lack of institutional structures to guide them in that journey. Erikson called this transition to adulthood the (more or less) successful resolution of an identity crisis, that is, a clear sense of role and responsibilities in adulthood. Côté and Levine (2002) identify multidimensional aspects to identity formation: (a) relatively firm sense of ego identity, (b) behavior and character become stabilized, and (c) community sanctioned roles are acquired (p. 15).

The prolongation of the identity formation stage beyond adolescence was an exception to the rule in Erikson’s time, some 50 years ago. However, the extension of the identity stage seems to be a normative event in postindustrial societies. Demographic

evidence of an institutionalized moratorium, at least for emerging adults in North America, abounds. The United States and Canada now have almost one-half of their citizens in their early 20s attending educational institutions full-time (Montgomery & Côté, 2008). According to Bowlby (2000), the estimated duration of the cohort school-to-work transition is now 8 years and growing—beginning at 16 and ending at 23—2 years longer than it was in 1985. For some historical context to the education-to-work perspective from sociology, consider that in 2000 some 40% of young Canadians aged 20 to 24 were attending school full-time. In the 1950s, that statistic was only 5%; hence, a new “stage” of emerging adulthood (cited in Côté, 2006, p.89).

Jeffrey Jensen Arnett (2004) seems to have been the first to coin the phrase “emerging adulthood.” The distinguishing hallmarks of emerging adulthood, according to Arnett (2004), include five key ideas. First, emerging adulthood is a time of intense identity exploration, both in love relationships and in work. Second, it is a time of instability. In the college years alone, emerging adults are likely to have at least four different residences, followed by the move out of college—sometime back with their parents! Third, emerging adulthood is necessarily a self-focused time of life, in stark contrast to the many self-sacrifices required by marriage and commitment to a particular career or chosen profession. Fourth, emerging adulthood is also a time of possibilities, many options are available to young adults and they are often overwhelmed and, at same time, excited about the potential inherent in those options. Finally, emerging adults justifiably have a continual sense of feeling in-between.

As identified by Arnett and Tanner (2006) in their research with over 300 young adults coming of age in America, the top three criteria that determine reaching mature full adulthood include: (a) taking responsibility for oneself, (b) making independent decisions, and (c) becoming financially independent (p. 12). A majority of the 20-something young adults that Arnett (2004) interviewed did not believe that they had reached all three criteria (p. 15).

Arnett's (2004) recent study of contemporary young adults in American society confirms that college students of the 21st century have a longer road to adulthood. All the traditional hallmarks of reaching adulthood—marriage, having children, establishing oneself in a career—are happening later in life. Students are taking more time to finish their education—5, 6 years for an undergraduate degree. Some go on for a graduate degree in their 20s, one third of them right after college. Current generations are not afraid to make many more job changes, seeking fulfilling careers, not just lucrative ones (Arnett, 2004, p. 3).

It might appear that the extra time afforded to young adults today would be to their benefit. However, many of these years are wandering years outside an institutionally supported context or viable mentoring environment. The term “quarterlife crisis” was coined by Alexandra Robbins and Abby Wilner (2001) referring to the overwhelming developmental tasks left to young adults *after* they have left the nurturing environment of a college or graduate school. Côté agrees that the new institutionalized moratorium may not provide young adults with enough guidance and resources to navigate an increasingly complex and interdependent world.

On the surface, then, emerging adulthood looks like a positive development, with late-modern societies giving adolescents and emerging adults a greater amount of choice and freedom. However, when the ideology of free choice is peeled away, an absence of guiding structures and norms is noticed—a situation of relative anomie that can present serious challenges to some people. Without guiding structures to give meaning to the potential choices people face, realistic and informed choices become burdensome for many young persons (cf. Côté, 2000). . . . Indeed, Schwarz (2000, 2004) argued that Western societies now present many people with a “tyranny of freedom and choice” that actually decreases their quality of life and, to some extent, diminishes their life chances. (Côté, 2006, p. 92)

It is doubtful that the difficulty rests solely in the number of choices available to young adults today. Ultimately, having choices in life is a situation that many desire and work hard to produce. It is the lack of a mentoring community and an appropriately structured holding environment that most trouble students as they graduate college and are left to face the challenges of emerging adulthood outside a community of support and guidance. The variety of choices available to them and the absence of supportive structures conspire to extend the apprenticeship time into adulthood in North American society. Consequently, young adults take more time today to settle into traditional adult responsibilities and lifestyles.

Nevertheless, not all young adults fare poorly in meeting the developmental demands of emerging adulthood. Identifying characteristics of young adults who are able to negotiate the developmental challenges of emerging adulthood more skillfully, Côté (1996) postulated the existence of identity capital. He defines identity capital as consisting of both tangible and intangible resources. Tangible attributes include financial resources, educational credentials, group memberships, and parental social status along with considerable management and social skills. Intangible resources constitute

personality attributes which include psychological capacities such as ego strength, an internal locus of control, self-esteem, a sense of purpose in life, social perspective taking, critical thinking abilities, and moral reasoning abilities (Côté, 1997). Côté offers an impressive list of both personal capabilities and external resources that clearly not all young adults have in equal measure. Having these tangible and intangible resources at one's disposal would undoubtedly make meeting the demands of adulthood much more manageable. However, they do not seem to be sufficient.

One aspect that all young adults do hold in common is their need to make personally satisfying choices when it comes to meaningful work, nurturing relationships, and an adequate world view that they can live by. These vocational issues require more than just acquiring identity capital. They require an ability to evaluate and make meaning of the new experiences that life after college brings. Traditionally, colleges have attempted to prepare students for life after college through career development and counseling. Certainly, this approach provides helpful guidance and the practical tools necessary for finding their first job out of college, but it still leaves unresolved some of the more significant existential questions of meaning, purpose, and life direction.

In a secular context, the separation of Church and State often prevents or outright prohibits colleges receiving state or federal funding from helping students to consider these questions in the context of a particular religious tradition. However, religiously affiliated colleges have the unique opportunity to introduce students to religious practices and a wisdom tradition that could both deepen and broaden their search for meaning, purpose and life direction after college. The colleges in this study took full advantage of

the wisdom offered by their religious traditions in helping students to explore how they make meaning of their world and their place in the world. Some theorists have identified this meaning making as a spiritual activity encompassed in a field of research known as faith development which I explore in the next section.

Young Adult Faith Development

“Faith development . . . refers to the developmental process of finding and making meaning as a human activity. This concept of faith or meaning intends to be equally applicable to religious or nonreligious, Christian and non-Christian interpretations of self and world” (Nipkow, Schweitzer, & Fowler, 1991, p. 1). James Fowler is one of the pioneers in this new field. While his work is in a relatively new field of research, certain historical contributions need to be recognized. Fowler’s stages of faith build upon the psychosocial development theories of Erik Erikson (1968, 1980, 1982) and Daniel Levinson (1978), as well as the constructive development theories of Jean Piaget (1932) and Lawrence Kohlberg (1983).

In his seminal work, *Stages of Faith Development*, Fowler (1981) reported the results of 359 interviews that had been conducted up to the time of its publication probing the nature of each individual’s development in faith over their lifetime. Over the course of these interviews, Fowler discovers six discrete, progressively complex stages of faith development. While not everyone travels through all six stages of faith in their lifetime (indeed, few seem to progress to the sixth and final stage of “universalizing faith”), in Fowler’s schema, there is a linear progression from one stage to another contingent upon an individual’s moral and intellectual development.

Building upon the work of Fowler, Sharon Parks (2000) posits a whole new stage of faith development faced by young adults. This intermediary stage between a synthetic/conventional, or stage three faith, and an individuating/reflective, or stage four, faith, is hallmarked by a probing commitment to their beliefs and a deeper connection with a gradually emerging community of peers who share similar beliefs and values. This intermediate step of faith development, complementing Arnett's (2004) concept of emerging adulthood discussed in detail in the preceding section, underscores the uniqueness of this time of life and the specific developmental challenges associated with it.

For Parks (1986), as for Fowler (1981), all young adults must grow in three crucial dimensions: form of cognition, form of dependence, and form of community (p. 95). A young adult's way of knowing grows from an authority determined set of truths through a rocky stage of unqualified relativism, to a probing ideological commitment that grows into a mature commitment as one's way of knowing is tested over time. A young adult's form of dependence transitions from dependence (or counter dependence) upon an authority figure to a sense of fragile inner dependence which eventually grows into a more mature and confident inner dependence. Finally, a young adult community begins as a group of like individuals to a more diffuse group of ideologically compatible companions, and then grows into a self-selected class or group.

In 2000, Parks set about to update her first work on young adult faith development, *The Critical Years*, written in 1986. Instead, Parks ended up writing an entirely new book, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams*, exploring how society might mentor

young adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and faith. She observes that young adults face big questions, questions of meaning, purpose, and faith, which they must answer in a way that helps them to adequately make meaning of their world. Parks (2000) asks pointedly: "How can our ways of making meaning become more adequate, dependable, and satisfying? How do we learn to make meaning in ways that orient and sustain a worthy adult life?" (p 14).

Like Fowler (1981), Parks understands faith broadly, as meaning making. She reconnects faith with meaning, trust, and truth and away from misunderstood notions of belief and religion. Faith may act as both verb and noun; it is a dynamic, multifaceted activity, and an active dialogue with promise. Our faith is revealed in our behavior. Humans act in ways that are congruent with how they make meaning, how they understand the world. "Faith is the ground of ethics and the moral life. Faith is intimately linked with a sense of vocation—awareness of living one's life aligned with a larger frame of purpose and significance" (Parks, 2000, p 26).

Parks notes that, as in other stages of life, faith and meaning are often reconstructed when an individual's way of making meaning is no longer satisfactory or adequate to make meaning of the complexity one encounters in the world. Often these moments of faith crisis are precipitated by some significant life event, perhaps a significant loss or time of suffering. She borrows Richard Niebuhr's phrase, "shipwreck of meaning." The metaphor conjures up powerful images, conveying how unsettling and potentially dangerous these crises of meaning can be for young adults as they realize that their way of understanding the world no longer can provide smooth sailing to safe harbors

where meaning, purpose, and safe passage are secured. "In shipwreck, what has dependably served as shelter and protection and held and carried on where one wanted to go comes apart. What once promised trustworthiness vanishes" (Parks, 2000, p. 28).

Parks (2000) recognizes that a primary challenge in the faith development of young adults is "becoming a home in the universe" (p. 34), that is, discovering a life full of meaning and purpose. This process of becoming at home in the universe often entails a shipwreck of meaning that compels the young adult to reconsider their core beliefs and perhaps even their guiding values in life. According to Parks (2000), experiencing suffering, limitations, and unrealized dreams of youth can precipitate a process of growth and maturation in faith that tills the fertile ground for replanting more worthy dreams.

Mature adult faith composes meaning in self-conscious engagement with the repeated dissolution and repatterning of one's perceptions of the fabric of life in the dynamic reconceiving of the assumed connections among persons, things, ideas, events, symbols, the natural and social order, space and time. The suffering of adult faith is located in learning how to hold on to, and when to let go of, the perceptions, patterns, and relationships that one experiences as partaking in ultimate value and truth. The journey through shipwreck, gladness, and amazement can have particular power in young adult lives, and it can be recognized as one way of describing the deep process by which we become at home in the universe. (Parks, 2000, p. 33)

Naturally, this process is not guaranteed; suffering can embitter as much as it has the potential to ennoble the young adult. This highlights the crucial role for mentoring the young adult and educating students in ways that will aid them in their search for meaning, purpose, faith, and one's life passion. But will college students have the personal motivation and emotional maturity necessary to grapple with such deep, penetrating life questions? Do they even want their college to be a part of that process, or do they prefer,

instead, to go it on their own? The next section addresses these issues through an analysis of research on contemporary college students' spiritual beliefs, practices, and attitudes.

Spiritual Lives of Contemporary College Students

In order to understand how to better cultivate a culture of vocation on a college campus, it is important to know the particular characteristics of the population being educated. More specifically, it is especially helpful to know a little bit about the spiritual lives of college students today. "To ignore the role of spirituality in personal development and professional behavior, higher education professor Elizabeth Tisdell asserts, is to overlook a potentially very powerful avenue through which many of us construct meaning and knowledge" (Lindholm, 2007, p. 1). A recent survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) offers some helpful details about the spiritual beliefs, attitudes, and practices of this generation of college students.

In 2000, HERI launched the Spirituality in Higher Education Initiative. Since then, HERI has surveyed students, faculty and staff regarding their views on the role of spirituality in higher education. The first study included 3,700 juniors at 46 undergraduate institutions, surveying students' experiences and expectations regarding their spiritual development in college. Subsequently, the pilot survey was further refined into an instrument known as the College Students Beliefs and Values survey (CSBV). In fall 2004, HERI surveyed over 112,000 incoming freshmen at 236 colleges and universities assessing students' attitudes, values, beliefs, and practices concerning their spiritual lives (Spirituality in Higher Education, 2007).

The development team recognized the difficulty of defining spirituality, no less the attempt to measure a college student's spiritual engagement and growth. HERI's CSBV technical advisory panel reviewed numerous attempts by psychologists over the past decade to define, measure, and even distinguish between "spirituality" and "religiousness." They did not find any one instrument that met their criteria for a broadly applicable questionnaire on students' beliefs and values, so they came up with a series of categories which grounded their survey questions. The 11 categories which the survey explored included: spiritual outlook /orientation/worldview; spiritual well-being; religious/spiritual practices and behaviors; self-assessments of spirituality and related traits; spiritual quest; spiritual/mystical experiences; attitudes towards religion/spirituality; religious affiliation/identity ; theological/metaphysical beliefs; facilitators/inhibitors of spiritual development and compassionate behavior (Spirituality in Higher Education, 2007).

A number of revealing findings resulted from these surveys, including a high level of both interest and involvement in spiritual activities. "Three-fourths say that they are searching for meaning and purpose in life" (Spirituality in Higher Education, 2003). It also demonstrated that college students have high expectations for their undergraduate institution in their continued spiritual development. They expect that college will help them to continue to refine their personal beliefs and shared values. Also, they anticipated continuing their religious and spiritual practices as they matriculated on campus. "Many are engaged in a spiritual quest, with nearly half reporting that it is 'very important' or

‘essential’ to seek opportunities to help them grow spiritually” (Spirituality in Higher Education, 2003).

While it is extremely difficult to measure something as intangible as the spiritual life of a college student, these studies give us a snapshot of contemporary college students’ attitudes, beliefs, and values as they enter college. This information is helpful for getting a general sense of the receptivity of college students to exploring the vocational questions during their time in college. These findings indicate that a considerable majority of college students today are looking for guidance with respect to the search for meaning and purpose in their lives, issues central to the exploration of vocation. When we put these findings in dialogue with the developmental challenges faced by young adults, we begin to get a clearer picture of how colleges might most effectively cultivate a culture of vocation on campus. The recent PTEV initiatives on select college campuses has provided some valuable experience and crucial insights for mentoring young adults in their vocational exploration. Before we look at some of these PTEV initiatives, I will broaden and deepen the term vocation and come to a workable definition for the purposes of this paper and my research.

College Students and the Question of Vocation

Defining vocation is itself a monumental task. Vocational decisions include making choices about work, community, and relationships. In their communication to PTEV colleges, the Lilly Endowment, Inc. commissioned them to “encourage young people to consider questions of faith and commitment when they choose their careers” (quoted in Haughey, 2003, p. x). But vocation goes beyond questions of work and career.

Vocation manifests itself in lasting commitments to family and friends, and to communities and causes. Broadly understood, vocation encompasses virtually all aspects of the human quest for meaning, purpose, and passion in life.

While there is no consensus on one definition of vocation, there is a generally accepted assumption (implicit in the root meaning of vocation coming from the Latin word—*vocare*—to call) that all people have a unique call in their life, whether specifically to religious ministries or to more secular affairs (Neafsey, 2006, pp. 5-6).

According to PTEV recommended literature, vocation is described in multiple ways.

Situating vocational discernment in the context of the developmental challenges faced by young adults in contemporary American society, Sharon Daloz Parks (2000) has this to say about vocation:

The (young adult) dream in its fullest and most spiritual sense is a sense of vocation. Vocation conveys “calling” and meaningful purpose. It is a relational sensibility in which I recognize that what I do with my time, talents, and treasure is most meaningfully conceived not as a matter of mere personal passion and preference but in relationship to the whole of life. Vocation arises from a deepening understanding of both self and world, which gives rise to moments of power when self and purpose become aligned with eternity. (p. 148)

Right away, vocation is broadened beyond just a set of career objectives that can be pursued at one’s pace and pleasure, but rather a more mysterious process of becoming, grounded in authentic, lifelong discernment that is, at once, both intensely personal, and profoundly communal.

Further distinguishing vocation from career, Parker Palmer (2000) understands vocation as a gift to be received rather than a goal to be pursued.

Vocation does not come from willfulness. It comes from listening. I must listen to my life and try to understand what it is truly about—quite apart from what I would like it to be about—or my life will never represent anything real in the world, no matter how earnest my intentions. (p. 4)

Palmer recognizes that vocation is an interior call that can be ignored, or more often, drowned out by other voices competing for our attention.

The sense of vocational call as a common experience and significant dimension of our interior lives is found throughout the writing of notable psychologists, including Carl Jung (1961) and Abraham Maslow (1968). For both theorists, vocation is an inner reality, a genuine presence, which necessarily must be recognized and respected for full human flourishing. It is an inner call to wholeness that often requires taking risks, distinguishing oneself from social expectations and even liberating oneself from the personal fictions created about one's life and identity. Jung (1961) speaks of it this way in *Memories,*

Dreams, Reflections:

When one follows the path of individuation, when one lives one's own life, one must take mistakes into the bargain; life would not be complete without them. There is no guarantee—not for a single moment—that we will not fall into error or stumble into deadly peril. We may think there is a sure road. But that would be the road to death. Then nothing happens any longer—at any rate, not the right things. Anyone who takes the sure road is as good as dead. (p. 297)

Jung points out that just as there are risks associated with following a sense of call, it is equally risky not to take such risks, not just because of diminished sense of meaning, purpose, and fulfillment in life, but even for psychological health.

Maslow (1968), in *Toward a Psychology of Being*, states the risks of not recognizing and respecting an authentic call in one's life this way:

If this essential core of the person is denied or suppressed, he [or she] gets sick, sometimes in obvious ways, sometimes in subtle ways. . . . This inner nature . . . is weak and delicate and subtle and easily overcome by habit, and cultural pressure. . . . Even though denied, it persists underground, forever pressing for actualization. (pp. 3-4)

D. W. Winnicott (1965) refers to this all too common phenomenon of letting life circumstances, social scripts pertaining to success and the good life, and personal fears interfere with the complex and challenging process of listening and following an authentic inner call. He speaks of the true self losing out to the “false self on a conformity basis.” Irving Yalom (1980) speaks of “being guilty of transgressing against oneself” leading to an “existential guilt” which takes a weighty emotional, psychological, and spiritual toll on the individual over a lifetime. When a person’s life choices are overly influenced by needs for emotional safety or financial security, that person runs the risk of living a life that is not grounded in their deepest beliefs, shared values, and personal passions. “Consequently, they may experience a nagging sense of emptiness or lovelessness that money, possessions, status, or a safe and secure lifestyle do not take away” (Neafsey, 2003, 194).

What Neafsey (2003), Winnicott (1965), and Yalom (1980) are pointing out here is that vocational discernment can be extremely complex, with many psychological pitfalls. Crucial vocational decisions are presented to college students as they emerge into adulthood. The complexity and difficulty of listening and following an authentic inner call is complicated by the myriad of social forces that factor into young adults decision making. Family expectation, peer preferences, and the siren song of more lucrative and prestigious professions can drown out the soft spoken inner voice of vocation. This is

especially true in contemporary American society for those privileged enough to earn a college degree.

Brian Mahan (2002) juxtaposes the notion of vocation with an ethic of ambition that he observes in American culture. Mahan recognizes the powerful influence that social scripts have upon college students' evaluation of life choices and their decision-making process. Beautifully illustrating this tension between competing social mores, Mahan recounts a discussion he had one day in class where a former student, Pam, was presented with the choice to enter Yale Law School or to join the Peace Corps. Taken aback by both the energy and implicit cynicism driving the debate, the class determined that, if Pam chooses the Peace Corps, then either she did not get accepted to Yale Law School or was afraid of failing out. Mahan (2002) concludes in this way:

Vocation speaks of a life that is unscripted in a sense. By contrast, ambition seems scripted by its very essence ("If you get accepted to Yale Law School, then you go to Yale Law School"). In ambition, the prestige of the achievement often seems to depend more on the dignity of the role itself than on the dignity of the one who fill it. This is not the case with vocation. Vocation speaks of a gracious discovery of a kind of interior consonance between our deepest desires and hopes and our unique gifts, as they are summoned forth by the needs of others and realized in response to that summons. (pp. 10-11)

Mahan (2002) develops his thesis of this tension between vocation and an ethic of ambition, recognizing that to follow whatever higher call may be within us is often countercultural in American society: "Given all that, life conceived as vocation—life increasingly given over to compassion for self, others, and world—appears in such circumstance as benighted, besides the point, a bad bet" (p. 13).

Mahan believes that resistance to the concept of vocation is twofold: first, that vocation is only for really holy or religious people, saints if you will. Second, he says that in our culture “there is something approaching consensus these days, at least in some quarters, that human motivation is self-interested without remainder” (p. 12). In contrast to what he perceives as the prevailing sentiment, Mahan’s view of the human condition is not so cynical or hopeless. He finds both promise and vulnerability in the dreams, and even in the ambitions of the young adults he has taught and mentored. Recovering an appreciation for and renewed commitment to helping young people explore the depth of vocational call is where Mahan finds hope.

Perhaps the most compelling and provocative articulation of vocation comes from Frederick Buechner who describes vocation as a both deeply personal and, at the same time, a communal phenomenon. Buechner (1973) declares: “The place where God calls you is the place where your deep gladness meets the world’s deep hunger” (p. 119). This formulation recognizes that our sense of meaning, purpose and passion in life comes from both deep within, as manifested in our deep gladness, those things that bring us deep peace and joy in life, and within the context a larger community that affirms (or negates) our vocational choices based on the genuine needs that following our deep gladness may address. Naturally, discerning vocation is rarely routine or mechanical; it often entails much soul searching and may contain painful and even awkward bouts of trial and error. Additionally, if it is understood to involve some divine inspiration, vocation is not always so easily apprehended, and is rarely likely to follow some mechanistic application.

Nevertheless, Buechner's pithy definition of vocation may be a useful jumping off point for conversations about such a complex and mysterious phenomenon. This definition, that highlights the need to consider together an individual's natural talents and personal interests along with the needs of the world, has been adopted by more than a few Jesuit colleges in their PTEV programs as one of their working definitions for vocation, most notably Santa Clara University, Loyola University of Chicago, and Boston College. Vocation, for the purposes of this paper, thus will be understood as the intersection of one's deep gladness (i.e., personal passions, shared values, and unique talents) with the world's genuine needs (i.e., those activities which contribute to the common good). A college student's quest for meaning, purpose, and passion in life, as Parks (1986, 2000) asserts, is the primary challenge of young adult faith—to ask worthy questions and to dream worthy dreams. Authentic vocational discernment often becomes the locus of these worthy questions and the process through which young adults may articulate their worthiest dreams.

While it is unknown how many college students choose to undertake a journey of vocational discernment during their college years, the psychological, social and spiritual need for authentic vocational exploration is constant. John Neafsey (2003) explains, the universal nature of vocation stands, whether or not an individual recognizes or responds to the call:

In the sense that I will be using the term, *every* human person has a vocation and *all* of us—whether we aware of it or not and whether we respond to it or not—have the potential to hear and follow the inner voice. The call gives rise to inclinations to be a particular kind of person or to do particular things, and is

accompanied by an invitation to follow or obey by living one's life in accord with what the inner voice seems to be desiring or asking. (pp. 166-167)

This call necessarily manifests itself in unique and deeply personal ways in each person's life. Vocation entails discovering the meaningful work, intimate relationships, and vibrant communal life which brings the person a deep sense of fulfillment and, at the same time, contributes to the common good in significant and meaningful ways.

Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation

As introduced in Chapter 1, the Lilly Foundation, Inc., has invested over \$200 million in 88 religiously affiliated colleges and universities to create Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation (PTEV). According to the Lilly Foundation, Inc., the PTEV initiatives were created to help students to explore their personal vocation in the hope of increasingly the number of talented young adults who would consider a vocation to ordained ministry. What Lilly hoped to accomplish through the PTEV grants resonated with many Catholic colleges in their desire to encourage their students to consider God's call in their lives. While every Catholic college strives to help their students to explore vocation, each college takes a different approach, often shaped by the spiritual traditions of their founding religious order.

Through a competitive application process that included hundreds of schools, 20 Catholic colleges and universities received multi-million dollar grants to fund PTEV initiatives at their schools. Each Catholic college employed different strategies to help their students to explore vocation. Their strategies were impacted not just by their common Catholic tradition but also by the particular spiritual foundation of the religious

community which founded them. The focus of this study is on the exemplary PTEV initiatives at two Catholic colleges: Santa Clara University and Saint Norbert College.

The members of the religious order which founded Santa Clara University are commonly referred to as the Jesuits and their spirituality is referred to as Ignatian, after their Founder, Saint Ignatius of Loyola. The Jesuit order has founded over 28 colleges and universities in North America. As such, Jesuits have a particular focus on higher education. Saint Norbert College was founded by the Norbertine Order. In contrast with the Jesuits' long tradition of work in higher education, Saint Norbert College holds the distinction of being the only college founded by the Norbertines. The central aspect of Ignatian spirituality centers on a highly developed methodology for decision making during major transitions in life. By contrast, Norbertine spirituality highlights more traditional Catholic concepts derived from the Rule of Saint Augustine (400) in their approach to vocational discernment, namely: a commitment to communal living; a mandate to help those in need; and a special focus upon serving the local Church. In the final two sections of this literature review, I will give a brief overview of Ignatian and Norbertine spirituality in order to highlight the similarities and differences for the comparative case study of our two colleges. I will begin with the Jesuit tradition.

Ignatian Spirituality and Its Approach to the Exploration of Vocation

Given the contemporary challenges faced by young adults in North America and their developmental needs as articulated above, what can Ignatian spirituality offer young adults who are seeking to grow in their vocational development? Clearly, the young adult years are filled with both challenges and opportunities that may help the young adult

develop a more authentic sense of self identity, according to Erikson's (1968, 1980) identity vs. identity diffusion stage. Likewise, the institutional moratorium observed by Côté (2006) provides an extended period of time to try out different identities to see which seems to fit best. And, if we agree with Parks' (1986, 2000) contention that there is an intermediate stage of faith development, then young adults will spend a good deal of their time testing "probing commitments" to communities and causes worthy of their time and talents. It would seem then that a spirituality, which could help young adults to determine the best or, at least, better choices for their lives, would be most useful. Ignatian spirituality has some spiritual tools, if you will allow the analogy, which may be particularly helpful for young adults as they are finding their way: the Ignatian method of discernment of spirits as outlined in the *Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, and the practice of spiritual direction.

Discernment of Spirits

Discernment, as defined in Chapter 1, refers to the process of conscientious decision making that is informed and guided by an individual's deepest beliefs, shared values, personal passions, and previously chosen commitments to communities and causes. Cultivating a lifelong habit of discernment is one of the central principles of Ignatian spirituality.

The term discernment of spirits is not a phrase readily accessible to contemporary audiences. Discernment of spirits is a term that is found in the 1548 treatise of Saint Ignatius entitled *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*. The *Exercises* present a highly developed methodology for decision making during major transitions in life. Even though

it was written over four centuries ago, the *Exercises* offer contemporary young adults a guide for recognizing one's vocation. The *Exercises* do this by presenting a method for discerning the qualitative difference among the "spirits," or movements of the soul or inner self. Discernment of spirits essentially provides a methodology for hearing and heeding God's call in your life, or vocation.

Ignatian spirituality is based on a profound belief in the presence of God in the concrete circumstance of the discerners' life. Discernment of spirits is a daily process, a spiritual discipline, which requires the discerners to develop a habit of reflection, cultivating a growing awareness and studied attentiveness to God's presence (or absence) throughout the events of one's daily life. The *Exercises* provide insight into some of the basic principles of discernment of spirits and how they might be useful for young adult vocational development.

The Ignatian principles of discernment of spirits can be very useful for contemporary young adults who often find themselves overwhelmed by the number of choices they have to make in their early adult years (cf. Côté, 2006). In fact, it is precisely because they have so many options that discernment of spirits could be especially useful. The Ignatian methodology of discernment can assist the young adult in determining what is best for them at that particular juncture in their life. While that may sound like a straightforward task, the many voices that compete for their attention can make choosing a career, a life partner, or a path in life quite complicated and confusing. Some guidelines could be helpful.

Spiritual Direction

The second contribution from Ignatian spirituality that might provide a cornerstone for a useful approach to young adult vocational development is what is often referred to as spiritual direction, or the practice of regularly reviewing your spiritual life with a trained spiritual director. The director tries to act as a guide or facilitator of growth, helping the young adult to recognize the presence of God in her/his everyday life. Freedom is of paramount importance in this relationship and in the process of spiritual direction, for freedom, above all else, is what is required in order a young adult to make the most loving decision about how she/he chooses to live her/his life.

Another aspect of spiritual direction in the Jesuit tradition is that it is meant to be holistic, encompassing the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and societal dimension of life choices presented to the young adult. "The characteristic movement of Ignatian spiritual direction is towards a balanced integration of the different dimensions of personal experience" (Lonsdale, 2000, p. 145). For the young adult this could mean bringing career choices, and other significant decisions to spiritual direction, not for answers but for help in discerning which choice may be most beneficial for the young adult.

Discernment is the foundation of Ignatian spiritual direction and the director is there to help the young adult to notice and make meaning of significant movements in their life. Particularly when it comes to issues of vocation, it is important for the director to have sensitivity toward both the uniqueness and the commonplace nature of a young adult's vocational struggles. While some young adults may believe that they have one chance to make the "right decisions" in their life, Ignatian wisdom might challenge that

notion, emphasizing the importance of recognizing patterns in the young adult's life, rather than latching onto to momentary inspirations.

More commonly the process of following out a personal calling has a cyclic rather than a linear shape. It is a question of constantly rediscovering God's love in the different circumstances of life, and constantly re-expressing our responses to that in the concrete choice we make. (Lonsdale, 2000, p. 150)

Finally, spiritual direction has the potential to attend not just to the intrapersonal and the interpersonal but also to the institutional. Naturally, this would require a director who has the capacity to think systemically and to recognize the importance of social influences upon our behavior and discernment, as well as the potential influence one's vocational choices may have to challenge unjust social structures. The *Spiritual Exercises* were written in an era where social justice was not widely spoken about nor explicitly addressed in spiritual treatises. An updating of the *Exercises* as well as a properly sensitized spiritual director can help the young adult to grow in their vocational awareness with respect to its impact and implications for social justice:

In particular, Ignatian spiritual direction is likely to make a person increasingly sensitive to injustice and oppression and to work for social change, especially in a struggle for greater justice. An effective desire for justice grows out of the integration of faith with the rest of life that is fostered by Ignatian spiritual direction. (Lonsdale, 2000, p. 151)

Ignatian spirituality encourages young adults to consider how their life choices can be directed to make a positive contribution to the common good. I explore in the next section how this focus upon educating for social justice has been a hallmark of Jesuit education that has profound implication for how Jesuit schools educate for vocation.

Educating for Vocation in the Jesuit Tradition

Jesuit higher education seeks to form women and men in service to others. Robert Bellah (2003) in his address *Educating for Justice and the Common Good* outlines three purposes for education:

The traditional answer to what education is for, and one very much alive and well in Jesuit higher education, is that it is for the cultivation of the liberal arts; its purpose is the formation of cultured, educated individuals with the wisdom and judgment necessary for them to provide leadership to the larger society. . . . The second is the search for knowledge—education as research institutions and producer of knowledge, new technologies, and critical thought. . . . The third, and perhaps most dominant, is to get a job. The idea is that college is a preparation for better employment opportunities and if you pick up some cultural education through the liberal arts along the way, all the better! (pp. 2-3)

Not wanting higher education to lose the first two purposes articulated by Bellah (2003) in deference to the more pragmatic objective of getting a job, Jesuit colleges and universities have sought to educate for the common good, encouraging students to live their lives with meaning, purpose, and passion. To help students discover their purpose and passion in life, Jesuit schools challenge their students to consider the life choices that they make in the context of their deepest beliefs and values.

Jesuit higher education is especially well suited and even designed to encourage women and men to consider God's call in their life. Their requirement to study the arts and sciences is not just to produce a well rounded person conversant in various aspects of contemporary culture but is designed to engage the whole person, body, mind, heart, and soul, in an ongoing reflection upon the deeper meaning of their daily life. This commitment to *cura personalis*, or care of the whole person, is grounded in the unique spirituality of the founder of the Society of Jesus, Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatian

spirituality has provided the foundation for Jesuit education for centuries, and is primarily passed along to Jesuit educators of each generation through a personal experience of the *Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius* (Carrier, 1988). The *Exercises* introduce Ignatius' profound belief that God is found in the everyday circumstances of our lives and God's call is heard through a regular reflection (the term used by Ignatius is "examen") and discernment of God speaking through one's thoughts, feelings, experiences, and relationships. "The influence of the *Exercises* on Jesuit higher education is hard to quantify, except that each Jesuit [educator] centers his or her work in the processes of discernment taught by the *Exercises*" (Rombalski, 2005, p. 43).

Jesuit higher education is particularly invested in educating for vocation. The Jesuit model for the undergraduate core curriculum is designed to educate the whole person through a broad based introduction to the liberal arts. The *ratio studiorum*, or core curriculum for Jesuit higher education, has gone through a variety of revisions over the centuries (Sanker, 2005). Nevertheless, Jesuit higher education has always maintained the same core objective to educate the whole person for the service of the reign of God, a religious term that connotes a state of existence where the mercy and justice of God are lived in their fullness, akin to but not equivalent to secular notions of the common good.

While it is true that most colleges require mastery of a core liberal arts curriculum for graduation, Jesuit colleges take the additional step of challenging the liberal arts educated individual to grapple with the "world's deep hunger" (Buechner, 1973), or put another way, the most urgent needs of the world. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach (2001), former

Superior General of the Jesuit Order, summarizes the purposes of Jesuit higher education this way:

Because if higher education as both means and medium has intrinsic value, it must still always ask itself: "For whom? For what?" The answer to these questions will always be related to the common good and the progress of human society (par 26). . . . In the words of John Paul II, it is necessary to contribute to the "globalization of solidarity." The "complete person," the ideal of Jesuit education for more than four centuries, will, in the future, be a competent, conscientious person, capable of compassion and "well educated in solidarity." (Kolvenbach, 2001, para. 33)

It is precisely this vision of educating college students "well educated in solidarity" that Santa Clara University took to heart as it designed their Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation. For this reason, and others to be discussed in the next section, I propose to undertake a comparative case study involving Santa Clara's PTEV initiatives.

Norbertine Spirituality and Its Approach to the Exploration of Vocation

Norbertine spirituality is inspired by the life and example of its early 12th century founder, Norbert of Gennepe. Norbert sought to reform the clergy of the day, compromised by corrupt practices. He envisioned a new way of living out Gospel values, one that centered on continual conversion of the individual always in the context of a community that would be both confirming and challenging. "It was Saint Norbert's gift to see the value of spiritual formation through living in community as a creative force that complemented pastoral service to the Church. The primacy of this communal formation is beyond doubt" (McBride, 2000, p. 31). This emphasis on forming a community centered on Christ, or *communio*, runs throughout the literature on Norbertine spirituality. (Ciferni, 2003a, 2003b; McBride, 2000; Handgrättinger, 2007; Vanasse, 2004).

Norbert had a vision of clergy serving the church and the world in active ministry, nourished by personal and liturgical prayer, and encouraged to continual conversion in and through life in community. This was a novel idea at the time as clergy tended to be either in the active ministry, or they were engaged in contemplative prayer as monks. In a manner of speaking, the Norbertines could be thought of as prototypical “contemplatives in action,” to borrow a phrase from Saint Ignatius.

Norbert recognized the need for a rule from common life together and embraced a strict adherence to the Augustinian rule, adopting Cistercian governance, and in accord with the recently initiated Gregory reforms of the clergy (Ciferni, 2007). From the beginning, the Norbertine order lived in the tension between the contemplative life of the monk and the active ministry of clergy, embracing the gifts of both without exclusively devoting themselves to either. The result of this fruitful tension was an order which celebrated the liturgy of the hours in community, observed a ritualized conventional life, and engaged in pastoral care that was compatible with their unique vision of “coming together in unity of heart and mind intent upon God” (Saint Augustine, circa 400). The Norbertine vision, then, consisted of canons regular living in community as clergy committed to ongoing conversion to Christ through the observance of the evangelical vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Essentially, Norbertine canons would donate themselves to service of the local church while committing themselves to life in community according to the Gospel of Christ, the Rule of Saint Augustine, and the exemplary life of Saint Norbert (Ciferni, 2007).

This new way of “being Church” was called the Order of Prémontré. In addition to combining the contemplative and active lives of clergy, one of its lasting innovations has been the witness and power of ongoing commitment to a local church.

To show that it is possible to live in community is an aspect of the modernity of the Norbertine charism, a sign for parishes and for the world. A characteristic of the Praemonstratensian life is, in fact the importance of the local church. Our communities are immersed in the place where they are implanted, thus forming *ecclesiolae*, little churches in the bosom of the universal Church. Thus there exists a real diversity at the heart of the Norbertine Order in function of the culture of the lands in which our communities have been established—sometimes for more than eight hundred fifty years! This characteristic goes against the grain of certain universalism that can lead to uniformity. (Anonymous, p. 26)

Indeed, it is this commitment to the local church that is a hallmark of Norbertine spirituality and a mainstay of their charisma.

Perhaps even more central for Norbertines, however, is their focus on *communio*. *Communio*, according to the Norbertine Constitutions, consists of “unity in Christ which must be fostered both within and outside our churches. . . . We are taught by Saint Augustine that the unity our communities should overflow in charity which embraces everyone” (Nr. 68, cited in Handgräter, 2007). According to Norbertine Abbot General Thomas Handgräter, communion is not simply a goal in itself but rather a “goal in order to” reflect that true unity in Christ pushes the community outward in acts of charity. “For us Premonstratensians life in community, life in the monastery and working out from the community is fundamental and important” (Handgräter, 2007, p. 5). The belief here is the richer the communion within the Abbey the more fruitful their ministry to those outside the community. Indeed, it is charitable outreach and pastoral care that expands this *communio* beyond the Abbey walls into the wider world.

The quality of the fraternal communion, then, is central to the effectiveness of the Norbertine mission. The dedication to unity in Christ within the Abbey is to be a total gift of self to the community and by extension in mission to the local church. "In the first place, we dedicate ourselves to the apostolic life in *communion* through our profession when we say 'I give myself to the Church of' Since I have given myself to a community, I no longer belong to myself" (Vanasse, 2004, p. 7). This communion is realized through common life of shared prayer, meals, recreation, and financial resources, much like the early Christian community in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 2: 43-47).

Educating for Vocation in the Norbertine Tradition

What then can be thought of as the distinctive hallmarks of Norbertine spirituality and its particular contribution for young adults? In his article, *Premonstratensian Charism at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, Andrew Ciferni (2007) suggests several distinguishing characteristics of contemporary Norbertine spirituality. First, all Norbertines are called to lifelong conversion to Christ in and through stability to a local church. This manifests itself in the Norbertine lifelong vow of stability to a particular abbey and by extension to the local church that abbey serves. This kind of stability is certainly rare in our highly mobile society and provides an opportunity for the Norbertine community to sink deep roots. For young adults who are discerning their vocation in the context of an increasingly interdependent world, the Norbertine commitment to serving the local Church may challenge young adults to see the value in committing their talents to serve local needs.

Second, all Norbertine are called to a life of contemplation which seeks to integrate their active ministry with their prayer lives. This primarily manifests itself in the communal celebration of liturgy, including the liturgy of the hours and especially celebration of the Eucharist, in the midst of the communities where they minister. Central to their life of contemplation is their leadership role for the local church in worship and providing pastoral care. Just as the clergy of the day attended to these religious rites, Norbertine canons continue to offer their liturgical prayer and leadership to the local church and its particular pastoral needs. While not unique to Norbertine spirituality, encouraging young adults to contemplate upon the action they take in their daily lives certainly would help them to be more conscientious in their vocational decision making and more reflective in their vocational choices.

Finally, perhaps the most unique aspect of Norbertine spirituality is their focus upon building and maintaining *communio*. It is the organizing concept for the Norbertine constitution and is readily identified as the central trait of Norbertine life. Three different forms of *communio* are referenced in the literature on Norbertine spirituality: fraternal, ecclesial, and universal. Fraternal *communio* refers to the communion built within an abbey amongst the Norbertine community. This is the core communion from which the others flow. Ecclesial *communio* underscores Norbertine commitment to building up the Church, through local efforts, but also supporting the unity in Christ of the entire Church (Colavechio, 2004). Finally, a sort of universal *communio* of uniting all of humankind in Christ is the ultimate aim of “being and becoming Church and to build Church among those [that the Norbertines] serve” (Colavechio, 1995, p. 75). Fraternal *communio* builds

up the ecclesial *communio* through acts of charity and service and endeavors to encompass the entire human family into one *communio*, echoing Christ's prayer for unity (cf. John 17: 11). This concept of *communio* is potentially useful for young adults discerning their vocation in a number of ways. First, Norbertine spirituality encourages young adults to conduct their vocational discernment within a supportive community and to consider their vocation as being primarily in service to the community. While other traditions reference the importance of discernment in a communal context, the Norbertine wisdom traditions sees vocation as deriving from community and as a service to the larger community. As such, it is reasonable to expect that any vocational discernment in a Norbertine context would place a high value on service in, with and for the local community.

While Ignatian spirituality seems to have a more readily observable impact upon Jesuit educational philosophy, the influence of Norbertine spirituality upon their pedagogical praxis is not always so easy to identify. Recent efforts to galvanize thoughts and experiences surrounding Catholic and Norbertine identity at Saint Norbert College surfaced the idea that the Norbertine charism was essentially a matter of "exemplification," seeming to imply that there was "no other specific articulation of the Norbertine charism/mission [other] than [their] potential for exemplifying Catholic Christian values and virtues" (Ciferni, 2007, p. 20).

Further evidence of Norbertine spirituality's less clearly defined influence upon their educational efforts was highlighted in a publication for the Norbertine run secondary school in Delaware, Archmere Academy.

An inherent problem in being able to preserve the Norbertine identity lies in the fact that it appears largely intangible. Mottos and creeds are not prominent even among the Norbertines interviewed. Rather, it appears that the Norbertine tradition, while espousing certain Catholic values, has been largely left open to individual interpretation in the Archmere community and has relied upon what the study labels *Norbertine presentism* to define itself. *Presentism* is defined as the intangible dissemination of Christian and educational values by the very presence of priest rather than by some intentional transmission. (cited in Ciferni, 2007, pp. 13-14)

This is not to say that Norbertine spirituality does not exert an influence upon their educational ministries. In fact, it seems that Norbertine spirituality exercises a significant influence upon all their ministries, including their educational outreach, as evidenced in the Faith, Learning, and Vocation Program studied in this dissertation.

In order to study more in depth the impact of the Ignatian and Norbertine spiritual traditions upon their educational efforts, particularly as it applies to vocational exploration, a cross case study comparison of PTEV programs rooted in each of these spiritual traditions is the focus of this dissertation. In the following chapter, I outline the methodology that was used to explore these cases in depth and to compare the design, implementation, and results of their Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A Comparative Case Study

As discussed in the preceding literature review, cultivating a culture of vocation is by its very nature a complicated process. Case studies are most useful when the researcher wishes to study a complex issue in great detail, for much can be learned from one interesting case when it is studied thoroughly and thoughtfully (Merriam and Associates, 2002). I have chosen two Catholic colleges' PTEV initiatives for a comparative case study. Because I wanted to determine the impact that the colleges' spiritual foundations and religious traditions had upon their PTEV initiatives, it was necessary to select two Catholic colleges, with similarly exemplary PTEV initiatives, yet with significantly contrasting spiritual foundations. The comparative case study yielded unique findings from both of the case studies, as well as providing an opportunity to compare and contrast the cases.

Since 8 of the 20 Catholic PTEV colleges were from the Jesuit tradition, it seemed reasonable to select a Jesuit college as one of the case studies. More importantly, of all the colleges receiving PTEV grants, the 8 Jesuit PTEV colleges offer a unique perspective on vocational discernment and provide an educational context particularly suited to the exploration of vocation. While each college needed to adapt their PTEV initiatives to their college's particular culture, Jesuit universities, due to Jesuit educational philosophy and grounding in Ignatian spirituality, by their very nature lent themselves to cultivating a culture of vocation (Appleyard, 2008).

A comparison college was selected in order to contrast its PTEV initiative with the PTEV initiative at the Jesuit college. It needed to be a college from a Catholic tradition significantly different enough from the Ignatian tradition in order to provide the necessary contrast between the case studies. For the comparative case study, a Norbertine college was selected. Saint Norbert College was one of the first Catholic colleges awarded a PTEV grant and is widely regarded by its peer Catholic PTEV colleges as an exemplary PTEV initiative. Most importantly, Saint Norbert College is grounded in the Norbertine tradition, a significantly different tradition from the Ignatian tradition, providing the necessary contrast between the colleges. I will now take some time to describe in more detail how I selected each of the colleges for the study.

Site Selection—Choosing the Jesuit College for Case Study

The first task was to select which Jesuit college to study. According to their program websites, the 8 PTEV Jesuit colleges reveal some common elements, namely a desire to involve students, faculty, and staff in the exploration of vocation. However, each of the 8 Jesuit colleges took a different tactic for creating programs that fit into their unique campus culture and to engage their campus community. For example, Fairfield University invested most of their resources in building the Ignatian College, a residence hall set aside for students who applied to be a member of a community specifically gathered for intentional and ongoing vocational reflection. Boston College took the “retreats approach,” and continues to have a vibrant outreach to faculty (Appleyard, 2008). Loyola Chicago’s EVOKE program’s mission is “helping Loyolans of all religious traditions to explore, engage, and deepen their commitments to leading and serving others

in faith-motivated ways” (Loyola University Chicago, 2008). Holy Cross College focused their efforts intensively upon vocational discernment habits woven throughout the undergraduate curriculum. Santa Clara’s Program for the Theological Exploration of Vocation, DISCOVER, was the ideal Jesuit PTEV initiative for studying the previously stated research questions due to its comprehensive design, strong institutional support, and unique timing in the funding rounds for PTEV. I will now explain in more depth these three criteria which helped me to select Santa Clara University as the first case in the comparative case study.

DISCOVER took a comprehensive approach toward cultivating a culture of vocation on Santa Clara University, seeking to engage the whole campus community in an ongoing dialogue about vocational exploration and its implications for Santa Clara University. DISCOVER (Developing and Inspiring Scholarly Communities Oriented toward Vocational Engagement and Reflection) has employed a comprehensive program approach for engaging the entire campus community in theological exploration of vocation, with programs expressly designed to reach students, faculty, and staff. Some programs were instituted to help faculty and staff to explore vocation in their own lives and in their work at the University. The majority of programs of DISCOVER programs were designed to reach their undergraduate population. The design of these undergraduate focused programs of DISCOVER at Santa Clara University demonstrated DISCOVER’s commitment to a broad based, comprehensive approach to the exploration of vocation that would attract undergraduates with a variety of interests. A description of these programs follows:

- The Kolvenbach Solidarity Program invited students to “a life changing experience where [students] made direct contact with communities here and abroad living on the margins.”
- The DISCOVER weekend retreat program was designed to “help [students] reflect on who [they] are, what [they] really want, and who [they] want to become.”
- Let Your Life Speak Symposia were a “two-unit, Career Center vocation symposium where [students] listened to alumni and others, who are passionate about their work, share the rewards and challenges of pursuing their calling.”
- DISCOVER groups in the Residential Learning Communities were designed to help students to integrate academic learning with students’ learning outside the classroom and were a particularly appropriate venue to encourage ongoing discussion and reflection around vocational discernment.
- Student ministry internships offered paid summer internships to students interested in working in ministry and also to students who were interested in working in social services.

These programs reflected a comprehensive approach to exploration of vocation. Students were provided with a variety of creative ways to explore vocation. This broad based design was meant to ensure that DISCOVER would appeal to a wide variety of students.

Another important factor in selecting Santa Clara was the strong support that DISCOVER received from the university’s administration. Santa Clara’s unique approach and its creative way of engaging the entire campus culture through a broad based

approach to the theological exploration of vocation was aided by a supportive administration. From the beginning, Santa Clara had the strong support of higher administration. So strong was their administration's support that the Lilly Endowment selected Santa Clara University's president, Fr. Paul Locatelli, S.J., from among all the other 88 PTEV colleges, to give a keynote address at a plenary gathering of the PTEV schools. According to Dr. Coble, Director of PTEV at Lilly Endowment Inc., Fr. Locatelli's staunch support for their PTEV program was a model of upper administration support for other colleges wishing to embed PTEV more deeply into their campus culture (personal communication, 2008). Because of this consistently strong support for the program, DISCOVER was given a unique opportunity to succeed at Santa Clara and the university took seriously the challenge to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus. Such a comprehensive and ambitious undertaking may not have been possible without strong, ongoing support of higher administration.

The final criterion involved in selecting Santa Clara University was the timing of DISCOVER grant, which allowed Santa Clara to take advantage of learning from other PTEV initiatives. Santa Clara was a second round grant recipient, which means that that it could (and did) take advantage of the successes and missteps of previous grant recipients, including a number of Jesuit colleges. DISCOVER's timing was particularly fortunate as a second round grant recipient so that it could learn vicariously from the first round PTEV schools. For example, according to Fr. Joseph Appleyard, S.J., currently responsible for overseeing Boston College's PTEV program, Boston College and Santa Clara University developed a "symbiotic" relationship. Boston College assisted Santa Clara in developing

their PTEV grant application and even led a planning retreat for Santa Clara after they received their planning grant. Since then, Santa Clara has returned the favor as former director of PTEV, the late Fr. Bill Spohn, S.J., returned to Boston College from Santa Clara to consult with them on their PTEV programs for faculty (personal communication, 2008). Due to these collegial relationships with other PTEV schools, Santa Clara both benefited from the experiences of other Jesuit PTEV initiatives and learned vicariously from earlier PTEV programs.

Because of its comprehensive design, strong institutional support, and unique timing in the funding rounds for PTEV, Santa Clara University's DISCOVER program was the ideal Jesuit PTEV initiative for this study. In order to conduct an effective cross case study, a similarly exemplary PTEV initiative from a non-Jesuit college would be necessary for the second case study. I explain the criteria and rationale for selecting the second college in the next section.

Site Selection—Choosing the Non-Jesuit Catholic College for a Comparative Case Study

In order to answer the research question: “What were the similarities and differences between the colleges’ spiritual foundations and how did they impact their vocational efforts?” it was important to select an appropriate second site for a cross case study comparison. There were a number of criteria that were used to select the second PTEV research site. The ideal second site needed to have an initiative that was as similar to Santa Clara's DISCOVER initiative as possible in terms of quality, comprehensive design, Catholic heritage, broad based outreach, and, naturally, they had to be a willing

partner in the study. The primary distinguishing characteristic of the comparison college was the unique spiritual tradition of its founding religious order. I will now explain these selection criteria in more depth.

First, the ideal comparison college needed to be an exemplary PTEV initiative. Selecting the comparison college based on this criterion was difficult because the Lilly Foundation Inc. did not exalt any one program over the others. Nevertheless, some programs seemed to draw the admiration and attention of other grant awardees. One such program was Saint Norbert College whose PTEV initiative drew praise from Lilly. Saint Norbert College held a “best practices” symposium on campus, eager to learn from fellow grant recipients as well as to share their own best practices. Saint Norbert College has continued its commitment to seeking excellence in the implementation of their PTEV initiative by hosting a convocation for PTEV colleges in the fall of 2008 on “Institutional Vocation,” which explored: “the institutions’ growing understanding of vocation, connections between current institutional vocation and the charism of founding orders, and the intersections of personal and institutional vocations” (Saint Norbert College, 2008). The conference affirmed Saint Norbert College’s desire to continue to grow and improve their PTEV initiative. In hosting the conference, Saint Norbert College demonstrated their appreciation of the impact of the charism of each Catholic college’s founding religious order upon their PTEV initiative, as well as their interest and willingness to explore that relationship.

Second, the Saint Norbert College’s PTEV initiative, the Programs Faith, Learning, and Vocation (FLV), offered, a comprehensive program, like DISCOVER, that

sought to engage students through a variety of programs and outreach initiatives. Not all PTEV colleges sought to create a broad based approach to target as many students as possible. For example, Fairfield University invested all grant funding into a focused Residence Hall dedicated specifically to students interested in exploring vocation. While this is a creative and focused approach to encouraging vocational discernment, a PTEV initiative with a more comprehensive outreach strategy was a better comparison.

Third, Saint Norbert's college was the ideal comparison college because it is a Catholic college grounded in a different spiritual tradition from the Jesuits. For the purpose of trying to isolate the Jesuit influence upon the PTEV grant, it was important to find another Catholic college run by a different religious order. The Norbertine religious order has a spiritual tradition significantly distinctive from the Ignatian tradition which allowed for an investigation into the impact that each founding order's spiritual tradition had upon their PTEV initiative. The difference between the Norbertine and Jesuit orders highlighted in a more pronounced way the influence of each religious order's tradition upon their respective PTEV initiatives.

Fourth, Saint Norbert College had a PTEV strategy to engage all students in vocational reflection. While most PTEV colleges seem to agree that everyone has a call, some focused more specifically on students exploring a vocation to ordained ministry or religious life. According to one PTEV director, this strategy was common with many of the Protestant colleges and a few of the Catholic colleges (personal communication, 2008).

Finally, Saint Norbert College was a willing partner in the study. Naturally, the second site needed to allow broad enough access to key constituents and documentation as well as demonstrate a sincere interest in developing a working partnership. Saint Norbert College, located in DePere, Wisconsin, and founded in the Catholic, Liberal Arts, and Norbertine traditions, was selected as the comparison college since it most closely met the criteria listed above.

The Opportunities Offered by the Cross Case Study Comparison

The cross case study comparison of two PTEV colleges provided an opportunity to build upon theories presented in the literature review concerning young adult vocational development, most notably, the power and potential for colleges to mentor young adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and faith. Naturally, this is especially true of the PTEV colleges, which made a concerted effort to intentionally create a mentoring environment for young adults. According to Dr. Coble of Lilly Endowment, Inc., many of the PTEV initiatives attempted to create mentoring environments that Parks (2000) hypothesizes colleges can become in deeper, more meaningful ways when a conscious effort is made to construct and support such a mentoring environment. A mentoring environment in college can offer emerging adults the recognition, support, challenge, and inspiration they need to meet the developmental challenges that lie ahead (Parks, 2000). A cross case study comparison of two PTEV colleges provided an opportunity to build upon Parks contention.

I conducted this study at a particularly important juncture in the Lilly program's history. Since the 5-year \$2 million grants have come to completion and PTEV colleges

are currently in the process of trying to sustain their PTEV initiatives beyond the grant funding period, the timing of this study offered the opportunity to study how PTEV colleges plan to continue their PTEV programmatic efforts when money goes away. Studying the initiatives when I did allowed me to explore how each college intended to sustain their PTEV efforts, and it provided some clues for how other colleges interested in cultivating a mentoring environment on campus could do so.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study utilized multiple methods of data collection including but not limited to in depth interviews, document analysis, and some level of direct observation, depending upon the access granted by the research sites. All interviews were conducted in person during on campus site visits in the Fall of 2008, with the exception of a few phone interviews with informants who were not on campus at the time of the site visit. Data collection for interviews included using a digital recorder, for later transcription, and fact checking. I also took copious notes during the interviews. The interviews were professionally transcribed soon after each interview was conducted. Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, I recorded conceptual memos detailing insights that arose as I collected and analyzed the data, focusing particularly on relationships among coding categories (Merriam and Associates 2002).

Interview Procedures

Interviews were the primary source of data collection. The interviews followed an interview guide using a conversational approach as described by Patton (2002). The interview guide directed the conversation, but left enough flexibility to “go with the flow”

(Patton, 2002, p. 343) to further explore discoveries related to the study's primary research questions. In order to produce a rich, thick description of the case studies (Geertz, 1973), qualitative semi-structured interviews (Merriam and Associates, 2002) were conducted with administrators, faculty, and students. I crafted an interview protocol derived from the study's primary research questions to guide the interviews. Additional questions did arise in the course of conversation, most notably surrounding the issue of how the programs intended to sustain their initiatives once the grant monies were exhausted. These questions about how the programs intended to sustain their initiatives following the grant funding period allowed some common strategies to emerge from the cases that may be instructive for other colleges wishing to cultivate (and sustain) a culture of vocation on campus.

Interviews Conducted with DISCOVER

From Santa Clara University, I interviewed the Director of the Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education and current director of the DISCOVER program. Additionally, I interviewed administrators from various aspects of the program, including: the Kolvenbach Solidarity Program; the DISCOVER weekend retreat program; Let Your Life Speak Symposium; and DISCOVER groups. In total, I interviewed six key administrators leading the major program within the DISCOVER initiative. I crafted an interview protocol derived from the previously stated research questions to guide the interviews (see Appendix A).

After interviewing the staff charged with administering these programs, I interviewed students who have participated in the programs listed above. Like the

interviews with DISCOVER administrators, these interviews were semi-structured and included time for follow-up questions at the end of the interviews (see Appendix A). The students selected were a purposeful sample of students who have demonstrated a significant level of engagement in the PTEV. I asked the administrators from each program within DISCOVER to provide a few students who have participated in their programs. Additionally, I asked if they would select students who were a cross section of the kind of students who generally participate in the program, making sure that there was a good balance within the gender, race, and even the level of their participation within DISCOVER. The DISCOVER staff made a good faith effort to help me connect with the broad spectrum of students but, in the end, I had a modest response to my invitations to be a part of the study. I did interview a total of nine students with at least one participant from each of the major programs within DISCOVER. The sample was more heavily female with only two men participating. This may have been due to the fact that, according to a number of informants, DISCOVER programs generally drew more women than men. Likewise, I only had two minority students out of the nine but that may have been a function of which students happened to be available for an interview during the dates of my site visit.

The final interviews at Santa Clara were with the faculty coordinator for the program and another faculty member involved with DISCOVER. I chose to interview these faculty members because they were especially recommended by the Director of DISCOVER since they have both conducted creative assessments of PTEV's impact upon Santa Clara students (Dreher et al., 2005; Plante, Bersamina, & Mills, 2006). I wanted to

find out what evidence they found of PTEV's impact (or lack thereof) in the course of their research, teaching, and involvement with DISCOVER. I also wanted to explore what next steps are being considered, if any, for assessment and longitudinal follow up with DISCOVER participants.

Once again, I crafted an interview protocol derived from the previously stated research questions to guide the interviews (see Appendix A). These interviews were likewise semi-structured leaving room for follow-up questions in order to ensure the richest possible data collection. I asked questions about their perceived impact of DISCOVER upon the students, how DISCOVER has impacted their teaching, and even how it may have influenced their own vocational discernment.

Interviews Conducted with the Program of Faith, Learning, and Vocation

At Saint Norbert College, I had the opportunity to interview a wide range of faculty, students, and staff. In order to determine which members of the community to interview, I sought the advice of the Program Director as well as one of the Trustees of the College who was somewhat familiar with the program and very familiar with the college. In the end, I interviewed all the staff members related to the administration of the program and a few of the faculty involved with the program, some as designers, some as presenters, and some as participants.

From the administrative staff of Faith, Learning, and Vocation at Saint Norbert College, I interviewed a total of 10 administrators including: the Vice President for Mission and Heritage, the Director of FLV, the Associate Director of FLV, and three

members of the Board of Trustees. The interview guide that was used for FLV Administrators was similar to the one used at Santa Clara (see Appendix B).

From the faculty involved with FLV, I interviewed a total of six faculty members including the FLV Faculty Coordinator. The faculty selected for interviews were nominated by the FLV Director in response to my request to speak with faculty members with varying levels of involvement with FLV. Again, the interview guide that was used for FLV Faculty was similar to the one used at Santa Clara (see Appendix B).

From the student participants in FLV, I interviewed a total 12 students. I asked the FLV Director to provide at least a few students who have participated in each of their main programs. Additionally, I asked if she could select students who were a cross section of the kind of students that generally participate in the program, making sure that there was a good balance within the gender, race, and even the level of their participation within FLV. The sample was, like the DISCOVER student group, more heavily female with only four men participating. I did not interview any minority students which may have been a function of the low number of minority students attending Saint Norbert College.

Document Analysis and Field Observations

I conducted a thorough review of the archival documents from both PTEV initiatives. This allowed for triangulation of data (Glesne, 2006) and the opportunity to corroborate the findings from my interviews. The documents included but were not limited to: grant designs and proposals, past program reviews (both by the college and by

Lilly), assessment studies, and articles written about the PTEV initiatives (cf. Lovette-Colyer, 2007; Dreher et al., 2005; Plante et al., 2006).

Additionally, I conducted some limited field observations, attending a DISCOVER group meeting at Santa Clara University, described earlier in this section. The rationale for conducting field observations was to provide a direct experience of the PTEV initiatives as an observer, or, if appropriate, a “participant observer” (Glesne, 2006, p. 50). Copious field notes were taken during the field experience. Participant interviews would have been a natural follow-up, but they proved not to be possible because the student group left immediately following the DISCOVER meeting to attend the inaugural “Last Lecture” on campus. I attempted to conduct other field observations including auditing the Let Your Life Speak course but the instructor did not think that it was appropriate to attend their class session, fearful that having a researcher present might have made the students “nervous for the mock interviews” scheduled for that class.

There were only a few opportunities for field research at Saint Norbert College. I did attend the College’s Holy Hour celebration which provided a direct experience of the impact of FLV upon the campus culture. Few other experiences were available that week as the FLV staff’s time and energies were put toward hosting the Institutional Vocation Conference being held for Catholic PTEV Colleges on their campus during my site visit. I was fortunate enough to attend the conference and to listen and observe as directors from 11 of the 20 PTEV Catholic Colleges shared their experiences of how their PTEV initiatives impacted their college’s sense of Institutional Vocation. I explore those findings in more depth in Chapters 5 and 6.

Coding Procedures

“Theory building involves the identification of a *core category*, the main conceptual element through which all others are connected” (Merriam and Associates, 2002, p. 142). To formulate core categories, I initially coded the interviews using the major themes driving the interview guide questions, namely: influence of the college’s founding religious order upon PTEV, unique characteristics of the research site’s college culture impacting the design and implementation of PTEV, the students’ perceptions of the impact of their participation, influence of faculty/staff participation, evidence of impact upon participants, and evidence of PTEV’s impact upon campus culture.

More categories emerged and my coding categories evolved as I reviewed the transcripts and listened to the interviews multiple times. “Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 7) tell us that ‘categories are the cornerstones of developing theory’” (cited in Merriam and Associates, 2005, p. 143). My aim was to tie the emergent themes and theories back to the original research questions and, in particular, to the overarching research questions, particularly: which lessons from these two colleges’ PTEV experiences might benefit other colleges wishing to create a mentoring environment that supports students in their exploration of vocation?

Emerging Themes

Using grounded theory as a method and a theoretical approach, my data generated analytical themes which I used for coding purposes. I began an initial coding of the transcripts as soon as I received them from the transcriber (usually a week or two for turnaround time), and conducted some preliminary data analysis of interviews and

observations between interviews following the guidelines of grounded theory as explained by Charmaz (2005), "Grounded theory methods consist of simultaneous data collection and analysis, with each informing and focusing the other throughout the research process" (p. 508). Grounded theory allows the researcher the flexibility to analyze processes (Charmaz, 2005). This aspect of grounded theory was particularly useful in the proposed case study, since the research questions were designed not just to assess the impact of PTEV but to explore which policies and procedures were enabling (or hampering) PTEV's sustainability past the grant funding period.

From this analysis of process, some grounded theory did emerge. I found that the cases could best be understood through the categories of structure, agency, and culture. According to Bolman and Deal (2003), "Structure must be defined to fit an organization's circumstance" (p. 45). In the circumstances of both of these cases, the PTEV colleges were trying to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus which required, at minimum, some supportive administrative structures to equip and encourage students, faculty, and staff to explore the theological notion of vocation. From the coding of the transcripts in the case studies, structure emerged as one of the key themes for ensuring the success of the colleges' PTEV initiatives, primarily in the form of the programs and administrative structures put in place to support those programs.

Schein (2003) defines culture as

a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 17)

A definition like Schein's on culture could easily be used to describe the environment created by the founding religious orders on these PTEV college campuses. For the two colleges in the case study, their founding religious community, its educational philosophy, and the religious order's unique spirituality clearly emerged as the cultural context into which each of the PTEV initiatives were designed, implemented, and evolved.

Finally, the individual actions of the leaders for each of the colleges' PTEV initiatives constituted the agentive factors at work in these case studies and provided the final theoretical construct for organizing, understanding, and interpreting my findings. Effective leadership in each of the programs emerged as a key contributing factor to their success. The program leaders' ability to effectively adapt to the challenges encountered in implementing the initiatives on campus was crucial for the evolution of their programs and their continued success.

In the three chapters which follow, I have organized my findings around these generative themes of structure, culture, and agency. In Chapter 4, I organize and analyze my findings from my research with Santa Clara University's DISCOVER Program exploring the programmatic and administrative structures that have supported DISCOVER; the agentive factors involved in DISCOVER's successes and shortcomings; and, finally, the cultural factors involved in designing, implementing, and adapting DISCOVER at Santa Clara University. In Chapter 5, I apply a similar analytical framework to Saint Norbert College's Program of Faith, Learning, and Vocation. In Chapter 6, I compare DISCOVER and FLV in terms of structure, culture, and agency,

through the lens of how each program plans to sustain their PTEV initiative after the Lilly grant monies are exhausted.

A Final Comment on Methodology

One potential limitation of the study was the researcher's own biases and preconceived notions about the select college being studied and its PTEV program. Recognizing that all perceptions are inherently subjective, my reporting of the data and especially the data analysis are necessarily subject to my own biases, predeterminations, and even wishes for the research. To name them more concretely, I am positively predisposed to the Jesuit philosophy of education, given my life experience and more than ten years of schooling entrenched in this pedagogy. In one sense, due to my prolonged exposure to Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit educational philosophy, my view on the research may be as an overly sympathetic, insider's view. Yet, while having never been employed nor educated by the selected Jesuit college, my perspective could be also considered as that of a potentially sympathetic outsider looking in. I tried to temper these biases by being "meaningfully attentive to [my] own subjectivity" (Peshkin, 1988, p 17) throughout the research; by conducting a thorough search for disconfirming evidence (Miles & Huberman, 1994); and by seeking constructive criticism from colleagues who do not have the same biases.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS FROM SAINT CLARA UNIVERSITY'S DISCOVER PROGRAM

The Historical Context for the DISCOVER Program at Santa Clara University

In January of 2003, Santa Clara University received a nearly \$2 million 5-year grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc. “to create and enhance the Jesuit university’s programs for students, faculty, and staff to integrate faith commitments, professional choices, and a call to leadership in society” (Santa Clara University, 2003b). The Programs for the Theological Exploration of Vocation (PTEV) at Santa Clara came to be known as the DISCOVER program: Developing and Inspiring Scholarly Communities Oriented toward Vocational Engagement and Reflection.

DISCOVER stated its intention from the outset to create a culture of vocation on campus which built upon a strong foundation already established through its Ignatian spiritual heritage and Jesuit identity: “Our overall goal is to employ the resources of the Jesuit spiritual tradition to coordinate and expand existing campus resources and to build a community to discern vocation” (Santa Clara University, 2002, p. 1). Such an ambitious goal of cultivating a culture of vocation on campus required DISCOVER’s strategy to be broad based; to involve multiple constituencies and offices on campus; and to be comprehensive in their programming. This meant DISCOVER needed to engage faculty, students, and staff in innovative and creative ways into the program. How DISCOVER

was able to accomplish this goal of creating a culture of vocation is the focus of this chapter.

An in-depth review of over a dozen informant interviews and thorough document analysis of the DISCOVER program revealed three generative themes—structure, agency, and culture—around which the development and success of both Santa Clara’s and Saint Norbert’s efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation may best be understood. Structure refers to the organizational arrangements, specifically the programs that were initiated to help student, faculty, and staff explore vocation. Agency refers to the individual actions taken by those involved with the initiatives. Specifically, agency is reflected in the leadership that supported the initiatives. Culture refers to both the pre-existing college culture to which the PTEV grant needed to accommodate and also to the culture of vocation that college initiatives cultivated.

I organize this chapter around these three themes, beginning with structure, then exploring the role of agentive factors, especially DISCOVER’s approach to collaborative leadership, and concluding with a discussion of how DISCOVER served to impact the culture at Santa Clara University. I begin an explanation of my findings with an analysis of the structure of DISCOVER at Santa Clara.

Structural Design of DISCOVER

Like many of the PTEV initiatives, DISCOVER created structures, both co-curricular and curricular, to encourage, equip, and inspire students, faculty, and staff, in the exploration of vocation. Co-curricular programs refer to all DISCOVER programs that are conducted outside the classroom. Curricular programs refer to DISCOVER’s

impact upon coursework and any influence within the classroom. This section begins with a description of the major co-curricular programs involved in DISCOVER. It concludes with a discussion of how the curricular elements of DISCOVER evolved over time.

Co-Curricular Structure of DISCOVER

The co-curricular structure of DISCOVER provided the backbone of DISCOVER programming. A large majority of the programming offered by DISCOVER occurred outside of the classroom. Participation was voluntary and thus, DISCOVER needed to be sure that their offerings were both attractive and relevant. DISCOVER was able to create successful programs that attracted students, faculty, and staff through a broad array of programs that addressed a variety of needs and interests for their target audiences.

DISCOVER's co-curricular programs can be categorized by the populations targeted—students, faculty, or staff. A rare number of programs served all three, but each population seemed to require programs specifically tailored to its needs. The large majority of effort and funding was focused upon the undergraduate students. These programs for students were designed to educate, encourage, and inspire undergraduates in discernment of their vocation. An early marketing brochure stated:

[DISCOVER] offers a variety of programs to assist you in making fulfilling choices in areas such as work, relationships and lifestyle. As you reflect upon your life and dream of your future, the available programs emphasize three questions that guide vocational exploration.

1. What am I passionate about?
2. Am I good at these things?
3. Who needs me to do these things? (Santa Clara University, 2003a)

The DISCOVER offerings for students tried to provide a holistic approach to vocational exploration. Indeed, the programs were most effective when they were

“interlocked and overlapped,” i.e., when students participated in more than one program, providing a kind of synergy in their vocational exploration. For example, one informant remarked that students who participated in both the classroom symposium and an immersion trip exhibited a deeper and more consistent commitment to vocational reflection. With this goal in mind, the programs were designed to educate the whole person, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and spiritually. In order to be holistic and comprehensive in their approach to vocational discernment, DISCOVER not only offered programs both in and out of the classroom, but also both on and off campus, even internationally.

The first DISCOVER program identified the classroom as an important locus for vocational discernment. The Vocation Symposium, a course for credit, called Let Your Life Speak, gave students an opportunity to:

- Develop greater self awareness through engagement with reflective activities, readings, assignments, and [mainly alumni] speakers
- Gain a deep understanding of vocation and the applications to your life
- Identify majors and careers [in your field of interest], through a variety of resources and methods
- Develop the ability to articulate your own “story” for purposes of interviewing, networking, and public speaking. (Thompson, 2007)

Each symposium explored slightly different themes such as social justice, diversity in business, careers in the sciences, and careers in the arts. The first core component common to each symposium was the inclusion of multiple alumni speakers working in that particular field who were asked to share “the good, the bad, the ugly” of how they found their niche within their chosen field.

The Let Your Life Speak Course (LYLS) was a crucial offering for undergraduates and created an invaluable part of the co-curricular structure that was established by DISCOVER. LYLS provided a space where undergraduates could explore their vocation in the context of career choices and the search for meaningful work. It was particularly useful for helping students to explore their career decisions informed and guided by their own deepest beliefs and values rather than just accepting societal values that might encourage a student to simply seek the highest paying job rather than the type of work that would be most meaningful for them. One participant explained how the course supported her decision to pursue a life that would make her happy rather than go after a job that merely paid good money:

I think I figured out . . . just the significance of being happy versus money. Prosperity comes to you in different ways other than money. . . . So just like it's that idea that it's not that important to be completely financially successfully. But basically more important about how happy you are. Because I'd rather have less money to live off of, I'd rather be making a lot less money and be happy compared to someone who's making a ton of money but is absolutely miserable. Like I'm seeing some of my friends that are in accounting right now, and they absolutely hate it, but they're on their way to making a six-figure salaries but I guess I wouldn't trade my life with them. (personal communication, December 2, 2008)

Encouraging students to make major life decisions that addressed their deepest beliefs and values was central to the type of vocational exploration that DISCOVER was trying to promote and did so quite successfully through LYLS according to student participants.

The second core component of the DISCOVER Program included the DISCOVER retreats and programming in the Residential Learning Communities (RLCs). Before Santa Clara applied for the PTEV grant, it had already made the commitment to

house its students in RLCs, rather than in a traditional dormitory setting. RLCs are communities of students living in residence halls which gather around a theme or common interest. RLCs are designed to help students to integrate academic learning with student's learning outside the classroom. The RLC model seemed to be a particularly appropriate venue to encourage students' ongoing discussion and reflection around vocational discernment. DISCOVER capitalized on this recent innovation at Santa Clara and incorporated RLCs into DISCOVER's weekly programming in the Residence Halls.

RLCs became the anchor for weekly small group discussion around questions and concerns that community members were facing at that time in their college journey. These questions often included issues around vocational discernment. One informant described a session at an RLC in which students were invited to contribute one or two burning questions they were wrestling with in their lives. The RLC created a space that allowed students to draw from their personal lives and discuss what their life experiences were teaching them about their own vocational identity and vocational choices. By aligning with the RLCs, DISCOVER effectively ensured that vocational reflection would be present in every residence hall and provided a mechanism whereby ongoing reflection of vocation could be extended into students' day to day lives.

As part of the DISCOVER program, through the RLC based ongoing discernment model, students were invited to go on a DISCOVER retreat with their RLC. DISCOVER retreats were loosely based on a popular retreat that Boston College developed for their PTEV program. "DISCOVER weekends give [students] the opportunity to stop and think—to get away from daily busyness, to reflect on your life and calling, and to hear from

others asking the same questions” (Santa Clara University, 2003a). These DISCOVER retreats were grounded in the principles of Ignatian spirituality, especially the practice of reflecting regularly and systematically upon one’s life experience, or the daily examen, as it is referred to in Ignatian spirituality. The DISCOVER retreats provided crucial opportunities for students to take a significant time out of their busy schedules for guided reflection upon the meaning of their life experiences at Santa Clara and how those life experiences might hold clues for them as they explore their vocation.

The third key opportunity provided by the DISCOVER program are immersion trips offered through the Kolvenbach Solidarity Program, which offers all Santa Clara community members

extended immersion experiences into the gritty reality of our globalizing world. Through this direct contact, [Santa Clara] seeks to realize the Jesuit Higher Education Mission—restated and renewed by Father Kolvenbach at the 2000 Justice Conference—of forming women and men of well-educated solidarity. (Santa Clara University, 2008c, para. 1)

The immersion trips, although existing before the DISCOVER program, augmented a pre-existent program by significantly expanding the immersion trip offerings to a wider population of students, as well as inviting interested faculty and staff to participate. This was particularly significant since this engagement with contemporary social issues offered through immersion trips helped the university carry out its mission to educate for “conscience, competence, and compassion.” Santa Clara’s mission derives directly from the Jesuit educational tradition of educating students to work for social justice. Immersion trips provided a structure where students were offered experiential education in issues of social justice.

The last major institutional arrangement offered to students allowed them the opportunity to engage in ministry internships to test out their interest in a particular vocation by working full time for a summer in their chosen field. Students applied for the program, which paid them a stipend during their internship. This stipend made the program accessible for those students who would normally need to find a paid summer job and allowed them to take an unpaid internship in the field they wanted to explore. Santa Clara interpreted broadly what type of internships qualified as “ministry internships” to include both students interested in working in ministry and those students interested in working in some social service field that “contributes to the common good.” The program included an on-site mentor and a retreat for students when they returned from their internship to help them in their ongoing reflection of their experience and what it might mean for their vocational discernment. Naturally, the opportunity to get real life experience of what it is like to work in ministry and allied professions were quite helpful for students considering a call to ministry and/or some form of social service. One drawback of the program was that it could only provide stipends for a relatively small percentage of the overall student population.

It is important to note that DISCOVER ‘s decision to define these ministry internships as broadly as they did, to include any student interested in contributing to the common good, expanded students’ understanding of ministry, and therefore created an broader notion of what it means to have a vocation to ministry. This is common among the Catholic PTEV initiatives. In the past, a call to ministry in the Catholic Church meant exclusively a call to priesthood and/or religious life. DISCOVER expanded the call to

ministry to include those called to ecclesial lay ministry (i.e., non-ordained lay professionals working with and for the Catholic Church) and those called to work in social services that work with the poor and marginalized. In casting a broad net for these ministry internships, according to an early designer of DISCOVER, the program was able to be more inclusive. By not narrowing the call to ministry as meaning exclusively a call to ordained ministry, DISCOVER opened the opportunity up to others who might not feel called to ordained life or were prevented from exploring a call to ordained ministry due to restrictions based on who may be ordained in the Catholic Church. This is all the more significant when you consider the fact that ordained ministry in the Catholic Church is not open to all people, most notably excluding women. Broadening the conception of a call to ministry allowed DISCOVER to focus on the vocational needs of all of its students, without excluding any population.

Curricular Structure of DISCOVER

DISCOVER's designers recognized early on that to sustain the theological exploration of vocation on campus and to continue to cultivate a culture of vocation beyond the grant funding period their efforts would need significant curricular as well as the co-curricular components discussed in the previous sections. DISCOVER's efforts to embed vocational exploration in the curriculum were explained by one of the original grant authors:

Part of [DISCOVER's] strategy was to introduce the theme of vocation into the classroom. That's critical. I mean everything else is important, but what we do at a university is in the classroom . . . the strategy was always to incorporate or bring vocation into the classroom, [even though] tactics over the course of the grant changed. (personal communication, November 21, 2008)

The first step necessary for introducing vocational exploration into the classroom was to familiarize faculty with the concept of vocation. The earliest DISCOVER program designed to help faculty to explore the notion of vocation was the Faculty Symposium. For faculty who chose to participate, the symposium was a 2-week summer seminar which explored a variety of topics, including, but not limited to, vocation, the history and current reality of Jesuit higher education, student development, and recent trends in higher education. The seminar was intended to help faculty reflect on how they might incorporate vocational exploration into their coursework. The faculty seminars were crucial for introducing the concept of vocation to faculty so that they in turn might incorporate the notion of theological reflection into their coursework and to explore the relevance of vocation in their field of study.

The other major program for faculty was one that existed before DISCOVER and was able to expand through the DISCOVER initiative called the Ignatian Faculty Forum (IFF). The IFF was originally started by a business professor at Santa Clara to provide a forum for faculty to explore questions of meaning and purpose in the vocation of teaching in Jesuit higher education. The IFF allowed faculty to gather monthly with their peers to discuss questions including: why teach at a Jesuit university; what is life-giving in their work; what is challenging; and similar vocational questions. The design of IFF is a typical example of Ignatian spirituality at work in DISCOVER. By encouraging faculty to cultivate a habit of reflection upon their teaching and, indeed, upon their life outside of their university roles, IFF introduced faculty to a core value of Ignatian spirituality, namely, to become "contemplatives in action." IFF encouraged faculty to undertake a

form of vocational exploration of their own and challenged them to regard their own teaching and research at a Jesuit university, and particularly at Santa Clara, as a special vocation in and of itself.

Since the Faculty Symposia could only reach a small group of faculty at one time, DISCOVER focused most of the resources which were dedicated to its curricular strategy upon the development of new courses that explored vocation. It encouraged faculty to develop these courses by offering them “mini-grants” to fund their attempts to weave vocational discernment more intentionally into their coursework. DISCOVER would “buy out” one course for selected faculty to free them up to develop new or revised courses, with an understanding that the new courses would be taught in subsequent semesters. Essentially, the “buy out” covered the cost for an adjunct professor to teach one of the selected professors classes. Some examples of courses developed by faculty included; “Working through Vocation: Theological and Religious Perspectives”; “Ethics, Authenticity, Freedom, and Vocation”; and “Law and Social Justice” (Santa Clara University, 2008b). Courses that integrated vocational reflection in a significant way were designed so that vocational reflection would occur in the classroom, at least for the students who chose to take these special classes. It also assured that vocational reflection in the classroom would continue as long as these courses were being offered. Finally, it underscored the importance that Santa Clara invested in the idea of vocation by deeming it a topic worthy of exploration in the classroom.

The Grants for Course and Curriculum Development, or “mini-grants,” drew proposals from various departments on campus. Santa Clara funded nearly one dozen

mini-grants by 2007, but that was just been the beginning. Their ambitious goal was to have vocation related courses in every discipline:

Ideally, students should be exposed to the whole concept of vocation in every major and it would be really great if every major capstone had some focus on vocation for the majors as they move forward into the world to, kind of, put it all together to go forward. And with that sense of inspiration and commitment, their lives are meaningful. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

Although efforts have continued to establish this cross disciplinary approach to educating for vocation, DISCOVER's curricular strategy remains a work in progress. Santa Clara currently does not have a vocations course in each major, but it has made significant progress toward that goal. One of their major accomplishments was to include a "Vocations Pathway" that is being added to the revised Core Curriculum as a concentration that students may choose. One faculty member explained the idea of a pathway:

A pathway is a set of four courses with a common theme that a student takes over the 4-year period. So it's not a minor but it's something that supposed to compliment the student's major course of study. So, we now have a pathway on vocation. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

Establishing a vocations pathway was a major advance in the curricular structures instituted by DISCOVER. In offering vocations as one of the pathways that students may choose, all students are, at the very least, introduced to the idea of vocational exploration as a path of academic study and naturally some will chose to take that pathway. Additionally, having a vocations pathway signals to the rest of the faculty the importance of vocational exploration at Santa Clara and may also attract other faculty to consider

developing a course, or adapting an existing course, to include some element of vocational exploration.

According to the current faculty coordinator, significant inroads toward infusing the curriculum with new courses that promote vocational reflection were made. She identified dozens of vocations related course(s) currently in the curriculum with more pending review. With such a large complement of classes that introduce vocational exploration to students and with more on the way, DISCOVER has assured that a much broader outreach to students is possible compared to what would have been possible if it had focused solely on co-curricular programs.

DISCOVER has established significant co-curricular and curricular structures which encourage, equip, and even inspire students, faculty, and staff to undertake the exploration of vocation. The major programs that I have described above continue to attract a wide array of students, faculty, and staff from Santa Clara to explore vocation in their own lives in the context of a supportive campus environment that identifies vocational exploration as a shared value of the institutional culture. This culture of vocation would be impossible to create and sustain without these structural arrangements which assist the Santa Clara community in vocational exploration. In the next section, I will explore the role that DISCOVER's leadership played in maximizing DISCOVER's impact upon the campus culture.

Agentive Factors Impacting DISCOVER

In addition to the structural factors that contributed to DISCOVER's impact on campus, the agency of the individuals involved in DISCOVER's leadership fueled and

supported DISCOVER's successes. Broad based collaborative leadership ensured that DISCOVER would be an effective agent for creating a culture of vocation on campus. This section begins with a discussion of the collaborative approach that DISCOVER's leadership employed from the very beginning of the grant writing process and how that broad based support was crucial for maximizing its cultural impact. That said, there were challenges in the way of leadership, especially the lack of continuity in key leadership positions that threatened DISCOVER's ability to have a sustained impact. I will explore how DISCOVER's leadership needed to adapt and be flexible to respond to the loss of key personnel during the grant funding period. And finally, I discuss the actions that the leadership took to respond to the needs of students. Of key importance was their insistence on measuring the effectiveness of DISCOVER so that appropriate actions could be taken to adapt DISCOVER to students' needs and to ensure that DISCOVER was making progress toward the Program's ultimate objective of creating a culture of vocational exploration on campus.

Collaborative Leadership

Since DISCOVER was interested not merely in creating programs for students to explore vocation but to create a culture where vocation was explored broadly and deeply by all members of the community, the planning and steering committees for DISCOVER needed to include the voices of constituencies across campus. The key to DISCOVER's success began at the outset with unflagging support from the highest level of administration and also with the wisdom and foresight to make PTEV planning and implementation a collaborative effort right from the start, i.e., involving members from

across the university. "The [Planning Committee] was composed of members including the Vice President for University Relations, two Vice-Provosts, the Dean of Students, Faculty, Residential Life and Career Centers, and other key constituents" (Santa Clara University, 2008a).

The leadership of DISCOVER was spread throughout campus in order to attract the broadest possible population on campus to their program offerings and to have the greatest impact upon the campus culture. The major programs were housed in different offices, which enabled them to reach a wider audience of student, faculty, and staff than if DISCOVER remained confined to one office. The immersion trips were housed in the Kolvenbach Solidarity Program, an area of campus that naturally attracted students who were oriented toward service opportunities. The Let Your Life Speak program was housed in the career center and led by a career center professional, an office which serves a broad spectrum of students seeking internships or job opportunities. Finally, the DISCOVER Groups were housed in every residence hall with the potential to reach all students housed on campus. Additionally, the leader of the DISCOVER Groups and DISCOVER Retreats was employed in the campus ministry department, an office that attracted students seeking spiritual and faith growth opportunities and a natural population to draw upon for involvement in vocational exploration. Having DISCOVER's leadership spread throughout various offices on campus enabled DISCOVER to have a greater impact upon the campus culture, encouraging students, faculty, and staff to explore vocational exploration from a variety of different walks of university life.

Leadership Challenges

DISCOVER's leadership was a key determinant for success and so turnover in DISCOVER's staff members continually presented challenges to the program, which DISCOVER's leaders needed to resolve, if the program was to be a success. Deciding who will oversee the various programs within DISCOVER and how DISCOVER will plan for succession in key leadership positions becomes especially important as the grant funding comes to an end in 2009. Succession planning within the leadership of DISCOVER will most likely have a profound impact upon DISCOVER's long-term viability and the extent of its success in promoting a culture of vocation and not merely just offering isolated programs that talk about vocation. As one informant who worked on a number of PTEV initiatives underscored the crucial importance of Program leadership for DISCOVER's success:

The single most important component of this project is the personnel. Do you have the kind of talent and dedication in the people that you have hired or the people that are working on this to make this thing work? And from a management perspective we had 13 people on staff at one point in various capacities and, if even one or two of those people were a dead weight, it can bring the whole room down. (personal communication, November 21, 2008)

In the early stages of DISCOVER, a number of key personnel were determined not to be the right fit for the program. This turnover in staff resulted in some "false starts" for DISCOVER and the need to begin again training new staff. Probably most difficult of all, the quick turnover in staff stalled the momentum that began with the award of the grant and prevented DISCOVER from establishing continuity in its programming and outreach efforts to students, faculty, and staff alike.

The history of DISCOVER demonstrates how difficult continuity can be, especially in the face of unforeseen changes. An early leader in the program reflected upon a tragic loss that upset the leadership of the DISCOVER in its first few years:

My position was set up such that we had an executive director of the program, a very famous theologian named Bill Spohn. The way that Bill and I structured the grant was, he would remain executive director throughout the course of the proposal and that I would be hired as a full time project manager in my first year and then move back to part-time and that I would serve as an internal evaluator of the project while I went to graduate school and continue to report to Bill but take a less managerial position. Well, lots of things happened; Bill was stricken with brain cancer and ended up dying. . . . And so I ended up with hanging on to that project manager position a little longer and I did not move into internal evaluation until the later stages of my time at Santa Clara. (personal communication, November 21, 2008)

The loss of Bill Spohn was a significant challenge for DISCOVER, not just for overall leadership of the project but because he was in many ways was “the theological mind and the voice of the project,” even really the face of the project. His death forced the person hired to oversee the administrative aspects of DISCOVER, including its assessment, to step into a more executive leadership role. Most significantly, the academic champion of DISCOVER, whose personality and reputation attracted many faculty and staff to participate in the program, was no longer there to help DISCOVER grow and expand its influence, particularly in its curricular development. Meanwhile, the role of internal evaluator of DISCOVER was left vacant as the program manager role needed to be filled. These vacancies caused disruption in the implementation, supervision, and ongoing evaluation of DISCOVER, robbing the initiative of some of the momentum generated from the initial enthusiasm of the grant award.

Leadership and Assessing DISCOVER's Impact

One continual leadership challenge facing nearly all educational efforts is having the capacity to assess the effectiveness of both people and programs. The challenge of assessment is particularly difficult for a program with a goal of cultivating a culture of vocation, since vocation is such an elusive concept and measuring growth in one's vocation is difficult to measure. In spite of turnover within its leadership, DISCOVER has remained committed to assessing its impact upon the community and Santa Clara's culture, even though their assessment efforts seem to have been sporadic and not entirely comprehensive. Since the Lilly Endowment, Inc. provided all \$2 million up front and "did not require reams of reporting," nor any specific form of evaluation, DISCOVER was free to determine their own methods of assessment. The actions that DISCOVER's leadership took in this regard was significant since it was only through some form of self-evaluation that the leadership would know if they were accomplishing DISCOVER's primary objective to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus.

Impressions of success often trumped reality until the leadership took action to assess their programs in a more formal way. For example, one DISCOVER staff member's impression was that 85% of the students believed their experience with DISCOVER was above average. However, those sort of numbers did not "have that much currency with the president," nor with Lilly, since both Lily and Santa Clara's higher administration were already staunch supporters of the program. They were interested in deeper cultural change, not just student impressions of individual programs. "Lilly was most concerned about institutional learning."

According to one of the Lilly Foundation officials overseeing PTEV, Lilly encouraged each of the individual PTEV initiatives to come up with their own methods of assessing effectiveness. It was Lilly's job to help them craft their assessment strategies. Lilly recognized that it was more important for individual programs to define for themselves what success looked like so they would take responsibility for continuous improvement and ongoing innovations in their PTEV initiatives. Such unflinching support from Lilly and the freedom to explore alternative ways of measuring success allowed DISCOVER to be more creative with their assessment.

Ten thousand dollars were set aside for assessment and a faculty member was commissioned by the executive director of DISCOVER to help set up an assessment procedure, but the faculty member never completed what he/she was commissioned to do. Nevertheless, some interesting studies were conducted in the RLCs to try to assess DISCOVER's impact upon its participants. Tom Plante and Diane Dreher, Santa Clara faculty, received grants to help assess the impact of DISCOVER upon students. Dreher measured RLC members' sense of vocation using a "Vocation Identity Questionnaire" (VIQ) at the beginning of their participation in an RLC and measured growth after 2 years of participation in an RLC. Commenting on the purpose and significance of the VIQ, Dr. Dreher reflected:

I developed a vocation identity questionnaire here at Santa Clara to measure a sense of calling in people who are not working for money but like primary sense of calling—volunteer work or as students or as retired people, you know, doing something. Again, us[ing] their gifts to give back. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

The primary findings of the VIQ, which was used to assess the growth of RLC participants over the course of the year, found that there was a statistically significant growth in student sense of vocational awareness and life direction (Dreher et al., 2007).

The VIQ was also used in a subsequent study by another faculty member involved with DISCOVER. Dr. Tom Plante and colleagues (2006) attempted to measure students' vocational identity and ability to cope with stress following an immersion experience, using a control group that did not participate on an immersion trip. Plante et al. found a positive correlation between participation in an immersion trip and heightened sense of vocational identity (using Dreher's VIQ), and an improved ability to cope with stress. One possible explanation for this finding is that students, who are exposed to the suffering of another, particularly from a significantly different cultural and or socio-economic class, have an ability to put their own struggles in a broader, even global, perspective. Reflecting upon his studies, Dr. Plante had this to say:

We used a comparison group of students who chose not to go on any of these [immersion] experiences and we match them on age and gender, and we measure the same time. At around the same time they take these pre test measures, and then post test, then follow-up. Basically, not surprisingly, you do get more compassion with those who participate in some of these experiences relative to a comparison group. And one of the really interesting findings is they also tend to do better on stress management. We don't know exactly why that is but the theory is that once they have a better sense of how the world really lives, somehow these hassles in their own life don't seem as important . . . they get some perspective and we take that as creating situations where they are more grateful for what they have in their coping with stress. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

According to Plante, these studies have given way to a larger university wide study that attempts to measure a student's growth in compassion during their educational experience

at Santa Clara University, using a student questionnaire that is administered to all undergraduate and graduate students.

Now one of the things that's kind of exciting, I think, is the university has been true to [its commitment to educate students for competence, conscience, and compassion] and has decided that every student that comes into Santa Clara as an undergraduate or a graduate student, law student, business student, engineering student, whatever any new student, they fill out some questionnaires including this compassion inventory that we developed. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

As evidenced by the research discussed above, DISCOVER has shaped the very way the university thinks about educating for "conscience, competence, and compassion" and paved the way for cultivating a culture of vocation on campus at Santa Clara University. DISCOVER's leadership and faculty collaborators, in seeking creative ways to assess DISCOVER's impact upon both the students and the wider university culture, assisted the university in its own assessment of the school's overall effectiveness in achieving their educational mission.

In conclusion, the designers of DISCOVER wisely decided to share the leadership among many collaborating offices on campus assuring broad based support and dissemination of their programs. This collaborative leadership was able to sustain the tragic loss of their first executive director and to keep DISCOVER committed to the broader goal of infusing the exploration of vocation into all aspects of campus life. Through the studies mentioned above, DISCOVER leadership attempted to assess some of its impact upon students, but the greatest impact was evidenced by its influence upon the campus culture. In the next section, I will discuss how DISCOVER both adapted to and made a profound impact upon the campus culture at Santa Clara University.

Cultivating a Culture of Vocation on Campus

Equally as important as having the proper structures and leadership in place, the authors of the Lilly grant proposal understood the need to adapt the DISCOVER initiative to Santa Clara's unique campus culture. The initial DISCOVER designers recognized that the timing of the Lilly grant award presented unique opportunities for the initiative to integrate and build upon innovations already underway on campus. This section describes the particular timing of the grant in the history of Santa Clara University and how seizing upon these unique opportunities present at the time of DISCOVER's inception provided fertile ground for the establishment of a program focused on vocational discernment. I continue with a discussion of the relationship between DISCOVER and the Ignatian spiritual tradition that puts into sharper relief the contributions of Ignatian spirituality for creating a culture of vocation on campus. I continue by providing evidence of DISCOVER's impact upon the culture of Santa Clara University. Finally, the section concludes with student participant perspectives that describe how DISCOVER impacted their educational experience at Santa Clara University and their own exploration of vocation.

Pre-existing Cultural Influences at Santa Clara and Their

Impact Upon DISCOVER

In order to make the greatest impact upon the campus culture, the authors of the Lilly grant understood the need to adapt the DISCOVER initiative to the particular moment in the university's history. The initial DISCOVER designers recognized that Santa Clara's historical context at the time of the PTEV grants presented unique

opportunities for DISCOVER to integrate its efforts with other innovations already underway on campus which could strengthen its ability to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus.

Before receiving the \$2 million grant award from Lilly for DISCOVER, Santa Clara University had already decided to radically restructure their on campus residential life by requiring all incoming students to select a Residential Learning Community (RLC) when choosing their housing on campus. Requiring that all undergraduate students living on campus select an RLC was more than just a structural issue for Santa Clara, but truly spoke of a shift in mindset to impact the campus culture by enhancing the academic climate on campus. DISCOVER recognized the power and potential of using the RLCs as the way in which the DISCOVER programs would be presented to a large population of undergraduates, namely, every undergraduate residing on campus.

These RLCs provided both the structural support and the cultural shift necessary to help launch DISCOVER in the Residence Halls. Santa Clara was shifting to a campus culture that placed significant value on the learning that often happens in residence halls and indeed all of the learning that occurs during college *outside* the classroom. This cultural shift of placing all students into a Residential Learning Community, and not just viewing the Residence Halls as a place where they slept, presented a unique opportunity for DISCOVER to introduce vocational exploration. In fact, the RLCs would later become a “major delivery vehicle for the DISCOVER program.”

The second major initiative already underway at SCU was a “renewed commitment to faith and justice as the mission of Jesuit institutions of higher education”

(Santa Clara University, 2002, p. 1). This renewed focus upon educating and working for justice within Jesuit institutions of higher education signaled to the DISCOVER grant authors that a major thrust of the initiative needed to address this central value of Jesuit higher education. To that end, the grant promised to expand the already existing immersion trip programs, which gave students, as well as faculty, staff, and alumni, an opportunity to encounter “extended immersion experiences into the gritty reality of our globalizing world” (Santa Clara University, 2008c).

The co-curricular and curricular structures put in place by DISCOVER helped to create a campus culture that highlighted vocational exploration as a primary focus of an undergraduate education at Santa Clara University. This focus upon vocational exploration became a hallmark of the institution, which distinguished Santa Clara from other peer colleges. I describe in the next section how DISCOVER was particularly effective because the grant aligned with the pre-existing culture, and served to both support and enhance its Jesuit identity.

The Relationship Between Ignatian Spirituality and DISCOVER

According to the Executive Director, DISCOVER provided a unique opportunity to highlight the religious heritage and educational traditions of Jesuit higher education to “make explicit what was implicit,” namely the Jesuit vision of higher education. In fact, one informant who worked for PTEV programs at three different Jesuit colleges believed that it was precisely due to their Ignatian approach to vocation that Jesuit colleges were so successful with Lilly’s PTEV initiative. He explained that it was “because the idea of vocation that Lilly articulated or at least the expansive way in which vocation can be

taught was very consonant with Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit education” (personal communication, November 21, 2008). Ignatian spirituality, with its focus on lifelong discernment and “finding God in all things,” proved to be ideally suited to nurture vocational exploration because of its emphasis on reflection and becoming a “contemplative in action.”

According to the director of faculty programming, DISCOVER programs are designed to help students cultivate a habit of vocational reflection and lifelong discernment. It does so in a variety of creative ways: “Students are encouraged to go off without their cell phones and their instant messaging, text messaging, and all their gadgets and to spend time in reflection.” Educating students to value making time for reflection upon their life experiences and then to discern what meaning those experience may have for their vocational journey is precisely the kind of impact that DISCOVER wanted to make. It took its direction from the Ignatian tradition of discernment of spirits, which as, discussed in detail in Chapter 2, is a highly developed methodology for decision making during major transitions in life. As one other involved faculty member of DISCOVER commented, Ignatian spirituality is “not only what DISCOVER is about, but what the university is about.” As he commented earlier in our interview:

I guess as I understand it, you know, [DISCOVER] is a grant given to the university to develop programming to help students develop vocational discernment, broadly defined but kind of consistent with Jesuit higher education, to discover their gifts and figure out how their gifts intersect with the world’s greatest needs. For them to be attentive to those who are marginalized and to make a more humane, just world based on their talents and gifts that they’ve discovered through various discernment processes on campus, both curricular and extra-curricular. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

As the faculty member articulates so well, DISCOVER is steeped in the Jesuit tradition of higher education. DISCOVER's objective, according to this faculty member's perceptions and his experience with the program, is to help students to "discover their gifts and figure out how their gifts intersect with the world's greatest needs," or put another way, educating students for justice. Likewise, DISCOVER relies heavily upon the Ignatian spiritual practices of vocational discernment and the guidelines that Saint Ignatius in 1548 provides in his seminal work, *The Spiritual Exercises*.

From the outset, the designers of DISCOVER intended to build upon the rich Jesuit educational traditions that were prevalent on Santa Clara's campus:

The elements of the second half of the title (DISCOVER) *Oriented toward Vocational Engagement and Reflection*" capture the unique Ignatian approach to discovering God's call at the intersection where faith engages the world. (Santa Clara University, 2002)

It is clear that the designers of DISCOVER intended to build upon the Jesuit educational tradition to educate for faith and justice. They saw the grant as an opportunity to highlight those elements that already existed on campus that were educating students for justice and to connect those educational efforts with DISCOVER's efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus.

Santa Clara's understanding of vocation is rooted in Ignatian values and comes directly from the Jesuit educational tradition to educate for "faith and justice":

From the perspective of Ignatian spirituality, we find our vocation by engaging the world and reflecting on how that engagement elicits fundamental desires to heal, serve, and create. Because God's Spirit speaks through both the world's realities and the gifts of the individual, vocation arises from this interaction of faith and justice, the heart and the world. (Santa Clara University, 2002)

DISCOVER adopted the Ignatian idea that we discover our vocation as we encounter the “gritty reality” of our everyday world. For Jesuit education, this means that, for vocational reflection to be most authentically Ignatian, vocational discernment must “engage with the world.” This engagement with the world “elicits fundamental desires to heal, serve, and create.” In the Ignatian traditions, vocation is heard through direct experiences with the “world’s realities” and also within the heart of the individual, reflecting upon their natural talents and personal passions and how those talents and passions might serve some need in the world.

To illustrate this intersection of the “heart and the world,” DISCOVER adopted the following quote by Herman Hesse to help them to articulate their understanding of vocation:

There are many types and kinds of vocations, but the core of the experience is always the same: the soul is awakened, transformed, or exalted so that instead of dreams and presentiments from within, a summons comes from without: a portion of reality presents itself and makes a claim. (Santa Clara University, 2002, p. 2)

DISCOVER adopted this idea of vocation that challenges students to discover the “portion of reality presents itself and makes a claim.” This notion of vocation is very much in the Ignatian tradition which leads its practitioners to reflect and discover the presence of God in their lived experience of everyday life. Once that presence of God is recognized in the concrete reality of the practitioner’s life, she/he can interpret how God is calling them to respond. Essentially, DISCOVER understood vocation as a nexus of faith and justice lived out in response to the needs of the world.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of the influence of Ignatian spirituality upon DISCOVER can be seen in programs designed to help students, faculty, and staff to explore their own vocations. Ignatian practices of discernment are found throughout the major DISCOVER programs from the Ignatian Discernment Training Groups to the Ignatian Faculty Forum. In each of these programs, Saint Ignatius' highly developed methodology for decision making is adapted and made accessible to each particular group, students, faculty, or staff members. One informant shared how the spiritual wisdom of Ignatius has been woven into DISCOVER's student programs:

Ignatius is all about discernment, you know. So, the tools, the Ignatian tools are such a great fit for this kind of project. And we've made use of them. I've shared about the workshops. Maybe also just in our reflections. Discernment of spirits, consolations and desolations, is woven into a lot of how the (DISCOVER) retreat unfolds . . . some of the movements of Ignatius own life and the way in which he shares particular practices out of his own story. We make use of it on the [DISCOVER] Retreat. (personal communication, November 19, 2008)

The practices and terms that the DISCOVER staff member refers to here are principles drawn for Saint Ignatius' 1548 *Spiritual Exercises*, and more specifically his "Rules for Discernment." Ignatius offers a few guidelines (or Rules) for discernment. The first guidelines offered by Ignatius concern how to properly identify the affective spirits of consolation and desolation and it can be admittedly a bit complicated, that is why there is a spiritual director involved to help with discernment. Essentially though, for those who are committed to God and God's purpose, consolation is a sign of God's favor toward a particular decision or path. For those who are not yet committed to God and God's purposes, desolation, or remorse for one's actions, could equally be a sign of God's call to a particular path. By definition, desolation is not bad in and of itself. It is the

behavior under the influence of desolation that can be problematic. Desolation can actually lead one to seek refuge in God and to become more compassionate toward others. Likewise, an experience of consolation is not always from God, rather it can be false consolation, a form of self deception, when something appears to be for the greater good and is accompanied by peace and even joy, but distracts from a deeper and more demanding call. A young adult's life choices are affirmed or challenged by consolation and/or desolation as one lives into the decision. While consolation often affirms one's decision, it does not necessarily happen right away, requiring a fidelity to the process of learning to recognize the presence (and absence) of God and God's promptings in everyday life.

As one Jesuit spiritual director recalled, Ignatius was insistent that his followers practiced the daily *examen*, a method of reviewing the day seeking for God's presence and promptings in their lives. If they missed every other form of prayer in the day, they were not to forego a daily examen. That is how much credence Ignatius put into the power of persevering in daily discernment of spirits (personal communication, 2007). In order to assist in the discipline of ongoing discernment, Ignatius strongly encouraged (or rather required) his followers to avail themselves of the mentoring capacities offered through spiritual direction. Sometimes, this direction came in the form of a mentoring community, which DISCOVER attempted to provide through their Resident Ministers and DISCOVER's partnership with the Residential Learning Communities and presence in the Residence Halls.

The use of Resident Ministers as the “delivery mechanism for DISCOVER” had become another key strategy and another avenue where Ignatian spirituality could be introduced to the students, literally, where they live:

So where DISCOVER comes in is in the resident ministers. There are four areas of focus for the resident ministry. . . . We focus upon reflecting, resourcing, mentoring and modeling. And that is what we call the R’s and M’s of resident ministry. Reflection is promoting vocational reflection in the RLC. Each resident minister leads the DISCOVER group in the RLC. And then, the DISCOVER Retreat, they help to organize that. So, those are two concrete ways that promote vocational reflection in the RLC’s. (personal communication, November 19, 2008)

The ubiquitous influence of Ignatian spirituality throughout DISCOVER programs reveals that depth to which DISCOVER was influenced by the Ignatian character of Santa Clara. Indeed, the design of most undergraduate student programs incorporates, either explicitly or implicitly, the principles of discernment of spirits from Ignatius. For example, within the resident ministry program, many creative strategies have been used to help students appropriate the wisdom of Ignatian spirituality in ways that might not be recognizable to the students but are nonetheless effective and solidly grounded in the Ignatian tradition. Some examples of these Ignatian spiritual practices introduced by the Resident Ministers in their programming and presence with students are described below:

The resident ministers will share, not just their vocation stories . . . the Resident Ministers share a personal discernment practice with the students, whether that be journaling, or the *Examen*, or music writing, it can be, you know, whatever discernment practice really is from them . . . there are just as many different discernment practices as there are Resident Ministers. (personal communication, November 19, 2008)

Introducing Ignatian spiritual practices like journaling as a form of spiritual reflection was commonplace in DISCOVER groups. During my site visit, I had the opportunity to

observe a Residential Learning Community gathering. The Resident Minister led the students in a guided meditation, preparing the first year students who were returning home for the first time since beginning college over the Thanksgiving break. She borrowed a classic Ignatian practice called guided meditation where the student imagines themselves in a particular scene in order to gain special insight into the student's own thoughts and feeling around that situation. Naturally, this practice is not exclusively an Ignatian practice but it does figure prominently in Ignatian spirituality.

Immersion trips are the final major example of Ignatian influence and Jesuit educational philosophy. The immersion trips “are designed to help participants see the world with new eyes, to recognize the unjust suffering of marginalized communities and individuals, and to allow those experiences to inform their vocational discernment” (Santa Clara University, 2008c). Immersion programs as a central primary strategy to educate their students for solidarity and to work for justice, a hallmark of Jesuit education and an embodiment of the ideals of Ignatian spirituality.

Unlike their original plans for the RLC component and faculty outreach, immersion experiences actually did grow as planned, even more than was originally projected. Just the fact that they exist as a major strategy can be traced back to the Jesuit influence and philosophy of higher education. As referenced earlier, the immersion trips are Santa Clara's attempt through DISCOVER to “realize the Jesuit Higher Education Mission—restated and renewed by Father Kolvenbach at the 2000 Justice Conference—of forming women and men of well-educated solidarity” (Santa Clara University, Kolvenbach Solidarity Program).

Furthermore, as affirmed at the highest levels of administration, grappling with issues of social justice has been a central focus of Santa Clara University's mission, predating DISCOVER, to educate students for "competence, conscience, and compassion." According to one informant, immersion trips are at the heart of what Santa Clara University is about because they "really connect students intimately with people in communities on the margins of society" which is at the heart of Jesuit educational philosophy to educate for faith and justice.

Naturally, just participating in an immersion trip is not nearly as effective, nor as authentically Ignatian, if reflection and dialogue about one's experience is not an intentional part of the experience. Not surprisingly, many informants, both administrators and participants on the immersion trips commented on what a central component reflection has been on the DISCOVER sponsored immersion trips. They typically emphasized strategies such as "devot[ing] some time for students to talk about what [spirituality, justice, and simplicity] means to them." These "pillars of immersion trips" are of course major tenets of Ignatius philosophy. Another strategy they use is "to feed them with some knowledge or some pieces that can help them reflect." This kind of personal reflection upon their life experiences, which was intentionally integrated into DISCOVER experiences (in the preceding example, the reflection was imbedded into an immersion trip experience) is a hallmark of Ignatian spirituality, Jesuit educational values, and the principles that DISCOVER was founded upon.

It is clear that DISCOVER recognized that power, potential, and importance of drawing from and expanding upon the riches of Ignatian spirituality. From the original

design of the Lilly grant, DISCOVER recognized this strength and capitalized upon it. It continued to integrate Ignatian spirituality as it found creative ways to adapt to Santa Clara's culture. Finally, DISCOVER made "explicit what was implicit" at Santa Clara in their Jesuit and Ignatian roots in their key programs, especially in the DISCOVER Retreats, DISCOVER groups in the RLCs, and in their immersion trips. The next section explores some of the evidence of DISCOVER's impact upon the campus culture of Santa Clara, much of it made possible by DISCOVER's wise appropriation of the wisdom of Ignatian spirituality and the intellectual infrastructure present at Santa Clara from its grounding in the Jesuit educational tradition.

Evidence of DISCOVER's Impact Upon the Campus Culture

The reason that DISCOVER has been so successful is because the leadership has always remained committed to impacting the wider culture. As discussed in the previous section, DISCOVER was profoundly influenced by strong pre-existent cultural elements, most notably, the Jesuit educational tradition and Ignatian spirituality. However, DISCOVER set out from the very beginning to impact the campus culture and to cultivate of culture of vocation on campus. In order to do that, the leadership knew that it would need more than just higher administration support and the \$2 million grant. They would need to come up with a strategy that would be broad based enough to impact the entire culture. The Lilly grant provided the financial backing and the impetus to effect this cultural change.

Santa Clara wanted to cultivate a pervasive culture of vocation on campus, even before receiving the Lilly grant, and saw the PTEV award as a unique opportunity to

promote already existing efforts to educate students for vocation. As one informant attested, “getting the grant was not about putting the grant on the web site to say ‘look we got this grant.’” Santa Clara took Lilly at their word to support changes that would enhance a serious consideration of vocation.

Lilly was also clear that they wanted their money to be seed money. They wanted PTEV to continue after money ran out. In response to that explicit desire of the Lilly Endowment, the President of Santa Clara chose strategically which departments were to house the various programs and who was selected to lead them. He knew that the programs had to be sustainable, especially since the university had committed in a letter, signed by the President and Chair of Board of Trustees, that DISCOVER staff and programs would be funded at least for 3 years after the 5-year grant ran out. As a result, Santa Clara chose professionals from across campus to write the grant proposal and then to lead the DISCOVER initiative. As one informant observed, “If we are going to [change the campus culture], we need to get the whole campus singing from the same song book. And the only way you do that is to be inclusive as possible.” Enlisting the faculty and getting the idea of vocational exploration into the classroom was crucial for transforming the culture

Students who did not choose to partake in any of the DISCOVER initiatives might encounter vocational exploration in the classroom. Although, admittedly, the programs seems to have the greatest impact on the lives of the students when they were “interlocked and overlapped.” “Toward creating culture, we realized early on . . . that the only way these would really work would be if they were interlocked and overlapped. So

it's not enough to have a student go to El Salvador." If students participated in multiple aspects of DISCOVER, then "we really began to see a change and often they became our best ambassadors."

While DISCOVER had to make some significant adaptations to the culture at Santa Clara, it is clear that it has had a significant impact upon the culture, helping to create some space for vocational reflection. As DISCOVER grew in reputation over the years, some other departments on campus began to recognize their value. The summer orientation program for incoming freshmen reached out to DISCOVER asking them to develop an educational component on vocation. The orientation program granted DISCOVER 45 minutes (a significant amount of time on a very cramped agenda) of mandatory meeting time for all freshmen to learn about how DISCOVER makes Santa Clara distinctive and distinguished and can help them with vocational discernment during their college years. DISCOVER had emerged as a core component of the Santa Clara experience and people on campus were recognizing the significant value of DISCOVER and its unique contribution to Santa Clara's Jesuit identity. One informant recalled someone from the Orientation staff commenting that: "DISCOVER is part of the Ignatian character of the university."

In addition to orientation, Residence Life asked DISCOVER to help with the revamping of their Residential Assistant (RA) training. (Resident Assistants are students who help to supervise the residence halls and build community on campus.) They were seeking RA transformation beyond training and they utilized the notion of vocation. First, it was piloted with just a few RAs and then the DISCOVER training was offered to the

entire staff. What is also noteworthy in this example is that the Residential Life Director was relatively new and did not come from another Jesuit, or even Catholic, college. Unfamiliar with the Jesuit tradition, this newcomer still recognized the value and potential of DISCOVER to enhance RA training.

The Office of International Programs likewise invited DISCOVER to offer a reentry retreat for students returning from a study abroad experience. They asked DISCOVER to assist students in exploring what they learned about themselves, the world, and what impact that would have on their future directions, essentially vocational questions.

One clear example of the impact the DISCOVER had on even the more resistant pockets on campus involves the Center for Student Leadership. I noted earlier the Director of the Center exhibited strong resistance toward DISCOVER. Somewhat resentful that “the rich just got richer,” the Director was even reluctant to refer students to DISCOVER programs. Eventually, DISCOVER was invited to provide a Student Leaders’ Retreat, which they designed and implemented for third year students. The center that had most pushed back returned to them asking them to offer a retreat. While the Director “was not the champion of [the retreat], he did sign off on it.”

Evidence of DISCOVER’s impact upon the culture of Santa Clara was not limited to student centered programs; many staff people shared that the staff IFF was a profoundly grounding and reflective experience for them. Maybe most emblematic of the impact DISCOVER has had on the larger culture at Santa Clara is captured in the one program that consistently drew students, faculty, and staff—the program In Search for

What Matters. This program began after DISCOVER was established and one informant shared that there was an uneasiness because no one knew whether anyone would show up. The program quickly grew in popularity and soon these events required pre-registration; was always full of members from across the community—students, faculty, and staff; and expanded to two presenters each quarter. Past presenters have shared their opinion that everyone should take the opportunity to write their version of “What Matters Most.” They reported that it helped them to feel grounded, committed, and helped them to explore their own vocational call.

All of this evidence of DISCOVER’s impact upon the campus culture is compelling. However, the greatest evidence of DISCOVER’s impact upon the campus culture for incorporating vocational exploration can be seen in its influence upon the students’ experience at Santa Clara and their learning with respect to vocational exploration. In the next section, I let the voices of student participants in DISCOVER reveal DISCOVER’s most important contributions, namely its impact on the learning, the lives, and the life choices of its student participants.

DISCOVER’s Impact Upon Students

Speaking with students who participated in many different aspects of DISCOVER, it is clear that their experience was, at the very least, a positive influence and, for some, it had a profound impact upon their educational experience at Santa Clara and their thoughts about life after college. A common remark from the students was that often they learned “more about me” than anything else. Michael Himes’ (2002) three key questions (What am I passionate about? Am I good at these things? Who needs me to do

these things?) were cited by nearly every participant as a helpful framework for their discernment. The questions just seemed to make sense to students and were readily applicable to some of the bigger questions that they were grappling with in their lives as they considered what major they would choose, in which activities they would participate, and even what they might do with their life after college. These questions held additional appeal to most students because the questions were “not too religious.” One participant identified these questions as potential helpful tools when talking about vocation in a more secular context.

Another universally known and frequently cited understanding from their participation in DISCOVER was Buechner’s (1973) articulation of vocation (“God calls you to the place where your deep gladness meets the world’s deep need”). This formulation was a familiar refrain in our conversations and a common understanding among the students that vocation was a quest to find the place(s) where their unique passions, talents, and abilities could be put at the service of a genuine need of the world. Essentially, participation in DISCOVER gave students a language for understanding and exploring vocation more deeply.

Additionally, Santa Clara University’s vision for educating students for competence, conscience, and compassion was mentioned by almost every student group as a common understanding for what Santa Clara was about. Interestingly enough, the students made a strong connection among the “3C’s” that Santa Clara claims to educate for, competence, conscience, and compassion, and the vocational exploration encouraged by DISCOVER. From my conversation with students, as well as involved faculty and

staff, it seems clear that DISCOVER introduced a language that the community could use to explore the broad and sometimes elusive concept of vocation. This common language enabled the community to converse in a deeper way about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences surrounding vocational exploration. Additionally, this vocation's language and common understanding of vocation, grounded in the theoretical frames of Buechner (1973) and Himes (2002) gave the community a lens through which they could interpret their life experiences at Santa Clara and beyond.

Greater vocational awareness appears to be one of the consequences of learning this common language of vocation through their participation in the structural arrangements that DISCOVER provided. When asked what they learned, if anything, from their participation in DISCOVER, the responses were spontaneous and ranged from declarations of simple moments of self-discovery to profound insights into the nature of vocational exploration. One participant spoke of his or her ability or the opportunity the program provided to regularly create more space for intentional reflection upon their life experiences, no mean feat in the busyness of a college student's schedule:

Yeah, it's hard to— . . . like it's a lot easier when there is an organized thing. Like I try in the morning—I wake up earlier than I normally would, and sit like outside of our cafeteria and just like it's a time of peace but that has only started because of my Ignatian retreat. But before then like I wouldn't do it. (personal communication, November 20, 2008)

The programs created by DISCOVER gave structured opportunities for students to take the time and space necessary for deeper vocational reflection and effectively encouraged them to continue that reflection in their daily lives.

It was clear that one of the more significant impacts that DISCOVER had on the students' lives stemmed from the Ignatian value of forming "contemplatives in action," cultivating a habit of reflection and giving them permission to take the time and create the space in their lives for regular and intentional reflection upon their college experience. DISCOVER created the structures necessary to promote this ongoing, intentional reflection in their lives and encouraged them to use the lens of listening for God's call, or in the language of Ignatian spirituality "finding God in the every day," in order to discern where God might be calling them and who they may be called to become.

DISCOVER introduced the notion of vocation to many who were unfamiliar with the term. For those who were already familiar with the concept of vocation, DISCOVER broadened and deepened the notion for them. Additionally, DISCOVER presented vocational exploration as a lifelong endeavor.

The following exchange with a Jewish student, who was involved with a number of DISCOVER programs, illustrates the type of learning that DISCOVER provoked:

Interviewer: Did you learn anything? What was the greatest gift from your participation in DISCOVER?

Student: Well, actually the greatest gift was just having the time after retreat to really reflect on where I am and where I want to go in my life, but also try to create a sense of that in my everyday life. Because obviously . . . know, vocation isn't discovered . . . it is a process. Just like creating that time and space in myself to discern that on a daily basis, you know, I do think it gave me a basis to do that. (personal communication, November 21, 2008)

The primary learning of this student participant was the importance and necessity of habitual reflection upon his life experience, recognizing that vocational reflection is a lifelong process. While at first glance the student's response may seem to be a modest

learning from his participation in DISCOVER, being made aware that vocational discernment is a lifelong process is quite significant. In Ignatian spirituality, vocational discernment refers to a process of decision making that is grounded in one's deepest beliefs, values, and passions. So to make a student aware that this is an ongoing and gradual process is an important educational milestone especially for students. Furthermore, encouraging and inspiring students to undertake such a process is a significant spiritual commitment. For students from the so called Millennial Generation, which has been described as the "busiest" generation in history, carving out the time and space for reflection and discernment seems to be a particular challenge, yet particularly important. For DISCOVER to accomplish the goal of encouraging and equipping students for lifelong vocational discernment is significant.

In some students' experiences, the opportunity provided by DISCOVER caused them for the first time in their life to think critically upon their life experienced in a disciplined and formalized way. As one respondent explained: "[The DISCOVER retreat] was actually one of the first experiences that really initiated that process [of discernment] for me. You know, [before] I never thought about it explicitly" (personal communication, November 21, 2008).

DISCOVER helped to introduce the idea of vocation and vocational discernment to a population of students who were only vaguely familiar with the concept and perhaps thought about it in narrow terms. DISCOVER deepened and broadened the concept of vocation and gave them a language through which they could speak about their life experiences and a lens through which they could interpret and make meaning from them.

The students' comments listed above are representative of the student DISCOVER participants whom I had an opportunity to interview. DISCOVER provided students a space for contemplation and maybe even an excuse or permission to explore more deeply this idea of vocation. DISCOVER also raised the question of vocation and broadened the notion of vocation as explained by one student participant in DISCOVER:

It was like whenever I thought of vocation I thought of like a career path, like a specific career, like going to a vocational college like some people go in for two years to get that or the Priesthood, where you know, like I'm Jewish like being a Rabbi or something like that. That is what I thought about it. I didn't think of like the broader personal journey to discover it. (personal communication, November 21, 2008)

Participating in DISCOVER gave students a language for articulating their vocational questions and leads to significant learning about their own vocational journey, as demonstrated in the students' familiarity and facility with Himes' (2002) "Three Key Questions" and Buechner's (1973) formulation of vocation. DISCOVER also provided students with experiential learning opportunities and introduced them to spiritual practices that they can use in their everyday life. Finally, it encouraged students to cultivate habits that will equip them and encourage them to conduct lifelong discernment.

In addition to giving students a language and tools for vocational exploration, student participation in DISCOVER had a direct and very concrete impact upon their vocational discernment, if not always in comfortable ways. For some students, their participation in DISCOVER precipitated a change of perspective and even previous life plans. As one student reflected upon his learning from his involvement with DISCOVER's immersion trips, he commented: "Throughout immersion, I learned

different things on each trip . . . maybe I don't want to go into accounting. . . . My path wasn't as set as I thought it was. That was what I learned through these trips" (personal communication, November 21, 2008).

Earlier in our conversation, the same student commented that he felt that he needed to respond to his experiences from his immersion trips. In the Ignatian spiritual tradition, authentic vocational exploration is always done in the context of community, putting an individual's talents and passions in dialogue with the deeper needs of the world. Clearly, that Ignatian value of serving the neediest made an impact upon many of the immersion trip participants. One student shared with me that when he returned from his immersion trip he felt compelled to respond to what he had seen and experienced. His first step was to found and direct the "International Service Club" which engages students and encourages them to work with needy children in after school programs, with women at a domestic violence shelter, and at a hospital for people stricken with Hanson's Disease (also known as leprosy).

Participating in these concrete forms of service involved students in an ongoing conversation about vocational choices in their lives and, for many individuals, it challenged them to see their career choices as a key aspect of their vocational journey. Perhaps the best way to capture the impact of DISCOVER upon students is to recall one informant's understanding of what DISCOVER is all about:

I think [DISCOVER] becomes almost a way that students are able to access pieces of the Jesuit tradition, to talk about spirituality, to get to that place. By talking about DISCOVER, when you [introduce Himes'] three questions, they are pretty safe for students. One of those things that came up in the conversations with these questions was that the entire type of community, regardless of students' religious

tradition or whether they identify as a person who is spiritual or not, could relate to these questions and then participants could go to a place that's a little bit deeper. (personal communication, November 20, 2008)

Helping students to "go to a place that's a little bit deeper" is precisely what DISCOVER has accomplished for those community members who chose to participate.

Conclusion

While Santa Clara University had pre-existent elements of a culture of vocation on campus prior to receiving the Lilly grant by virtue of its Ignatian spiritual heritage, DISCOVER helped to "make what was implicit, explicit," allowing the richness of Ignatian spirituality and its emphasis upon vocational discernment to come alive for students, faculty, and staff. Creative curricular and co-curricular programs which have encouraged, equipped, and inspired the Santa Clara community to explore vocation have provided a sound structural foundation that may help sustain the theological exploration of vocation at Santa Clara University beyond the grant funding period. Shared, collaborative leadership in the DISCOVER program invested numerous areas upon campus in the exploration of vocation and cast a wider net, involving a broader population of the campus community in DISCOVER than if it had remained housed solely in one office. Finally, capitalizing upon the intellectual infrastructure already created through Jesuit educational traditions and the spiritual heritage of the Ignatian tradition, DISCOVER skillfully adapted their PTEV initiative to the particular culture that already existed on campus at Santa Clara University, cultivating a vibrant and evolving culture of vocation on campus.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS FROM SAINT NORBERT COLLEGE'S PROGRAM OF FAITH, LEARNING, AND VOCATION

The Historical Context for the Program of Faith, Learning, and Vocation at Saint Norbert College

Saint Norbert College's award of the \$2 million PTEV grant came at a "karios" moment, a specially ordained and crucial time in the college's history, according to the designers of the Faith, Learning, and Vocation Program (FLV). One of the early FLV collaborators explained:

It came, I think, at a very, very important time for this institution because we were very close to losing the identity—the religious identity—of the college. In the early '90s, I still remember . . . I was involved in interviewing a prospective faculty member. . . . And the person said: "Well, what about the religious identity of St. Norbert College?" And my colleague said: "That doesn't mean anything anymore. That's gone." And that's actually how I got interested in administration, because I thought oh, my gosh, we have to recultivate [the religious identity of the College] somehow. (personal communication, October 23, 2008)

Indeed, as one faculty member shared, if Saint Norbert had not received the Lilly grant, which was specifically designed to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus, the faith based educational mission of the university might have been lost. Saint Norbert was having an identity crisis, specifically in its relationship to Catholicism. As one long time faculty member recollected:

Well, I mean, I was also an undergrad here. So I was here in the '70s. And in fact, in the '80s there was a move to rename the college, to I don't know what, but not name it St. Norbert any longer, 'cause they thought it was too—it sent too much of a religious message. Things were really—well, I think it reflects a lot what was going on in society. And the idea that we have to get the best professors. We were

not really worried about the fit as much as if they're a good historian or they're a good biologist. (personal communication, November 23, 2008)

This scramble for the best and brightest students, faculty, and staff was in tension with the college's outward and explicit identity of "Catholicity" which was being called into question by various constituencies with disparate views of what it means to be Catholic. Many Catholic colleges had been asking what it means for them to be a Catholic college and questioning their unique call as a Catholic institution of higher learning. Saint Norbert College was no exception.

Today, according to their revised mission statement, "St. Norbert College, a Catholic liberal arts college, embraces the Norbertine ideal of *communio*¹ and provides an educational environment that fosters intellectual, spiritual and personal development" (Saint Norbert College, 2008b). Saint Norbert College is the only Norbertine College in the world, and as such, it occupies a special place of prominence in the Norbertine apostolate, or missionary work in the world. This fact presents both unique opportunities and particular challenges for the college. Other religious orders, like the Jesuits, have a worldwide network of colleges and universities which have created a particular vision for Jesuit higher education. Saint Norbert College, having no other peer Norbertine colleges,

¹Saint Norbert College has this to say about their understanding of *communio*: "As an academic institution, our community is rooted in the Norbertine ideal of *communio*, which is characterized by mutual esteem, trust, sincerity, faith and responsibility. *Communio* is lived through open dialogue, communication, consultation and collaboration. *Communio* encourages us to respond individually and collectively to the needs of our local and global communities.

"Historically, the earliest Christians described the distinct quality of their common life as *communio*—a life characterized by faith in Jesus Christ and a commitment to one another. St. Norbert of Xanten later reformed Catholic life by establishing a new Order that reflected this ideal.

"Today St. Norbert Colleg, formed in the Catholic, liberal arts and Norbertine traditions, embodies Norbert's ideal of *communio* by embracing all people while maintaining its own identity" (Saint Norbert College, 2009).

has not developed a clearly articulated vision of higher education in the Norbertine tradition.

Saint Norbert College was a first round grant recipient, one of only 20 colleges to be awarded a PTEV grant in the first round of awards. According to one of the original grant authors, Saint Norbert College was invited by Lilly to apply for the grant monies, recognizing that it was a relatively small college which could be profoundly impacted by a \$2 million grant. Additionally, Lilly had worked with Saint Norbert College before this PTEV grant and knew that the college had strong collaborative relationships with both Catholic and Protestant churches in the area, a relationship that Lilly admired and thought would cultivate the kind of ecumenically minded vocational exploration that would best serve the area of Northeastern Wisconsin. These relationships would presumably bear fruit in Lilly original goal of increasing the number of talented young people who would pursue a vocation to professional ministry in their ecclesial communities. Also, the Norbertines at Saint Norbert College were eager to explore the possibility of encouraging young women and men to consider vocations to committed religious life, including but not exclusively, to the Norbertine order.

Saint Norbert College, perhaps sensing that the college was at a crossroads in its history, also appreciated the unique opportunity presented by the grant interpreting it as an opportunity to reflect, renew, and reestablish the college in the centuries old religious tradition and spiritual foundations of the Norbertine Order. To that end, Saint Norbert College sought to create a culture on campus where vocation was explored richly and deeply by all members of the community and, most importantly, to explore vocation

together *as* a community. This focus would eventually lead Saint Norbert College to take the lead on conversations around Institutional Vocation and what the PTEV grants have meant for the growing sense of God's call in the life of the institutions which they endowed.

An in depth review of over a dozen informant interviews and thorough document analysis of the FLV program revealed three generative themes—structure, culture, and agency—around which the development and success of St Norbert's efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation may best be understood. Structure refers to the organizational arrangements, specifically the programs that were initiated to help student, faculty, and staff explore vocation. Culture refers to both the pre-existing college culture to which the PTEV grant needed to accommodate and also to the culture of vocation that college initiatives cultivated. Agency refers to the individual actions taken by those involved with the initiatives. Specifically, agency refers to the leadership that supported the initiatives. In this chapter I examine the structural, cultural, and agentive factors that facilitated St. Norbert's transition from a college struggling with their identity to one that became recommitted to their Norbertine heritage and successful in cultivating a campus culture of vocational discernment. I begin with discussing the structural arrangements supporting the Program of Faith, Learning, and Vocation.

Structural Design of Faith, Learning, and Vocation

The key structural factors of FLV which supported this culture of vocation consisted of educational programming in the co-curricular and curricular side of student life. On the co-curricular side, the ALIVE team, service trips, and ministry internships

provided attractive opportunities for students to engage in vocational reflection outside the classroom. On the curricular side, the faculty and staff development efforts, including faculty/staff retreats, book studies, and grant monies for developing vocations-related courses, assisted in creating a structural component to FLV that brought the classroom into FLV's efforts to cultivate a vibrant culture of vocational exploration on campus. All these structural elements helped to create a shared language that assisted student, faculty, and staff in their exploration of vocation.

Early Objectives of FLV

In its first year of operation, Faith, Learning, and Vocation developed programming to meet their four main objectives of:

1. To foster an integration of faith, learning, and vocation for undergraduate students
2. To enhance the formation of ministerial leadership in parishes and congregations
3. To develop an understanding of vocation with faculty and staff
4. To lead and sustain the program (Massey, 2001)

FLV created an array of programs that attracted the widest possible population to their offerings. Some of their earliest efforts included a Vocation Retreat and Lay Volunteer and Ministry Fair; the development of a course in the Theology of Vocation; the creation of the Lilly Leader program; and the construction of residence hall chapels in two of the residence halls.

As I will discuss in this section, these structural arrangements, albeit with some major adaptations in their programming along the way, made a significant impact on the culture of Saint Norbert. I begin with a discussion of faculty and staff programming through FLV and explain the structure that those programs have built and their impact. Next, I discuss the structures put in place to help students explore vocation in their own lives. I conclude with a discussion of the importance of language and how the structures developed by FLV helped to create a common language of vocation through which all members of the Saint Norbert community could engage in vocational exploration as a community. This discussion of language leads us into an exploration of the role of cultural influences upon FLV and how FLV was able in turn to influence the campus culture.

*Faculty and Staff Programming—Laying the Groundwork for
FLV's Curricular Structure*

Perhaps most significant of their earliest efforts were the structures FLV put in place to address faculty and staff vocational education and formation. FLV's focus upon faculty formation in vocational education recognized that one of the most important, effective, and lasting methods for introducing students to the theological exploration of vocation was through the classroom. In order to develop the curricular pieces of FLV, the faculty themselves would need some education and formation around the concept of vocation. Along with the classroom impact, FLV recognized the potential for vocational exploration in the faculty's advisory role. Indeed, the advising role may be as important as teaching for encouraging students to engage in vocational exploration, since it provides a

built in opportunity to mentor students as they consider choices not just about their major, but also about future life directions.

FLV began their faculty/staff formation by offering a summer seminar experience that introduced the concept of vocation to participants through readings and presentations, and also encouraged participants to dialogue with each other concerning their growing understanding of vocation and what implications it may have for their teaching, research, and advisory roles with students. Additionally, FLV offered a day of recollection, an opportunity to engage in some of the vocational discernment practices themselves for their own edification as well as for the exposure to what sort of formation the students would receive through their participation in FLV. The FLV Director commented that faculty development which equips and encourages the faculty to explore vocation with their students is “perhaps the most effective way to reach our students.”

Another key structural piece in the FLV strategy consisted of providing opportunities for engaging the community in an ongoing dialogue regarding the nature of vocation. To this end, FLV began the first of many semester long book studies where a book was chosen for discussion that was related to the concept of vocation. Participating faculty and staff shared their reflections on the book and the ideas that the book sparked within them. This offering drew the widest spectrum of participation, perhaps because of the eclectic nature of the books chosen, which included works from a variety of genres and disciplines, including titles such as: Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin’s *Three Cups of Tea: One Man’s Mission to Promote Peace One School at a Time*; Sue Ellen Monk’s *The Secret Life of Bees*; and Anne Lamott’s *Traveling Mercies*. By choosing

books from popular authors whose stories weave in issues related to vocational exploration as well as selecting books more directly written about the theological exploration of vocation, FLV was able to attract a wider audience and continue a campus-wide conversation around the notion of vocation and give them a language by which they could articulate and share their learning from vocational exploration.

As important as the faculty and staff programs in FLV were, faculty and staff development was just one piece of the structural elements that supported Saint Norbert's efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation. Each FLV program built upon another to put together a curricular and co-curricular edifice upon which a culture rooted in vocational exploration could be constructed. As the Director commented, FLV desired to "develop the kind of context in which vocation [could] be explored," which required "building block work." Building block work, the Director explained, refers to the gradual process of putting the effective structures in place that could initiate and sustain the exploration of vocation across campus. Even the name of the FLV program (Faith, Learning, and Vocation), reflects the program's desire to assist students in integrating understanding and practice of one's faith with their classroom learning as they explore the idea of vocation. One of the main goals of this faculty/staff education and formation around vocation was to develop a common "language (of vocation) that they could own."

Evolution of Student Programs—Laying a Foundation for

FLV's Co-Curricular Structure

In terms of specific programs for students, the desire to cultivate a culture of vocation played out in a number of significant ways. The original strategy of offering

vocation retreat experiences and a “Lay Volunteer and Ministry Fair” proved to be less effective for engaging students in the exploration of vocation. According to one informant, any retreat promoted to students as specifically designed to explore the possibility of a call to religious life was “scary” even for the students who were actively considering such a life choice. Instead, the administrators found that offering trips oriented toward serving community yet hosted by a religious community, offered an attractive and a less intimidating way for students to encounter religious life as a possible vocation. These student programs provided a structure upon which a culture of vocational discernment (not necessarily religious) was built.

Another structural component of FLV was the set of policies that provided scholarships to students so that they could explore their interest in a particular field of service or church ministry. The ministry internship awards seemed to help engage students in the most meaningful way to explore a possible call to ministry. Ministry internships provide students opportunities for paid part time work in off-campus “faith based service programs.” These ministry internships ranged from working in parish based youth ministry to working in prison outreach programs. They were offered both during the semester and over the summer. The program provided a mentor who guided students in reflecting upon their ministry experience and the implications for their own vocational discernment. Such arrangements, while only impacting less than a dozen students each year, allowed student participants in FLV to go deeper in their vocational exploration by actually “trying out” their interest in ministry.

Perhaps the most successful co-curricular program on the student side of FLV began as the “Lilly Leaders” program. The purpose of this program was to create a peer ministry program that would help to cultivate an environment where vocation would be discussed in all aspects of a student’s life. To that end, Lilly leaders were placed in various departments across campus, working 10-12 hours a week developing programs and cultivating relationships that engaged students in conversations around vocational exploration. In the first year of FLV, students were placed in a variety of co-curricular settings including: “two residence halls, athletics, Career Services, Women’s Center, Peace and Justice Center, and the department of Leadership, Service, and Involvement” (Massey, 2001). The hopes for these Lilly Leaders were broad and deep as they constituted the heart of the co-curricular strategy for engaging students in vocational exploration. The designer of the Lilly Leader program explained the purpose of the Lilly Leaders program in this way:

First, we ask the Lilly Leaders, in their work with their peers throughout campus, to develop an environment where the concept of vocation can be received, namely, an environment where faith and life are connected. We believe that we cannot ask students to look at their career and lifestyle choices from a faith perspective if they have not already developed the pattern of connecting their daily living with their faith or spirituality. (Massey, 2001)

This commitment to putting the student’s life experience in dialogue with the wisdom of their faith tradition required that the Lilly Leaders were both well practiced in vocational exploration themselves and also well integrated into student life.

The Lilly Leaders were commissioned to help their peers with vocational reflection, as they themselves engaged in their own vocational exploration. The designers of the FLV Program described their role this way:

Lilly Leaders are sent out as missionaries of a sort to try to build connections between faith and life. . . . The second impact of the Lilly Leader program is on those students serving as Lilly Leaders. These students are offering a form of ministerial leadership on the campus. The program attempts to support and equip them for this work through mentoring, training, and formation. (Massey, 2001)

Supporting and equipping students to help other students proved to be an innovative approach that engaged students in vocational exploration. Lilly Leaders provided key structural support to FLV in the residence halls.

Moreover, the Lilly Leaders were themselves engaging in vocational exploration as they helped their peers to do the same. This was an intentional strategy on the part of the FLV designer recognizing that the students who engaged in this type of ministry with their peers on campus may very well consider professional ministry as a vocation. The designers described their hopes for the Lilly Leaders in this way:

We expect to see, in the long-run, Lilly Leaders who serve their local faith communities actively, either as involved members or as lay or ordained leaders . . . we do not expect all Lilly Leaders to move into ministry as a career. However, we do expect to see varieties of leadership in faith communities from students who have served as Lilly Leaders. (Massey, 2001)

FLV has invested and continues to invest significant time, energy, and financial resources into these peer ministers. In conversations with them, it is easy to understand the impact that such an investment has had on students' vocational development. More than a few of the Lilly Leaders have indicated an interest in pursuing professional ministry and allied helping professions as a result of their participation as Lilly Leaders.

Not surprisingly, the Lilly Leader program itself has evolved over time. Lilly Leaders are now known as ALIVE team members, an acronym created by the students, which stands for Active Leaders In Vocational Exploration. ALIVE team members are now exclusively ministering within the Residence Halls. While having Lilly Leaders in a variety of offices across campus did yield some benefit, it was observed over the first few years that the most effective peer ministry was happening in the residence halls and that the Lilly Leaders assigned to other campus locations were often underutilized or a redundancy in those areas where vocational exploration was already being introduced through the work of the full time professional staff in those offices. For that reason, ALIVE leaders were concentrated exclusively in the Residence Halls where their work seems to have had the greatest impact upon the students. Residence halls are important spaces for engaging students in vocational exploration since it is where students spend a significant amount of time when they are not in classes.

According to the current ALIVE team supervisor, the peer ministry provided by team members gives students an opportunity to explore vocation in creative and non-threatening ways outside the classroom. Some of those creative ways include arranging opportunities for “conversations with peers about topics of faith, about topics that are meaningful, current events, whatever it might be . . . they are doing the work of vocation, and helping students figure out who they’re called to be and where they’re called to go, [although] they may not come right out and say it” (personal communication, October 27, 2008). The ALIVE team members used everyday conversations to encourage their peers to think about vocational questions. These conversations with peers in the residence halls

allowed FLV to introduce vocational exploration literally where the students live. For that reason, the ALIVE team has created a key structure for FLV to encourage, equip, and inspire to students to engage in vocational exploration outside the classroom.

Nevertheless, as effective as FLV's co-curricular programs, like the ALIVE team and the ministry internship program, were for creating a sustainable structure for the exploration of vocation, the designers of FLV recognized that curricular structures were crucial in order to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus.

Evolution of the Curricular Structure of FLV

Much like the evolution of the co-curricular aspects of FLV, the strategy for incorporating the exploration of vocation on the curricular side saw its share of strategic and programmatic shifts. One of the first hopes articulated by FLV was to create a variety of new courses and to adapt existing course to incorporate the exploration of vocation. However, FLV faced two major obstacles in attempting to implement their ambitious curricular strategy. The first major obstacle was timing. FLV was beginning just as the core curriculum was being revised. The core curriculum revision demanded a good deal of extra work from an already overworked faculty, including the need to redesign courses and design new courses to fit the goals of the revised core curriculum. To ask professors to then develop or revise new course on top of that was asking a lot. Commenting on the original curricular strategy for FLV, its unfortunate timing, and resulting lackluster response from faculty, the Director reflected:

Some of the ideas we had might sort of objectively be good ideas, but they didn't set the moment in history we were in. [Our original ideas for curriculum development] didn't actually, when we tested them out, didn't fit Saint Norbert, or

Saint Norbert at that moment in time. And so some things we had to change. And one of them was the idea if we just threw enough money at the faculty they'd design all these courses and the reality was, no they wouldn't if: (a) they didn't think it was ever going to get taught anyway and (b) they didn't think that they knew enough about vocation to do so and (c) I got a dream course that I want to develop and I don't have the time to do that one, so why am I going to do yours for you? (personal communication, October 28, 2008)

So the initial strategy for creating a whole host of course on vocational exploration did not materialize. Overburdened faculty along with suspicion that the courses wouldn't get taught anyway prevented the curricular strategy from getting off the ground. The leaders of FLV realized that they needed to put their efforts into creating a common language that supported initiatives to advance efforts toward vocational discernment in order to build a curricular structure for the program.

I began this chapter with a discussion of the early programmatic design of FLV. I then presented the major co-curricular structural elements of FLV. I continued with a discussion of the initial failures in establishing a curricular structure for FLV. I now conclude with FLV's recognition of the need to create a common language of vocational exploration as the final structural element for FLV. Once the language was established on campus, FLV could begin to address the cultural elements involved in the implementation of FLV, which I begin to discuss at the conclusion of this section.

The Importance of Establishing a Common Language for the Exploration of Vocation

The major challenge to the original curricular strategy had centered on faculty misperceptions and an overall lack of understanding around the notion of vocation. It became clear early on that some exploration of vocation among the faculty would be a

crucial, if obvious, first step in order to have a vibrant curricular component to the FLV initiative. To that end, FLV began to offer a summer seminar for faculty to explore more deeply, and in the context of community, this notion of vocation and implications it may have for their teaching, research, and even for their own vocational exploration.

According to the faculty liaison for FLV, the summer retreat seminars were a crucial program for creating this kind of culture of vocation:

I would start with the retreat seminars from my end for creating the culture of vocation. We had six years of these summer seminars that focused on personal calling. And what struck me from the very first one, Mark, is that people I think really appreciated the opportunity to come together and to think about what they're doing through the language of call and vocation. . . . I think it helped them see what they're doing beyond just, I'm doing a job or raising my family, I'm contributing to something that's truly worth while, that's going to make a difference in people's lives, particularly with the students. (personal communication, October 22, 2008)

By emphasizing vocation, and giving faculty a chance to get away from their everyday world, participating faculty saw vocational exploration as personally useful and a potentially powerful concept for their teaching.

The faculty liaison for FLV described the depth and quality of the faculty seminars saying "from the beginning, [I was] surprised how deep the sharing was" and it offered faculty and eventually staff "a chance to see one another in a different way." The summer retreat seminars were held about a mile from campus at the Norbertine abbey. The format allowed participants to step out of their roles on campus and reminded people that they were about something collectively. A true sense of a community was forming around this shared exploration of vocation. The summer retreat seminars "changed their vocabulary and . . . more often you would hear people using the language of call." A

common experience of the summer retreat seminar on vocation and a common language around call helped to forge a more cohesive sense of shared purpose through FLV.

On the co-curricular side, FLV ran into some similar challenges of needing to broaden and deepen the notion of vocation for students before they could fruitfully explore the topic in any sustained and meaningful way. Just using the very word vocation in promotional materials could be both scary and off-putting for the students.

The use of “faith language” in general provoked a similar fear in students that FLV was trying to tell them what to believe, how to behave, and maybe even what they should do with their lives, rather than presuming, in good faith, that FLV was there to help them in an authentic personal search giving them access to a wisdom tradition, the support of a community, and providing a broadminded approach to the exploration of vocation. To help appeal to the broadest possible population of students, FLV needed to use language that had resonance for both students who affiliated with a particular faith tradition and those who did not. To that end, many of the students, faculty, and staff that I interviewed mentioned Michael Himes’ (2002) “three key questions” and Frederick Buechner’s (1973) formulation of vocation, as useful questions that were not overtly “religious” in tone and resonated with students identifying with any or no particular religious tradition. Speaking on this particular challenge for FLV, the director of student programming commented:

If you talk about God, [some students] are going to be out the door. But they can latch onto these [Himes’ three key and Buechner’s] questions. Then for others who regard faith as a huge piece of it, by talking about faith and God, those [questions] will be new connections for them. (personal communication, October 27, 2008)

Buechner's (1973) formulation of vocation and Himes' (2002) three key questions allowed receptivity to discussions of vocational exploration that religious discussions did not allow among many students.

Even for the peer ministers on the ALIVE team who were charged with leading much of the FLV programming targeted toward students, the use of faith language was a challenge. When they would use too much "religious talk," they alienated a larger group of students. At the same time, not using any faith basis for the theological exploration of vocation was limiting. The supervisor for the peer ministers reflected upon the challenge this way: "I think what was happening in years past is they would stick at the surface level for so long . . . [and so, now] we're talking about our faith" (personal communication, October 27, 2008). By asking helpful, relevant, and non-threatening questions and by giving the students a common language and a way to think about vocation, FLV encouraged student to explore vocation in a way that was neither too religious nor so vacuous as to be devoid of meaning and depth.

In summary, the key structural factors of FLV which supported this culture of vocation consisted of educational programming in the co-curricular and curricular side of student life. On the co-curricular side, the ALIVE team and ministry internships provided attractive opportunities for students to engage in vocational reflection outside the classroom. On the curricular side, the faculty and staff development efforts, including faculty/staff retreats, book studies, and grant monies for developing vocations related courses, assisted in creating a structural component to FLV that brought the classroom into FLV's efforts to cultivate a vibrant culture of vocational exploration on campus. All

these programming elements of FLV helped to create structures on campus that assisted student, faculty, and staff in their exploration of vocation.

In addition to the structural components that have contributed to creating a common language for the exploration of vocation on campus, FLV recognized both the need and crucial opportunity to engage the existing campus culture, especially the nascent efforts that were underway to recover the Norbertine tradition at Saint Norbert College, in a deep exploration of vocation both individually and as an institution. In the next sections, I will explore the cultural factors impacting the evolution of FLV beginning with a discussion of how FLV needed to adapt to the culture on campus. Eventually, FLV's success with raising the question of exploring one's personal vocation prompted the larger question of the institutional call of Saint Norbert College. I will conclude the section with a discussion of how the exploration of institutional vocation helped to embed vocational exploration within the culture of the college.

Cultural Factors Impacting the Evolution of Faith, Learning, and Vocation

A key learning shared by many of the PTEV initiatives was that cultivating a culture of vocation provided the best environment for students, as well as faculty and staff, to explore and sustain conversation around the notion of vocation. In this chapter, I first note the shift in FLV's focus from a series of programs that encouraged individuals to consider the possibility of a call to religious life to a more broad based strategy of cultivating a culture of vocation on campus where vocation was explored in a deep and meaningful ways by all members of the Saint Norbert College community. Then, I explore how Saint Norbert College went about cultivating a culture of vocation on their

campus. Finally, I narrate how FLV's impact upon the campus culture led the College to an exploration of the institution's vocation as the only Catholic college founded in the Norbertine tradition.

*FLV's Shift of Focus from Vocational Programming to Cultivating a
Culture of Vocation on Campus*

Looking at the original goals for FLV articulated in 2000 and comparing them with the four main areas of focus outlined 8 years later, it is evident that the FLV initiative has evolved significantly over time. The goals of the FLV program as articulated in 2008 were:

1. Helping students connect their faith and life choices
 2. Providing opportunities for students to explore ministry as a possible calling
 3. Exploring the concept of vocation with faculty and staff
 4. Providing opportunities to reflect on the institutional vocation of the college
- (FLV, 2008)

The goals of FLV as stated in its 2000 annual report were just two: (a) assisting all students to more intentionally connect their religious understandings and values with their life choices; and (b) identifying and preparing an increased number of qualified ordained and lay leaders for formal church communities. FLV's focus remained on the students, encouraging, equipping, and inspiring them in their exploration of vocation. However, the program's evolution caused the focus to move from promoting specific vocations of professional ministry to a broader appeal to help all members of the college community to explore the notion of vocation. Additionally, FLV recognized the importance of

faculty/staff development and exploring the concept of vocation with them. Finally, FLV recognized the importance of exploring the institutional vocation of the college in tandem with supporting community members in the exploration of their personal vocations.

In order to make this shift in focus, FLV concentrated their efforts, not unlike many other Catholic PTEV colleges, more intentionally on cultivating a culture of vocation on campus and not just providing a string of programs and activities that promoted vocational exploration. This shift in focus away from just creative programming to the bold and broad based goal of cultivating a culture of vocation is evident in the progress report given to Lilly in 2008. According to the report, FLV was concerned with creating “a campus culture in which all members of the College community are welcomed into a lively, inclusive, prayerful, and ongoing public dialogue about the connections between faith, spirituality, and our individual and communal vocations” (Welch, 2008).

FLV's Approach to Engaging the Campus Culture at Saint Norbert College

In order to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus, FLV needed to do more than just offer a comprehensive programming structure encompassing both the curricular and co-curricular. FLV leadership realized that it needed to both adapt to and challenge the existing culture on campus at Saint Norbert College. They believed that the best way to do that was to engage the campus community in an ongoing dialogue concerning the nature of vocation. The questions and conversations surrounding vocational exploration, by definition, had profound implication for all the members of the community who chose to engage with it. The fact that Lilly presented a provocative question in promoting

theological exploration of vocation helped FLV to engage a wide audience interested in joining the conversation. Student, faculty, and staff alike commented on how the questions surrounding vocation were relevant, thought provoking, and conversation generating. One informant reflected on why the exploration of vocation was so fruitful for Saint Norbert College: "I think that part of our success is that Lilly hit on a really good question that was timely in terms of ourselves and Catholic colleges and universities trying to figure out better who [we] are, and what [we] are about" (personal communication, October 22, 2008).

The timing of the PTEV grants coincided with a larger trend within Catholic colleges and universities that found themselves struggling to both define and differentiate themselves with respect to their religious heritage, mission, and their unique role within Catholic higher education. Essentially, the Lilly grant put into clearer focus an overarching question that loomed large over the community, namely: what does it mean to be a Catholic college?

The question of Catholic identity and efforts to answer the question of what it means to be a college founded in the Norbertine tradition drew a wide variety of faculty and staff into the conversation, many of whom chose to engage with the topic through the offerings in FLV. As the Director noted:

I think [the questions raised in vocational exploration] make sense on a personal level, you know? How do you discover what you are called to personally or institutionally? And what's asked of you? What's yours to contribute? How do you juggle when multiple things that seem yours to contribute compete with each other? I just think the questions resonate on a deep level for people and so that's part of our success, we get to work with a good topic. (personal communication, October 28, 2008)

Inviting faculty and staff to explore vocation was somehow less threatening than many of the questions surrounding the religious identity of the college. Nevertheless, the topic of religious identity and the importance of the Norbertine heritage were discussed as it became clear over time that talking about personal vocations with respect to one's role and identity as a member of the Saint Norbert College community paved the way to explore the idea of "institutional vocation," i.e., what does it mean to say that Saint Norbert College is a Catholic college grounded in the Norbertine tradition?

*From Personal Vocation to Institutional Vocation—Recovering
Their Norbertine Roots*

FLV helped the Norbertines be more Norbertine, and become more Norbertine. Perhaps the most significant evolution of FLV and its greatest impact upon the culture of the college was its gradual focus upon "institutional vocation." As members of the Saint Norbert College community began reflecting upon their individual vocations, it begged the question of the vocation of the larger institution. That, indeed, institutions, if they are truly following an inspired vision for service, also evolve in their understanding of call, that is, how they are uniquely situated to serve. This sentiment clamored for attention the longer that FLV was in operation and its urgency was amplified by the crossroads that Saint Norbert College was experiencing regarding its Norbertine heritage, Catholic identity, and the future of the college.

The Conference on Institutional Vocation took place at Saint Norbert College from October 23-25, 2008. The conference guided representatives from 11 of the 20 Catholic PTEV colleges in exploring:

- Their institutions' growing understanding of vocation
- Connections between current institutional vocation and the charism of founding orders
- Intersections of personal and institutional vocations (FLV, 2008a)

Presenters shared their stories of how their PTEV initiatives evolved on campus and the implications that their experiences had for their understanding, communicating, and celebrating their institution's unique vocation. Topics that were discussed ranged from reclaiming the founding story of each of the colleges involved in PTEV to reconnecting with the particular charism of the religious tradition which guides the institution as they sought to cultivate a culture for the exploration of institutional vocation.

Some of the key insights shared by conference participants focused upon how each college understood their unique contribution Catholic higher education. For Saint Norbert College, exploring Institutional Vocation afforded an opportunity to reconnect with their Norbertine spiritual foundations and to reclaim and retell the founding story of Saint Norbert College. As a result, a new Center for Norbertine Studies was developed on campus and perhaps, most significantly, the office for Mission and Heritage took a more central role in the leadership of the institution, elevating the head of Mission and Heritage to Executive Vice President with significant resources and a charge to re-envision and communicate a revised Mission Statement to the wider community that put the Norbertine, Catholic, and Liberal Arts traditions front and center. Additionally, the new Mission Statement highlighted treasured Saint Norbert College traditions that derive

directly from the key aspects of Norbertine spirituality, *communio*. The Mission

Statement describes *communio* in this way:

Our community is rooted in the Norbertine ideal of *communio*, which is characterized by mutual esteem, trust, sincerity, faith and responsibility. *Communio* is lived through open dialogue, communication, consultation and collaboration. *Communio* encourages us to respond individually and collectively to the needs of our local and global communities. (Saint Norbert College, 2008b)

The focus on the Norbertine, Catholic, and Liberal Arts traditions of the college have helped to continue campus conversations around Institutional Vocation and have given the college a common language and understanding of what it means to be Saint Norbert College. Most significant, the discussions around Institutional Vocation puts into clearer focus what fidelity to the Mission and Founding Vision of the college looks like in 21st century. The conversation around Institutional Vocation, as attested to by the other colleges participating in the conference, has been transformative for the Saint Norbert College community, encouraging continued dialogue and exploration of what it means to be a member of Saint Norbert College, as faculty, students, and staff members.

According to one of the earliest collaborators with the program, FLV did not start out with a specific emphasis on Norbertine spirituality, nor a specific desire to explore the life of Saint Norbert in an intentional ways. While it may be true that exploring the college's Norbertine roots may not have been in front and center at the time of writing the grant proposal, it is clear that as a result of getting the grant, FLV gravitated toward a deeper exploration of the college's Norbertine heritage. For example, the faculty retreats did not start out with a focus on Norbertine spirituality. Over time, the faculty retreats shifted from a focus on personal vocation to concentrate more upon institutional (or

corporate) vocation. The shift to a stronger focus on Norbertine heritage with the advent of FLV was remarkable. As one faculty member reflected:

I've been here ten years, Mark, the first six or seven years I never heard a word about it. I mean I didn't have a clue who Norbert was. And you know, honestly concluded that he must not have mattered because nobody every talked about him. I mean the Norbertines were very vague on him and any time you ask, you didn't get much. (personal communication, October 23, 2008)

The downplaying of the Norbertine heritage of the college has a long history that parallels trends in Catholic higher education to both compete with and conform to the norms of "aspirant" non-Catholic peer colleges for prestige and influence with the world of higher education. As one of my informants described, Saint Norbert College, not unlike other Catholic colleges, downplayed their Catholic identity, thinking that it might deter their ability to attract the best and brightest professors and students.

FLV gave Saint Norbert College both the resources and the opportunity to explore institutional identity at not only a crucial juncture in the college's history but at an important time for the local Norbertine Abbey which founded the college as a response to the needs of their local community, a trait typical of Norbertine spirituality. In the context of increasing secularization of Catholic colleges, Saint Norbert College had some soul searching to do and it appears that its sponsoring Abbey benefited greatly from this deeper search for more clarity of purpose and a rediscovering of its unique identity.

We have helped [the Abbey] figure themselves out as they have helped us figure ourselves out. From the Abbey's angle—this is going to sound crass for the moment, but I don't mean it to be crass—I think some of the financial help they've given us over time has been really important to sustain certain programs, to move ahead in certain ways. But I think the thinking that's been done on this side of the river—in regard to what does it mean to be Norbertine, what does it mean to be a Norbertine institution—has helped them kind of figure out ohhhh.

Because I have found most of the Norbertines very reticent to talking about themselves or about the order or what attracted them. (personal communication, October 23, 2008)

The Communio Course

FLV has cultivated this resurgence of interest in Norbertine heritage and spirituality which precipitated the creation of a course for students introducing their “three master traditions”: the Liberal Arts traditions, the Catholic traditions, and the Norbertine tradition. The course is currently being piloted with a smaller subpopulation of the freshmen class but is being considered as a mandatory class for all freshmen in the near future. The Communio course, as it is called, was mentioned numerous times by students and it was not uncommon for them to cite with some facility and familiarity the significance of the three master traditions and their central importance at Saint Norbert College. One professor describes how the deeper search for Norbertine identity and spirituality has been integrated into the student experience.

And one of the moments of grace, I think—and we have this pilot course—Communio, we hope to make it a common course. The first six weeks deal with the common readings and everything, and it’s on the Catholic intellectual tradition, the Norbertine traditions, and the Liberal Arts tradition. (personal communication, October 23, 2008)

The Communio course has been offered to a select group of incoming freshmen to introduce them to the Catholic, Norbertine, and Liberal Arts traditions. It also serves to introduce them to the benefits of being part of a centuries old intellectual and spiritual tradition.

One way that the Communio course tries to communicate the value of a Norbertine education is by taking them for a tour of the local Abbey. Even the most

ardent supporters of the Communio course and the Norbertine Heritage were somewhat skeptical of that strategy but were pleasantly surprised to witness the students' openness to this experience of history and tradition come alive. As one early supporter of FLV and the Communio course observed:

Well, part of the Norbertine section [of Communio] is we take the students over to the Abbey. From where I sat, I thought: this is going to be a bust. I thought: [the students] are going to go, they're going to hear these old people talk about Norbertines, then they're going to pray the liturgy, and they're not going to like it —this is how out of touch I am! The students loved it. It was a high point of the course for them. And in fact, the students last year said: make sure you have more time [at the Abbey] next year. (personal communication, October 23, 2008)

The Communio course is one of the key ways in which students are literally introduced to the Norbertine tradition as it is currently being lived out at the local Abbey, the founding Abbey of the College. Communio is a dramatic and tangible example of FLV impact upon the Saint Norbert College curriculum.

The Impact of the Exploration of Institutional Vocation Upon the Campus Culture

Once FLV recognized the power and potential of reconnecting with the founding story of the college, the faculty retreats began to center around Norbert's story and the Norbertine charism. This shift in focus inspired and motivated faculty and staff members who had been working at the college for years but did not know how or why the college was founded in the first place. Focusing upon the unique history of the college, the charism of the Norbertines, and the contributions of Norbertine spirituality just created a desire to know more.

Faculty and staff expressed interest in learning more about the college's Norbertine roots which led FLV to promote Heritage tours, where faculty and staff

members were invited to tour Norbertine Abbeys after participating in workshops exploring the Norbertine tradition. All this movement was occurring on campus at the same time that the Norbertines at the founding Abbey were reclaiming a focus upon what was unique about their charism. As the one Norbertine shared:

Well, it's interesting because I think the Norbertines, for a while, had lost their focus. Now, light bulbs came on for all of us during our last year during our heritage tour last summer, because in Europe—again, where abbeys are closer, they talk a lot more to one another—they decided that they were going to put out our four main traditions: action, contemplation, stability and communio. . . . Well, it's so interesting that we were using the exact same four on the campus. So we're on track. FLV has addressed all of [the four main Norbertine traditions] through the book discussions, the retreats, a time to contemplate. (personal communication, October 28, 2008)

The Communio course, Heritage tours, and a variety of other initiatives inspired through FLV and the ensuing exploration of Institutional Vocation helped the Norbertines be more Norbertine, and become more Norbertine. Some of the more practical ways that it did this was through programming which encouraged the exploration of their four main spiritual pillars of action, contemplation, stability, and communio. For faculty and staff, this spiritual formation was most evident in FLV's summer retreats, books studies, and heritage tours. For students, a variety of FLV programs promoted the Norbertine tradition but most notably through the ALIVE team with their work in the residence halls by simply creating the time and a sacred space for people to reflect.

Toward the promotion of action, Saint Norbert College is still developing this piece of their program. While service has always been a central part of the college's mission and outreach, it is just starting to get more attention as to how it is integrated into the entire educational experience. A new center for Community Service Learning is just

being formed on campus to introduce community service into the classroom in a more formal way. Norbertines historically, as part of their unique charism that includes a vow of stability, have always sunk deep roots into their local communities. Indeed, the founding of Saint Norbert College itself was an outgrowth of a perceived local need for an institution of higher learning to serve the local population. Building on these long-standing relationships with the community has facilitated the process of establishing a broad based and more formalized structure for incorporating service learning into the classroom at the college.

Perhaps most prominent in its manifestation and celebration of Norbertine spirituality, FLV has been an educational vehicle and major catalyst for building what the Norbertines refer to as their central charism, the promotion of *communio*. As discussed in Chapter 2, *communio* connotes more than just the building a community, but forming a community centered upon common values and a commitment to one another's growth in living out of those values. At Saint Norbert College, *communio*, in addition to the *Communio* course, is incarnated and celebrated in a variety of ways. Most noteworthy is the "Holy Hour" which is observed campus-wide once a week from 10-11 a.m. on Wednesdays. All departments have agreed not to schedule any classes or meetings during that time and the community gathers to celebrate a common theme, or value, of the college, through word and song in the campus chapel. While not all attend the Holy Hour and there are pockets of resistance seeing it as an attempt to "force religion" upon them, many areas of the campus are represented at these weekly gatherings and leadership of the reflection and worship is shared among departments.

Reflecting upon events these like the Holy Hour that FLV promotes, the Vice President for Mission and Heritage shared:

FLV has been a huge community-builder in many ways. Directly, by helping people understand the importance of relationship, through the retreats and the book discussions. But indirectly, by helping people understand our mission, by helping people feel at home, by helping people feel that they really can contribute and be a part of this institution, and feel like their life here is their vocation. That it's not at odds, that it really is a big box that people can fit into and can contribute. (personal communication, October 24, 2008)

For the faculty, FLV did more than just inspire a values based environment and engender a warm feeling of community. It prompted some serious personal vocational reflection in the context of an ever clear sense of Saint Norbert College's institutional vocation. Some participants shared that not only were they affirmed that Saint Norbert College offered a hospitable environment for them to teach and conduct their research, but was truly the place to which they were called. Others, upon understanding more deeply what Saint Norbert College was all about, decided that it was not the right environment for them. The director of FLV offered the example of a Saint Norbert College employee who recognized that his true call was to coach high school football. This sort of discernment, while a loss for the university community, was seen as a success for FLV in that it helped to equip and inspire members of the community to conduct authentic vocational exploration.

Examples of vocational discernment like these bring us to the final theme raised by the case study, namely the role of effective and collaborative leadership in FLV's successes. Undertaking an open exploration of the college's own institutional vocation required not only courage and vision but the backing of higher administration and the

involvement and continued participation of many constituencies on campus. FLV had support from higher administration from the very beginning of the grant writing process. Additionally, it involved a broad array of faculty, staff, and students early on in its implementation. FLV's influence on vocational exploration reached all the way up to the Trustee level of leadership culminating in a well attended and well received retreat focusing upon the vocation of the Trustee at Saint Norbert College.

Agentic Factors Involved in FLV's Success

In this final section, I will explore the crucial role that collaborative, flexible, and creative leadership had upon FLV's success. I begin with a discussion of how the design and implementation involved multiple constituencies on campus and enjoyed the continued support of higher administration throughout the grant funding period. I continue with a discussion of the flexibility and creativity demonstrated by FLV leadership to both adapt to and also effectively challenge the campus culture. I conclude with an examination of FLV's creative and compassionate leadership upon the experience of student participants in FLV.

The Crucial Role of Leadership in FLV

Clearly one of the early successes of FLV stems from the actions of the individuals involved with the design and early stages of implementation of the grant. One of their key strategies was to involve a wide range of constituencies from various departments across campus in the design and implementation of the FLV initiative. This collaborative approach cultivated a shared sense of ownership and a commitment to FLV in its earliest stages.

I think one thing [that contributed to the FLV's success] is the fact that so many people were involved in writing the grant. . . . because we designed the process as highly consultative, there was already a fairly broad sense of ownership. (personal communication, October 28, 2008)

FLV leadership realized that the decisions about how to spend \$2 million would be of great concern to many constituencies on campus, so it wisely included as many voices as possible. Not surprisingly, the significant resources that the program had its disposal went a long way toward facilitating FLV's acceptance and success in engaging students, faculty, and staff. The \$2 million grant was by far the single largest grant that the college had ever received. Also, quite helpful was the fact that Saint Norbert College received all \$2 million up front in one lump sum, allowing them to plan big from the beginning, grabbing the attention and respect of faculty and staff, and opening doors that otherwise might have remained closed without such generous financial backing.

Perhaps the most important factor in the success of FLV, which was commented on by almost every informant who was interviewed for this study, was the choice of leadership. FLV recognized the need for both co-curricular and curricular components for their initiative to have the greatest influence for creating a culture of vocation on campus. To that end, Julie Massey was invited at the beginning of the grant funding period to oversee the budget for FLV and quickly was entrusted to supervise various aspects of the initiative with primary responsibility for the co-curricular elements of the program. Paul Wadell, who was part of the broad based collaboration that designed the earliest incarnation of FLV, was invited to take the role of faculty liaison for the program. Both Julie and Paul garnered the respect of colleagues throughout campus and quickly became

the face of the program. Their personalities, by mutual admission, were complementary and they “both moved pretty well in different realms.” While there may be a danger in resting the leadership of a new initiative upon a few charismatic personalities because of concerns over sustainability, it seems clear that Julie and Paul’s co-leadership of the program went well beyond just their affable personalities. They both offered a highly respect, consistent presence within the curricular and co-curricular leadership roles, exhibiting an openness to new ideas and an eagerness to invite more colleagues into the ongoing campus conversation around vocational reflections. The quality and consistency in FLV leadership were major factors in establishing FLV as a vibrant part of Saint Norbert College’s campus culture. FLV’s skillful leadership was particularly evident in how FLV leadership approached the resistance that FLV encountered in the campus culture.

*Resistance to FLV in the Campus Culture and the Response
of FLV Leadership*

Naturally, FLV encountered its share of resistance too as it sought to engage the campus culture in an ongoing dialogue around vocation. Some of the pushback, especially from faculty and staff, centered on a fear that FLV was promoting some covert agenda to proselytize them into the Catholic faith. As one informant put it, the resistance to FLV was often because people mistakenly thought that FLV was “telling people what to believe.” This particular fear is certainly a distortion of both the intentions and the practices of FLV, according to the leaders of FLV whom I interviewed. However, these

questions about FLV's intentions raised concerns over FLV's promotion of particular values over others. In the words of the FLV director:

I think there's a broader question in higher education generally, religious higher education, and Catholic higher education more specifically, about how much are we trying to *form* values. I think there's some real live debate over whether that is our role. Because that assumes that we have a vision of a good . . . it doesn't assume the direction in a confined way, like you can only do this, you can only be Catholic, you can only have this job. It doesn't assume that but it assumes that you could move toward the good or you could move otherwise. (personal communication, October 22, 2008)

Not surprisingly, some faculty members, who were unfamiliar with the Catholic tradition, were not immediately comfortable with the influence of the Catholic tradition upon Saint Norbert College. Other faculty members who were familiar with the Catholic traditions also questioned the level of appropriate influence the Catholic identity should have on how the college functioned. FLV leadership understood, listened, and responded to this concern. They sought creative ways through which the entire campus community could discuss these broader issues of institutional values and purpose that were prompted through an exploration of institutional vocation. Ultimately, the Saint Norbert community found common ground in discussing the Catholic intellectual tradition and how that impacted Saint Norbert College as a liberal arts institution. Additionally, FLV leadership recognized that faculty and staff were generally receptive to and comfortable with the Norbertine influence upon the college, perhaps because of their positive experiences with Norbertines on campus and their overall appreciation of the Norbertines' contributions to the college. FLV leadership wisely advanced the conversation of institutional, as well as personal, vocation by appealing to Norbertine values and spiritual traditions.

FLV leadership used the grant funding as an opportunity to promote a vision and set of values that would guide and support the community in authentic vocational discernment while at the same time allowing freedom for individual interpretation and application of the theological exploration of vocation. Some faculty members resisted the call for new and revised classes that incorporated the idea of vocation into the coursework. As mentioned earlier, the timing for building these new courses was not ideal, given the demands of the core curriculum revisions underway. Faculty members were asked to attend to both the demands of the new core curriculum and, at the same time, to incorporate the notion of vocation into their coursework. These demands proved to be too much. In the original proposal, FLV envisioned that they would “create or redesign twelve, eighteen whatever it was, some ridiculous number of newly redesigned courses.” Those courses never materialized in that fashion but vocation was slowly woven into the curriculum through a gradual education of the faculty regarding the concept of vocation and the invitation to bring this new learning into their classrooms in creative ways that made the most sense for each particular discipline.

FLV leadership faced challenges in the development of the co-curricular piece of the Program as well. The first bold innovation that FLV leadership decided to make pertained to the choice of using peer ministers in the residence halls as opposed to professional faculty or staff. These peer ministers were undergraduate students working with other undergraduate students helping them to explore vocation. While peer ministers often have immediate credibility in working with students because they are sharing a common college experience together, one obvious challenge is their limited life

experience beyond those “critical years” (Parks, 1986) of college that can add perspective and sometimes a wisdom that only comes with life experience further down the road. In the words of the ALIVE team supervisor:

But also I think a challenge is that I typically have a pretty young team. This year I think I have older students—two seniors and some juniors. It’s hard, when they’re not necessarily at the maturity level of a junior and senior, to put on kind of deeper programming for their younger peers. It’s a different dynamic. (personal communication, October 27, 2008)

In addition to their limited experience, another challenge faced by FLV’s leadership was the “quality issue” among peer ministers. While the quality and depth of the programming offered through the ALIVE team improved significantly, according to their supervisor, ongoing quality control and a system for holding students accountable seemed necessary:

I think one of the challenges in my role has been the quality issue. I think it’s gone way up . . . that’s been a challenge, to try to deepen the quality of the program in a way that still respects where they are in their journeys as students, and that they’re still learning. But also pushes them. (personal communication, October 27, 2008)

Perhaps the greatest challenge, though, across the board when trying to engage students, particularly of this overworked and high achieving generation, is the scarcity of time in students’ busy schedules. Fruitful exploration of vocation needs time, and a good bit of it. Exploring vocation, of all activities, demands a regular time commitment for those who would enter into it in any deep and meaningful way. FLV leadership appreciated the time pressure that the students are under and tried to respond in creative and compassionate ways. In the words of one FLV administrator:

I think the time issue is a huge challenge. And it’s a continual frustration for me, and it—honestly, it makes me sad to see the schedules that students are leading,

and basically being forced to lead. . . . I worked hard as a student, but I don't remember feeling like them. They just come to meetings so stressed out because of everything that's required of them, both in class and extra-curricular [activities], and all this stuff that they're involved in. But at the same time, when we think about it, I wasn't on the phone with my mom an hour every single day. You know, I wasn't texting people all the time. Some of that stuff just takes up so much time. And so I think that's a huge challenge because there are students who we know would want to come to the programs but they can't. We're seeing the weekly programs not working, so [we are asking ourselves] what else can we do that will work and that will meet the needs of the students in a way that's meaningful and makes sense. That's a huge challenge. (personal communication, October 27, 2008)

FLV leadership recognized the importance of addressing this challenge. Students need to make space/time in their lives if vocational exploration is to be most meaningful and effective (Palmer, 2000). They need to engage in reflection on a regular and ongoing basis, valuing contemplation and spaces for silence (Neafsey, 2006) Yet, it is exceedingly difficult to carve out the time needed for reflection if students are continually overwhelmed with schedules that are simply too busy. This challenge is not unique to FLV, or to Saint Norbert College. Indeed, it seems to be a familiar refrain on college campuses seeking to educate this generation and a point underscored by Arnett's (2004) analysis of the emerging adulthood as discussed in Chapter 2.

Faith, Learning, and Vocation has looked at this cultural and generational challenge that mitigates against cultivating a culture of vocation and is trying to address it by leaning on the wisdom within their own Norbertine tradition through the creation of a sacred hour each week during which time everyone is asked to refrain from scheduling any meeting and all are invited to join in a communal celebration, hosted by a different department on campus every week. Although faculty realize that observing a weekly holy

hour will not single-handedly solve the problem of excessive busy-ness in students' lives, it does begin to create a culture on campus that values making space for reflection and gathering together as a community.

As one informant reflected, observing a sacred hour is a start, but certainly not a complete solution:

A lot of what [the ALIVE team] is doing is helping students carve out a space for quiet and for reflection. . . . I think common prayer is a way of looking at it, the sacred hour. But at the same time, I have a hard time getting my own ALIVE team students to go. I think in addition to being overrun and/or run-down and just too many things going on, there is a sort of a fear, on some level, of silence and of being quiet. They can't do it. Many of them just have a hard time. (personal communication, October 27, 2008)

As the supervisor of the ALIVE team reflects in her comments, one of the greatest leadership challenges that FLV faced was a culture of busyness: "I think there's a lot of conversation on campus about we're over-programmed, [and] I'm telling them to do a weekly program. But at the same time, how else do you build small communities without that weekly meeting time and carving out that space?" The ALIVE team members needed to find a way to engage students where they lived, in the residence halls, competing with a myriad of other activities, responsibilities, and distractions vying for their attention. Naturally, when competing with so many other demands on students' time, attendance at ALIVE team events was not always high and that was a cause of frustration. FLV leadership was consistent in telling their peer leaders that their impact upon students and the campus culture could not be judged solely by the number of students attending their programs.

In fact, perhaps the greatest evidence of FLV's effective leadership for vocational exploration can be seen in the impact upon the students who did take the time to participate. In the next section, I explore the impact that FLV had upon students using the voices of FLV student participants. Overall, the students whom I interviewed perceived their involvement with FLV to be a very positive experience that had significant influence upon both their understanding of vocation and the exploration of their own vocation.

FLV's Impact Upon the Students

The first and most obvious impact upon the students involved with FLV was the deepening and broadening of their understanding of vocation as evidenced by the student voices that follow in this chapter. As discussed in detail in Chapter 2, vocation is a rich concept that defies simple explanation, more akin to the theological notion of mystery than a concept with a clear and universally accepted definition. For many of the Catholic students, vocation needed to be understood more broadly than its popular understanding and colloquial usage, oftentimes reserved exclusively for those with a particular vocation to religious life. As one student explained, he "always thought of vocation as being a priest or a nun." After his participation in FLV, he now understands vocation as a more universal concept. As he put it, he knows that he is "called to be a man of faith, a man of service, now I just need to figure out where to go with that" (personal communication, October 26, 2008).

Other students spoke of their understanding of vocation, prior to their participation in FLV, as referring to a "state of life." In Catholic terms, this means that one is called a particular state of life: married, single, or religious; the choice to one of

these states of life is definitive, since they are mutually exclusive in the Catholic tradition. Through FLV, this student was introduced to a broader notion of vocation, seeing one's call as also pertaining to job and career choice. She admitted that she changed her major "a lot of times." And, she "just realized that there was like, a lot of deeper issues to look at and things to think about in regards to vocation." She credits her participation with FLV as helping her "gain the language" to engage and articulate this broadened and deepened understanding of vocation. For example, she reflected aloud upon her growing conviction that a sense of vocation impacts how someone works, not just what they do. She explains her insight into vocation this way:

But I think, like if I'm working at the nursing home and I call my CNA [Certified Nurse's Assistant] role a vocation, I'm going to go about it a lot differently than I would if I was just there to make money . . . sometimes I'm like, this is my vocation, I can't wait to go to work. And then my attitude is really different. (personal communication, October 26, 2008)

Her comments illustrate a common learning expressed by other student participants. Students realized through their participation in FLV that they found a deeper appreciation for the depth and breadth of vocation and how engaging in vocational exploration could be personally enriching for them. They came to see vocation not just as a religious concept but an eminently practical one for their lives.

The Faith, Learning, and Vocation Program, as the name suggests, has helped students to integrate their faith and learning in order to explore this idea of vocation because of the helpful co-curricular and curricular structures put in place to assist them in making this integration of faith, learning, and their vocational exploration. Some student voices below help to underscore this assertion. Clearly for some students, their

participation in FLV was motivated by a sense of wanting to work in and from a faith perspective, recognizing that there are many creative ways to bring their faith convictions and values to their work. For some who had a significant, ongoing level of involvement with FLV, say as either an ALIVE team member or ministry intern, vocation became a lens for them to understand, interpret, and perhaps even make meaning of their life experience. In other words, vocation became an integrated part of their faith perspective on the world. One student enthusiastically commented on how the frequency of her conversations about vocational topics increased, even permeated her life:

And now I feel like I'm at a point where I just see the word vocation just pop up everywhere. Like I'll be in a conversation with friends and I'll be talking about something and I can recognize something that they are doing is really a vocation for them. (personal communication, October 26, 2008)

For many of the students that I interviewed, their participation in FLV has had a clear impact on how they think about vocational choices and how they go about making vocational decisions. For some of the more involved students, they credit their participation in FLV as helping them affirm their life choices and sometimes challenge them to change their path. But most often the students seemed to gain a deeper conviction and commitment in wanting to listen for and pursue a life path that is informed by intentional reflection upon their growing sense of personal vocation. One student, when asked if she thought her participation in FLV gave her a clear idea of the direction her personal vocation, she gave this response:

A little better, but then again sometimes . . . like I'm an education major and I have been able to recognize that teaching is a vocation for me, because it's a gift, it's a passion that we need more in the world. But I also see other vocations within life, like a call to be a person of service to others and trying to figure out how that

will fit into my life post-college and in challenging times. And I also considered, like I am now considering doing a year of service after graduation too, just to explore that more. Because I think one thing I learned a lot from the service trips in Rochester was the immense value in having time to reflect and just how much more I took from the experience from having that reflection within the community . . . that's partly why I'm thinking about doing a year of service, just to have more time to actually think about an issue or to think about how it might touch my life or call me to, like make a difference in regards to like, throughout my life.
(personal communication, October 26, 2008)

Her commitment to seeking creative ways to serve following graduation was an almost universal sentiment expressed by the students. Naturally, not all students actually wind up being involved in full time service following college, but according to the FLV Director, she has seen a marked increase in the number of students who make decisions like commitment to full time service, often as a direct result of some experiences these students had in FLV.

Equally impressive is simply the quality and depth of the learning that students shared from their FLV experiences. One student spoke of how he now recognizes the challenge of balancing responsibilities and “everyday callings in life” as distinguished from that one lifelong calling. He reflected with a fragile confidence on his ability to juggle work and family demands asserting that “your primary vocation dictates the rest . . . how you wholeheartedly commit yourself to both [job and family].” Asked to define “primary vocation,” the student posited: “Your primary vocation defines who you are . . . What do you want to be remembered for? . . . Ultimately who do you want to be?” Another member of the same student focus groups offered his insight regarding the ongoing nature of discernment as a lifelong process saying: “vocation doesn’t have an end. It is a constant struggle.”

Many of the students shared that they recognize and now have a way to address their hunger for reflection and deeper conversations about exploring vocation in their own lives. They recognized the need for ongoing support in their vocational discernment. Many of them found crucial guidance and support for their ongoing vocational discernment through a consistent mentoring relationship. Some of them had mentors assigned to them and others sought mentors out on their own. One student reflected upon the impact that having a mentor had on her FLV experience:

I am like the poster child for mentors . . . I had to get this mentor, so I picked my philosophy professor from freshman year. I think we were supposed to meet like three times a semester or something. Well I like met with him like every week. And I really liked it and I really liked having a chance to like, I don't know, talk about my life and like reflect on things. We like rarely if ever actually talked about my job on the ALIVE Team. But it was a really good experience. So then when I came and I was working for the parish, I really missed that because we didn't have mentors. So I actually asked another professor to be my mentor even though I wasn't on the ALIVE Team anymore. . . . I just think it's so good. I think everyone should have a mentor, because it's just like . . . I don't know, you have to make a lot of big decisions when you're a college student. And you're like, trying to figure out who you are and what you want to do with your life. And you can do some of that reflecting on your own, but it's really helpful to me anyways, to get like an outside perspective on my life. (personal communication, October 26, 2008)

These comments are representative of the receptivity and enthusiasm of the student for their experience with mentoring. When asked if any other students had a similarly beneficial experience with mentoring, one student described the nature of his mentoring relationship this way:

Student: I completely agree. It's awesome. I have, now have the same mentor last year as this year. He was my theology teacher freshman year, which is still my favorite class. I still have the notes from that class and I'm not a very studious person. I don't have any other notes.

Interviewer: Who is that professor?

Student: Dr. _____. Yeah, he's just a great dude. And when we get together, it's just a fun time. We just go get a bite to eat or whatever.

Interviewer: Do you meet frequently?

Student: For sit down meetings it's only a few times a semester, but we see each other informally. But I don't know, and it's coming to the point now where I have a relationship where we can kind of like, start to challenge each other too. Like, recently we were just talking about things that were coming up in our lives and choices that we're trying to make. And it's like we're challenging each other, kind of walking through it together. So now we're kind of, I guess, mentoring each other in a way. And it's just . . .

Interviewer: So there's mutuality in the relationship?

Student: Right.

Virtually every student that I spoke with in a more formal mentoring relationship expressed how helpful it was for their vocational exploration. One student even shared that her primary motivations for taking a leadership role in FLV centered on the benefit that each ALIVE team member was provided with a mentor. Naturally, any student may seek out a mentor if they choose to do so, but having a formal mentoring component as part of the program has provided a helpful structure to support the development of the mentoring relationship and the students' ongoing vocational reflection. FLV recognized this value and provided modest financial resources to facilitate the process of mentoring. Another student describes how FLV has facilitated a comfortably informal, yet consistent, reliable and mutually beneficially mentoring relationship:

The [mentoring] meetings are just very informal, you know, at the beginning of the year they'll give you a whole packet of stuff you can talk about, these discussion questions or whatever. But it's never been that, it's just been, you

know, just talking about, oh how's life? How are your classes going and stuff like that, back and forth. (personal communication, October 26, 2008)

The informality in the description of this mentoring relationship belies the immense benefit the students relayed in having a professional adult mentor to encourage and guide them as they ask the bigger questions of life and begin to formulate dreams for their life following college. The student goes on to explain:

There's a level of trust I think there, because talking about just different things, anything from my relationships and stuff like that, faith, life questions and stuff like that. There's change in vocation, you know, constantly looking at what are you called to do. And [the mentor] has different vocations as he gets older too and what does he want to do and what does he have to do; just that kind of thing. So I think there's definitely mutuality in it. (personal communication, October 26, 2008)

When a mentor can build a rapport with a student and engage in some appropriate level of mutual self-disclosure with respect to vocational exploration, it normalized the process of vocational exploration for the student and gives them a real life context for understanding their own evolving sense of vocation. It also makes a not too subtle statement of how important vocational exploration is in the culture of that institution. The student concluded his reflections:

I think [involvement in a mentoring relationship] also gives you skills to interact with people who are on different levels, you know, not just your peer group, but people who are older than you. And I think it also is encouraging for later on, you know, that we have an opportunity, we can see what [our mentors] provided to us and hopefully we'll be able to provide that later on down the road. (personal communication, October 26, 2008)

Conclusions

The benefits of these mentoring relationships, like the one so poignantly described above, are emblematic of the value of FLV to Saint Norbert College's campus culture.

FLV has transformed the culture of Saint Norbert College into a more cohesive community that shares a common language of vocational exploration and a renewed appreciation for their religious heritage. FLV's programmatic structures provide opportunities for the exploration of vocation, both in and out of the classroom. The prior campus culture at Saint Norbert College, which minimized or outright ignored the college's religious heritage as irrelevant, now actively engages with the Catholic intellectual and Norbertine traditions, valuing them alongside the liberal arts tradition as foundational and formative to Saint Norbert College's unique identity. Finally, FLV's creative and committed leadership expertly guided the evolution of FLV to both accommodate and challenge the campus culture, ultimately creating a hospitable space where vocational exploration is valued and explored throughout the campus community.

CHAPTER 6

COMPARING THE CASE STUDIES

Comparing the cases studies can be done in a variety of ways. Perhaps the most logical way to conduct this comparison is by comparing and contrasting the Programs using the theoretical framework that emerged from the case studies as outlined in Chapters 4 and 5. In this chapter, I will compare and contrast the significant findings contributing to the successes of both colleges from both case studies using the familiar categories of structure, culture, and agency. First, both colleges developed and adapted the necessary curricular and co-curricular structures which support the programmatic aspects of their PTEV initiatives. Second, to ensure the greatest impact upon their campus cultures, each college needed to concern themselves with issues of agency. Succession planning in their Program's leadership was critical to ensure continuity in the broad based and collaborative approaches they have established in their Programs and to continue a genuinely shared leadership of their vocation initiatives. Especially crucial in dire economic times, each Program needed support from higher administration to assure the continuation of their PTEV initiatives in the face of financial difficulties and pressures. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, each college cultivated a culture of vocation by adapting and incorporating pre-existent elements in the college's culture, most significantly the college's religious heritage and spiritual foundations.

Structural Factors Involved in Successfully Cultivating a Culture of Vocation

Creating a culture for the theological exploration of vocation on campus required that the necessary administrative structures were put in place to ensure that the exploration of vocation would reach into every aspect of campus life. Naturally, this required sufficient financial backing and administrative support to continue key programs. In this section, I begin with comparing and contrasting the co-curricular programs at Santa Clara University and Saint Norbert College, and how DISCOVER and FLV are positioned to continue their key programs. I continue with a comparison of the courses available that assist students in the exploration of vocation, and plans on each campus to develop the curricular component of their PTEV initiatives. I conclude with a discussion of what lessons might be useful for other colleges wishing to support students in the exploration of vocation.

Comparing DISCOVER and FLV Co-curricular Programs

As described earlier in the findings chapters on DISCOVER and FLV, both colleges have developed a creative array of co-curricular programs to support students in vocational exploration. Both programs have co-curricular programs that are extremely active in the residence halls. DISCOVER groups convene in nearly every residence hall and are tied closely with the Residential Learning Communities that were established just prior to the beginning of the grant period. At Saint Norbert College, ALIVE team members are found almost exclusively in the residence halls since, according to the Director of FLV, ALIVE team members seem to be most effective in that setting. This is

a key point for other colleges wishing to support students in the exploration of vocation. It seems that engaging students in the residence halls was one of the most effective methods for continuing an ongoing dialogue regarding issues of vocational discernment. Through appropriately prepared facilitators, students are encouraged to explore vocation in the very place where they live. In the case of DISCOVER, Resident Ministers became the “delivery vehicle” for DISCOVER. In the case of FLV, the ALIVE Team Members were peer educators who introduced their fellow classmates to vocational exploration.

Comparing DISCOVER with FLV, it is in the arena of educating and working for justice where we see the greatest disparity in strategy and as well as in their allocations of the increasingly scarce resources for vocational programming. While it is true that Santa Clara already offered immersion experiences to their students before DISCOVER, the Lilly grant allowed SCU to expand dramatically both the number and quality of their immersion trips. Such a commitment required significant financial resources and, according to the Director of DISCOVER, the immersion trips offered through the Kolvenbach Solidarity Program, take the largest portion of DISCOVER budget monies. In spite of the considerable costs of the immersion trips, Santa Clara remains committed to making these experiences available for students.

Saint Norbert College is similarly committed to educating and working for justice as evidenced by their TRIPS program and the current efforts to expand Community Service Learning. However, in contrast with Santa Clara, Saint Norbert College has not dedicated quite as much of their financial resources toward immersion trips or similar justice oriented offerings for students. In terms of sheer numbers, SNC offers a few

TRIPS programs each semester whereas SCU offers dozens of immersion experiences annually.

The difference in their approach to vocational exploration through immersion trips is evident in both the descriptions of their PTEV initiatives as well as the types of programs available for students. While it could be argued that this difference is merely one of programmatic focus, the disparity is embedded in the educational philosophy of each college and can be traced back to the spiritual foundations of the two colleges. Santa Clara is part of a Jesuit tradition steeped in a history of commitment to the promotion of justice. In the 34th General Congregation of the Order, the Jesuits defined themselves as being profoundly committed to actively working on behalf of social justice as a constitutive element of the Gospel and a core identity for the Order: "Jesuit education is eminently able to use their education for the service of faith and promotion of justice" (Kolvenbach, 2001). Naturally, Saint Norbert College is also, by virtue of their Catholic identity, committed to educating and working for justice. However, it has not been a major focus of the FLV Program. As the faculty coordinator for FLV humbly and frankly shared at the Institutional Vocation Conference, Saint Norbert College may need to make their care and concern for the poor and marginalized a more central component of FLV.

One surprising similarity between the two Programs was their mixed experiences with offering ministry internships. At both colleges, ministry internships have been offered to students as an opportunity to test out their interest in working in ministry following college. Internships are a well respected method for vocational exploration and a mainstay of college career centers. However, DISCOVER and FLV have received

lukewarm responses at best to their internship offerings. To be fair, those students who did participate in the internships indicated that they were personally very valuable.

Nevertheless, it is safe to say that ministry internships did not become the focal point for either program, and it seems uncertain if the internships will continue as a significant part of their Programs. Whether this was a result of the design or marketing of the internships was unclear from my research.

Comparing DISCOVER and FLV Curricular Programs

Incorporating theological exploration in the classroom seems to be less well developed at Saint Norbert College than in co-curricular programs due primarily to a lackluster response from the faculty to the call for new and revised courses that incorporate vocational exploration. While there are some courses that have been developed which specifically deal with vocation, for example, a popular theology course entitled, "Marriage as a Vocation," there are relatively few courses that have significantly incorporated the theological exploration of vocation into their content. Additionally, there may be some more work to be done as the core curriculum is revised. As a former Dean of the College lamented:

At this point, as we're looking at the core curriculum or the general education program, the vocation perspective is not present. In fact, in the review committee, they actually had suggested that theology and philosophy may no longer be required. That's why FLV has been so important. They were going to put the Theology core requirement under Catholic intellectual tradition. And you could choose from theology, philosophy, art, English, Catholic novel. Well, our argument, very strongly, is that you have to have theology and philosophy in a Catholic college because there's a distinctive method and content . . . it has reduced theology to simply another kind of way of looking at the world that's not necessarily important if you learn how to do it. (personal communication, October 23, 2008)

In spite of this unresolved issue surrounding the Theology and Philosophy requirements, there are inroads that FLV has made into the curriculum, perhaps most notably, the Communio course that has been piloted with a select group of first year students. There is some hope of expanding it as a required course for all incoming freshmen but that is another debate yet to be resolved.

By contrast, the course offerings in DISCOVER have grown significantly, if slowly, over the years, with nearly 30 courses that included some element of vocational exploration. Naturally, not all of these 30 courses are exclusively centered on the exploration of vocation but each of them minimally includes some significant engagement with the topic of vocation. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, a vocations “pathway” has been established as part of the revised core curriculum at Santa Clara. All these developments show hopeful signs that the theological exploration of vocation will continue in the classroom beyond the grant funding period. Ambitious strategies for expanding the impact of vocation on the classroom are in process:

We need more vocation courses and since there’s a vocation pathway now that I’m the director of, I can go out and recruit for [more courses for the Pathway] . . . with the new core curriculum which starts next fall all students will have to take a pathway . . . and so I figured, we need to get this pathway in as an early one so that’s its established. We’re part of the establishment as it were. Some people are still creating their pathways proposals so I think the new core curriculum can really help move forward our commitment to vocation. (personal communication, November 11, 2008)

Establishing a Vocations Pathway goes beyond just another avenue to introduce students to the idea of vocation in the classroom, it is a signal to the rest of the faculty that vocational exploration is a topic worthy of academic study and course development.

*Lessons for Other Colleges from the Structural Successes
of DISCOVER and FLV*

While an effective co-curricular structure is critical for helping students explore vocation more deeply, it is the curricular components that are absolutely essential to sustaining and furthering the exploration of vocation. Both colleges found their greatest impact upon the culture through a comprehensive strategy that engaged students both in and out of the classroom through creative and adaptable co-curricular and curricular offerings. On the co-curricular side, for other colleges seeking to cultivate a mentoring environment for vocation, the opportunities presented to educate students within the residence halls have great potential. This is the place where residential students spend a great deal of time when they are not in the classroom. Naturally, this strategy would not be as effective at a campus where the student population consists mostly of commuter students, but some of these strategies may be adapted to common gathering spaces between classes where non-residential students spent a good deal of their time, for example, in a student life center.

Immersion trips would also seem to be a co-curricular program of central importance for any college wishing to educate for vocation. First, immersion trips' focus upon the poor and marginalized in society presents to students in a very direct way the importance of taking the "world's hungers" into account as one considers vocation. The intense experiential dimension of immersion trips are often an effective means for encouraging students to reflect upon the meaning of one's experiences and perhaps helping students to see this type of critical reflection upon one's experiences as an

indispensable habit of vocational discernment. From a pragmatic point of view, immersion trips appeal to college aged young adults in their sense of adventure and promise of novel experiences. Finally, DISCOVER and FLV's experiences with internships may offer a word of caution for other colleges wishing to educate for vocation and intending on relying solely on an internship based model.

As far as engaging students in the classroom, the considerable difference between DISCOVER and FLV in their curricular strategy offers a few potential lessons for other colleges. First is the rather obvious lesson that curricular development is a necessity for any school that wishes to go beyond creating isolated programs for vocational exploration. Both colleges commented frequently about their outreach to faculty as a key component in the advances they were able to make in cultivating a culture of vocation. As one PTEV Director put it succinctly, without vocational exploration in the classroom, the PTEV initiatives would have just become another set of co-curricular programs that supplemented, but were not necessarily central, to a student's educational experience.

Another key lesson from these two case studies seems to be the crucial need for a faculty liaison. The liaison naturally would need to be someone committed to creating a culture of vocation on campus and someone who could "travel easily among different populations," as our FLV faculty liaison was described. No doubt, having some money for faculty, in the form of mini-grants like in DISCOVER, or stipends for participation in faculty retreats/seminar on vocational exploration like in FLV, can go a long way to attracting an already overstretched faculty to consider getting involved with vocational exploration.

Finally, faculty may be more likely to develop courses and/or participate in vocational exploration programs if they themselves feel comfortable with the notion of vocation and have some familiarity with the concept. Both Programs mentioned how crucial faculty education efforts were at the beginning of their grant periods and were necessary before any significant curricular inroads could be made.

Agentic Factors Involved in Successfully Cultivating a Culture of Vocation

Effective leadership is crucial in any endeavor that seeks to accomplish more than one individual can do alone. However, when faced with the task of impacting a campus culture, effective leadership becomes that much more critical. For both DISCOVER and FLV, leadership played an integral role in the successes they were able to achieve in a number ways.

First, both Programs realized from the very beginning that a collaborative approach to leadership was necessary to garner the broad based support needed to have maximum impact and to create a pervasive culture of vocation on campus. This meant that both the design and implementation of their PTEV initiatives would need to be shared among many constituencies on campus.

Another aspect of effective leadership simply concerned choosing the right people to run their Programs. The executives responsible for the PTEV initiatives on each campus spoke in glowing terms of the leaders for both the curricular and co-curricular aspects of their Programs. While perhaps a fairly obvious point, it is still a central insight from these two successful Programs. Choosing the right people to lead the various aspects

of their Programs, according to both informants from Santa Clara University and Saint Norbert College, was the crucial determinant for success. The ability to adapt to the loss of key leadership positions and planning for succession in leadership has proven to be even more critical, especially at Santa Clara where there was significant turnover.

The Importance of Continuity and Collaboration in Program Leadership

Each college's collaborative approach to leadership had a profound impact on how successful each Program was in cultivating a culture of theological exploration on campus. Equally important especially as the grant funding comes to an end, each Program is faced with the crucial decisions of who will oversee the Program, if anyone at all, and who will be responsible for leading discrete aspects of the Program. These decisions surrounding who will continue to lead the initiatives are particularly important for the continued effectiveness and impact of their Programs.

According to a faculty member that has been with the Program since its inception, DISCOVER has weathered its share of storms in the upheaval of changes in key leadership position but has maintained and even grown operations throughout.

What's nice about our Program is that it's a Program that lives on its own and people can come and go. And sometimes when a charismatic individual founds a program or a nation or whatever, and that person goes, the thing falls apart. . . . Our leadership has not been invested in one figurehead. Our leadership has always been spread democratically among all the participants . . . so if it were one of these top-down situations, and we were decapitated, the organism would die. . . . I think that all of us in the program feel a sense of leadership and ownership and we can also pass it on. (personal communication, November 18, 2008)

This shared leadership and broad based collaboration established from the very beginning of DISCOVER ensured the greatest possible impact for cultivating a culture of vocation.

In a somewhat self-generative way, the vocational educational efforts of DISCOVER themselves may be credited for this shared sense of ownership and shared responsibility for institutionalizing the key aspects of DISCOVER:

There's a long tradition of people breaking bread together. What happens is that we become a circle, and the circle just expands, instead of a pyramid top-down leadership, we've also been very fortunate to get people like [a former executive director of DISCOVER] and [the current executive director of DISCOVER] to just come right in because they are leaders. So I think there's something . . . Oh, I know what it is, vocation. A sense of vocation helps people become leaders. And so what we've been doing is fostering a sense of vocation in our faculty and staff as well as our students. (personal communication, November 18, 2008)

It is interesting that, in fostering a sense of vocation in the faculty and staff, DISCOVER was modeling the type of leadership that would be necessary to help it to grow and to sustain itself beyond the grant funding period.

Another factor that contributed to successfully cultivating a culture of vocation at Santa Clara beyond PTEV has been its proven ability to persist in spite of turnover in key leadership positions. DISCOVER has seen at least three executive directors since its inception in 2003. While much has been said about how difficult the continual turnover has been for DISCOVER, it has somewhat paradoxically become one of its greatest assets for institutionalizing DISCOVER. Since DISCOVER lost so many people from key leadership positions early in the Program, it was reinforced in its strategy to share leadership among collaborating offices on campus, most notably with campus ministry, the career center, and the Kolvenbach Solidarity Center.

*The Importance of Strong and Consistent Support from the Highest
Levels of Administration*

One crucial factor for the success of both programs was the staunch and ongoing support of their PTEV initiatives from the president's office and even from the Board of Trustees. For example, in the case of Saint Norbert College, the Vice President for Mission and Heritage became a vocal advocate for FLV and early on recognized the Program as an indispensable agent for Mission and Heritage on campus. FLV expanded its influence to include the ranks of the Trustees, co-opting their support and leadership on behalf of the Program through a series of Trustee Retreats. These retreats addressed the vocation of the Trustee and eventually broke open the conversation to include an exploration of institutional vocation, which began a rediscovery of the religious foundations of Saint Norbert College.

FLV hosted a trustees retreat to educate the trustees on the efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus and the ensuing conversation around institutional vocation. This retreat, according to a number of both participants and observers, was instrumental in strengthening the culture of vocation already taking root on campus and to put the new mission in the forefront of university life.

I saw the results of [the trustee retreat]. And the results were that the trustees said look, we've got to put mission front and center here. We've got to start raising the question. Being an associate dean, I was always on the academic committee of the board. And the chair of that committee, after that retreat, just announced: look, we've just come from this retreat. We need to ask: everything we do here, is it supporting the mission of St. Norbert College? And if it doesn't, then we have to seriously question why we're doing it. And so it was front and center, and it really was the trustees, then, who I think pushed a lot of the faculty to start taking it more seriously. (personal communication, October 23, 2008)

Such strong statements from the Trustees might have received significant pushback within the campus culture unless FLV had already prepared the way by creating a vocabulary around vocation and cultivated receptivity in the culture by promoting both the exploration of personal and institutional vocation. As a long-time faculty member observed, “So I think that’s been the real saving grace in this, is that there is now receptivity and openness that wasn’t there eight years ago or ten years ago.”

*Lessons for Other Colleges from the Leadership Successes
of DISCOVER and FLV*

A similar trait that both schools share was their unflagging commitment from the highest levels of the college’s administration. Saint Norbert College found staunch support of the Executive Staff through the Office of Mission and Heritage as well as Trustees committed to sustaining the exploration of vocation through their exposure to the Program with Trustee Retreats. Santa Clara University had presidential backing from the very beginning of DISCOVER. According to one of the DISCOVER grant authors and a staff member on three Jesuit PTEV initiatives, this higher level support will be crucial for other colleges that wish to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus:

The single most important factor to me, is this idea, this initiative, supported all the way up to the top of the university? I mean, I cannot imagine, having now worked at three places, if we did not have the support from the Presidents of each of those three institutions. I mean the *full support* then it would not have worked. I suspect it flounders in other institutions without that support. . . . So my advice to anybody on the campus who is not the President of the University is to get a drink with the President or coffee and whatever and make sure that this is something that the President is on board with before moving forward. (personal communication, November 21, 2008)

Of course, it is not just the President who needs to be in support of the exploration of vocation, but the President's support of DISCOVER at Santa Clara University and the support of FLV from the Office of Mission and Heritage at Saint Norbert College definitely made cultivating a culture of vocation a vibrant possibility if not a fait accompli.

*The Influence of Significant Financial Backing upon Program Leadership
and Its Effectiveness*

Financial support for the PTEV initiatives certainly was the sine qua non for cultivating these cultures of vocation. At Saint Norbert, a small Catholic liberal arts college, the \$2 million grant had an enormous impact on FLV's ability to gather the community together, to show appreciation to those involved, and to provide incentive for participation, particularly for faculty and staff, all this at a time when "budgets were tight." At Santa Clara, a larger school in terms of both student body and endowment, the two million dollar grant was still the single largest private grant in the history of the college. Besides providing immediate funding to make their ideas for exploring for vocation a reality, winning the Lilly grant gave DISCOVER a special credibility within the University:

I think having access to funds is very important. It just is. At the end of the day, you command the respect amongst people on campus when you have a little money to back it up. And ideally, if you can get outside money, like Lilly, that legitimizes your efforts. . . . I was able to walk into meetings with all types of people on campus at Santa Clara and have this legitimacy because an outside institution invested in Santa Clara, invested in DISCOVER. And that made a huge difference. In terms of people's openness to work on this Project—I mean, once people start working on it, they get fired up on their own. It's a really easy concept to fall in love with, a sense of vocation. Even the most agnostic or atheistic

professors were some of the best of people on campus for this stuff. They got into it. But you have to have an entrée. (personal communication, November 21, 2008)

From this informant's perspective, to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus you must have support from the top and you need to have some financial backing.

At the same time, most informants agreed that there are a number of effective programs that could be started without much money at all. For faculty and staff, just gathering the community together to discuss the concept of vocation can have profound influence upon the campus. DISCOVER's "What Matters to Me" and "Why" luncheon series has inspired the creation of a "Last Lecture" series. The first Last Lecture was held during my site visit and the theatre ran out of seats leaving literally hundreds of disappointed students waiting outside. FLV's book studies have continued the conversation around vocation by offering interesting and eclectic works dealing the topic of vocation. Faculty and staff gather monthly to have these conversations and the only cost to FLV is the complementary copies of the books that they provide to participants for incentive to participate.

The Crucial Importance of Faculty Involvement for

Effective Program Leadership

Much time and energy was spent on building the co-curricular structures of the PTEV programs but the curricular inroads made at both colleges hold the greatest promise for sustaining the theological exploration on campus. While there is turnover among faculty and staff on every campus, the turnover is always less than that of the students who cycle through approximately every 4 years. The executive director of

DISCOVER highlighted the importance, and challenges, of the faculty formation for

DISCOVER's continued impact on campus:

Now some faculty members are just not interested [in the question of vocation]. Other faculty are interested, but are concerned about how you bring [the topic of vocation] up. . . . There are fewer and fewer of those conversations because faculty are increasingly uncomfortable raising those [vocational] questions for a myriad of issues. . . . I mean I guess from a faculty point of view you want to do it in such a way that you empower the faculty who are interested, but you need to do it in such a way that you don't alienate the faculty who are not interested. That's always a complicated issue, but I think it's an important one. I think the grand vision is that you bring everybody on board, but that's just unrealistic, and it might be a little naïve. I refer to [the strategy for involving faculty] as having, you know, the infiltrators, and you need to have enough of them . . . a critical mass. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

Saint Norbert College similarly spoke of forming a critical mass of faculty and staff who are collaborators, interested in educating students for vocation and cultivating a culture where vocation is explored deeply by faculty, students, and staff alike. Not surprisingly, PTEV leadership from both colleges noted the importance of involving faculty early on, even prior to beginning any programs with students, if the college desires to sustain the theological exploration of vocation. There is good wisdom in this and certainly the faculty efforts at both colleges have been crucial not only for their success with engaging students around the topic of vocation, but for cultivating "whole environments for exploration of vocation." In the next section, I will discuss the cultural factors involved in the success each college had in cultivating a culture of vocation on campus.

Cultural Factors Involved in Sustaining the Theological

Exploration of Vocation

In this section, I explore how each program's need to adapt to their unique college culture led them to embrace the religious heritage and spiritual foundations of their college. I discuss how each College plans to sustain a culture of vocation on their campus. I close with some thoughts on how other interested colleges may begin to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus.

Importance of Faculty Involvement, Development, and Ownership

When asked for advice on how a college could begin to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus, one of the Program directors highlighted the central role of faculty and staff vocational exploration: "Faculty and staff development . . . is perhaps our most effective way to reach the broadest possible cross section of students—to really help our faculty and staff understand vocation." Another informant made the excellent, if not obvious, suggestion to survey faculty and staff based on their knowledge and interest around the topic of vocation, as well as asking for their suggestions for constructing a culture of vocation, before commencing a vocational initiative on campus:

I think that what would be very helpful if these colleges were to initially have a questionnaire for the faculty about their own sense of vocation, to connect their own sense of vocation to the possibility of building a culture of vocation on campus. . . . Ask them: from your perspectives, what could we do here to create a greater sense of vocation, a culture of vocation, on campus? They would then come forward with ideas and there would be ideas that would be appropriate for that particular college. And then do something similar with the staff for the very same reason? Ask the people who are closest to you, to the process, what needs to be done, because they know. (personal communication, November 18, 2008)

This seemingly obvious suggestion speaks to the profoundly unique nature of each of the cultures of vocation created on the PTEV campuses, even while the programs and strategies used to help students, faculty, and staff to explore vocation were often quite similar. It also underscores the need to tailor any initiative aimed at encouraging and sustaining vocational exploration to the particular culture already existing on that campus.

Understanding the Institution's Identity

The two colleges in this study are good cases in point for the need to adapt to a particular college's pre-existent culture before trying to cultivate something within that same culture. Santa Clara University's culture was already very much steeped in the Ignatian tradition and recently had renewed their commitment to the philosophy of Jesuit higher education, recently renewed and articulated at the 34th General Counsel of the Order. Not surprisingly then DISCOVER's design and subsequent implementation and adaptation was heavily influenced by a desire to "make explicit what is implicit" in the culture of Santa Clara. According to DISCOVER's executive director, who is also the Director of the Center for Ignatian Spirituality:

There was a certain patrimony here from the Jesuit tradition that I, as the Director of this Center [for Ignatian Spirituality], want to share with my non-Jesuit colleagues. Because I think there is great value in the Jesuit tradition. The subtext here, which we don't articulate but we all recognize with a wink and a nod, is that Santa Clara will go forward despite the number of Jesuits on campus declining. And the question is what will the place look like in fifty years? What will it sound like? Where will its heart be in fifty years? And that's what we're doing now, because the tradition will be carried forward by our partners in ministry and not necessarily Jesuits because our numbers are declining. So that's the project. . . . That's the subtext of what we do [in DISCOVER]. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

In the case of Saint Norbert College, the FLV designers had a desire to embody Norbertine values from the very first days of writing the grant proposal. Indeed, the very name of the program, Faith, Learning, and Vocation Program gives witness to Norbertine values:

I think people on the team that wrote that grant, valued different parts [of Faith, Learning, and Vocation]. I mean they valued the whole, yes, but also valued the faith exploration piece. . . . The learning piece was definitely important for the group that developed the grant, for our students, but also for our faculty and staff, and the idea of it being a learning community and the idea that the work that this program did would not be devoid of learning and critical reflection [on] vocation, ultimately that's the shift we were hoping to bring about. . . . I do think [the name of the Program: Faith, Learning, and Vocation] does reflect three things that were valued from the people who did the original writing to this day. (personal communication, October 28, 2008)

Sustaining the Theological Exploration of Vocation at an Institution

Sustaining the theological exploration of vocation at Santa Clara University has been a primary concern from DISCOVER's inception. Indeed, in the very grant application, the authors addressed their hopes and tentative plans for sustaining DISCOVER beyond the grant funding period by embedding it within already existing offices on campus and integrating DISCOVER programs as part of their ongoing curricular and co-curricular efforts. Even more significantly, the power and presence of the Ignatian spiritual tradition and the philosophy of Jesuit higher education are key factors in sustaining the theological exploration of vocation on campus at Santa Clara University. Not surprisingly given its close connection with and indebtedness to the Ignatian tradition, DISCOVER is currently housed in the Center for Ignatian Spirituality and the Executive Director for the Center is also the Director of DISCOVER. The close

alignment of DISCOVER with the Center for Ignatian Spirituality strategically places the PTEV initiative in a place of prominence on campus, being one of four “Centers of Distinction” at Santa Clara. More importantly, it serves as potentially an ongoing home for key pieces of DISCOVER following the exhaustion of the grant monies in 2009. Being housed in a respected and institutionalized home like the Center for Ignatian Spirituality presumably positions DISCOVER well for sustainability past the grant funding period.

Largely due to a shared Ignatian vision for higher education, the eight Jesuit Catholic colleges that received Lilly grants shared both fundamental strategies as well as specific programs to facilitate their community’s exploration of vocation. According to one of the DISCOVER grant authors who was involved with three Jesuit PTEV programs, all of the programs were strong on their promotion of theological reflection, always being sure that contemplation was never separated from their action, be it an immersion trip, local service project, or retreat offering. In fact, one particular informant believed that the Jesuit’s broadminded view of vocation, informed by Ignatian spirituality, not only endeared themselves to Lilly but also helped other PTEV schools to further refine their understanding of vocation:

I think that part of the reasons that Jesuit schools, in general, were so successful with Lilly is because the idea of vocation that Lilly articulated or at least the expansive way in which vocation can be thought of . . . was very consonant with Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit education. (personal communication, November 21, 2008)

The presence of PTEV initiatives on seven other Jesuit college campuses assisted Santa Clara University in designing their initiative through an open and ongoing dialogue with

other Jesuit colleges with PTEV grants. While clearly not all Jesuit colleges are the same, their shared Ignatian spiritual tradition and similar understanding of vocation made them likely dialogue partners as each sought to capitalize upon the momentum created through the award of their Lilly grants.

The Centrality of the Institution's Founding Story

By contrast, the Norbertine order does not have a long tradition of apostolate in higher education. Indeed, Saint Norbert College holds the distinction of being the only Norbertine College in the world. Without a network of colleges and centuries of experience in higher education, Saint Norbert College has faced the monumental task of defining what Norbertine higher education is all about. In the context of Catholic colleges seeking an answer to the overarching question of what makes a Catholic college Catholic, this task becomes all the more complicated.

True to its Norbertine spiritual roots, Saint Norbert College has fruitfully undertaken the task of self definition and returned to its founding story for guidance. Like most Norbertine apostolates, Saint Norbert College was founded in response to an expression of local needs, in this case for an institution of higher learning in Northeast Wisconsin. The Norbertines profound commitment to a specific locality, as made manifest in the vow of stability that each Norbertine takes to a particular Abbey, has enabled the college to sink deep roots within the community and to establish a respected and prominent place in the development of the greater DePere area and beyond. Much like Santa Clara's tapping of Ignatian tradition; it is in relying upon their rich Norbertine

spiritual heritage that FLV may find its best hopes for sustaining the theological exploration of vocation on their campus.

As noted earlier, Saint Norbert College has faced the added challenge of needing to define and reclaim what is unique about Norbertine spirituality. The director recalled a story of student who was at a conference and talked about the Norbertine traditions of contemplation and action, thinking that they were uniquely Norbertine hallmarks until a student from a Jesuit college spoke about the Ignatian tradition that seeks to form Jesuits as “contemplatives in action.” When asked: “What is just Norbertine?” even the directors of FLV admitted that it was harder to define. Ironically, it is not in spite of but precisely because of this lack of specificity around Norbertine identity that FLV may find its strongest potential for sustainability as it has sparked a campus wide discussion surrounding institutional vocation. The resulting exploration of institutional vocation has furthered FLV’s reach and scope on campus. So much so that according to the Vice President of Mission and Heritage, FLV has established itself as a “mini Mission and Heritage” department. As mentioned earlier, one of the roles that FLV evolved into was as a catalyst for a wider conversation on campus with respect to what it meant to be a Norbertine College, precisely the type of work that the Mission and Heritage Office was formed to do. In this role, FLV found itself promoting the Heritage and Identity of the College in meaningful ways, culminating in a conference designed and hosted by Saint Norbert College examining the role of institution vocation upon PTEV initiatives.

In beginning to explore the question of institutional vocation, Saint Norbert College returned to their founding story and rediscovered their spiritual foundations. With

this process, FLV led the campus community in rediscovering their Norbertine heritage and the richness of the Norbertine, Catholic, and Liberal Arts traditions. Exploring institutional vocation highlighted the unique charism of the Norbertine order and reclaimed the foundations of Norbertine spirituality, especially the values of “communio” and the benefits of the vow of stability that each member takes to the Abbey and the local community that the Abbey serves. In the case of the Abbey that founded Saint Norbert College, their commitment has been to serve the people of Northeast Wisconsin. As one informant reflected upon the impact of the vow of stability:

Their vow of stability I think is really important here. That the Norbertines put down roots and they stay in a place. When you join the Norbertines, you join an Abbey. . . . You join an Abbey, for better or worse, that’s where you put down roots. But I think that’s helped us see that, you know, when we talk about these matters of vocation, we’re talking about it in northeastern Wisconsin. We’re not going to be in Milwaukee, you know, Marquette’s down there. We’re not going to be in Philadelphia, or in Chicago, we’re in northeastern Wisconsin, and in this culture with its own assets and challenges. To me it’s been important in forming a vocational identity in the sense of, you do good where you are. And that we can do great things in a place that can be easily overlooked. So I think that’s made a big difference, this vow of stability. (personal communication, October 22, 2008)

The vow of stability and implications for institutional call have made clearer the unique contribution that Saint Norbert College makes, not just in their local area, but within the wider world of Catholic higher education.

I think what’s helped is that we’re starting to see the connection between story and vocation or between narrative and vocation. That we’re not like the Jesuits where there are a lot of schools that we can compare ourselves to. You know, for better or worse, we’re it. And I think at times it’s helped us settle into our identity and to be proud about it. In one way our big competitor is Marquette in terms of students and I think with saying that, we’re not a university. We’re a small liberal arts college, we’re called to do something really well that’s not Marquette, that’s not San Diego or wherever. But let’s do it as best as we can. . . . I think vocation means you’re providentially situated to do good where you are. And so I think that

ties into the Norbertine narrative and charism of stability. Here we are and we can lament it and waste our time being frustrated or we can say we have a good story, let's tell it. So I guess, to me in terms of Catholic colleges, I think a lot of it is owning your story. (personal communication, October 22, 2008)

Not unlike the individuals who have participated in FLV, the institutional exploration of vocation precipitated some soul searching for the college, asking questions of purpose, like: what distinguishes Saint Norbert College from other Catholic colleges and peer institutions?

Before FLV, the marketing of the College might have centered around "selling a pretty campus, or our location, or for people who want a smaller school." Now, Saint Norbert College defines itself in terms of the unique contributions of the Norbertine charism and the spiritual heritage of the College. By reconnecting with their founding story and the values of the Catholic, Liberal Arts, and Norbertine traditions, Saint Norbert College continues to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus. In recovering and owning the story of Saint Norbert College and exploring institutional vocation it's helped FLV to better create a culture of vocation for the students. It was necessary as an institution to be able to explore more deeply their Norbertine roots in order to be authentic in creating a culture where students themselves would be encouraged, equipped, and inspired to explore the notion of vocation in their own lives.

Summary of Advice for Other Colleges Wishing to Cultivate a Culture of

Vocation on Campus

Beginning an Ongoing Conversation about the Nature of Vocational Exploration

As part of my research, I asked all of my informants from both schools what other colleges that wished to support students in the exploration of vocation could do on their own campuses, assuming that a two million dollar grant was not available to begin a comprehensive initiative. Overall, there were remarkable similarities in the advice that informants from each school gave to other interested colleges. The advice can be summarized as an encouragement to create a campus culture where an ongoing conversation around vocation could be sustained. The most frequently heard wisdom garnered from their experiences was simply to raise the question of vocation and to bring together members of the campus community to share ideas and to learn together. According to one informant at Santa Clara, simply raising the question of vocation in a creative and provocative way is a helpful starting point:

I think [colleges wishing to support students in the exploration of vocation] can just raise the question. I mean as you well know there is a whole body of literature, that I'm only becoming familiar with now since I took this job, about reflecting on vocation. . . . I'm getting on dangerous turf here because I'm not really a sociologist, but what is the status of our eighteen year olds now? I mean I think they need a lot of help in this area. And not to give them the answers, that's not what we're about, but to provide them with a process to help them reflect on these questions and to help them to reflect on these questions in a liberating way. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

The fact that the questions surrounding vocation are truly pressing themes in college students' lives helps to give the conversation some momentum and potential that it will prove worthy enough a topic for students, faculty, and staff to explore.

Challenging Students to Ask the Bigger Questions of Life

One major factor mitigating the urgency and perhaps undermining the generative potential of the "big questions" surrounding the exploration of vocation would be the lowered sights that some students (as well as some faculty and staff) have for the undergraduate experience. Financial pressures to pay off ever increasing student loans as well as social pressures to conform to some societal definitions of success lead our students to see their undergraduate experience and their college degree as little more than a means to an end in order to land a desirable job, or to embark on a lucrative career. The director of DISCOVER recognizes this tension and the tendency toward lowered expectations, or, at least, to reduce the goals of an undergraduate education to solely pragmatic ends:

Now I recognize that for many the goal of college is to get the BA, to get the good job. I'm not naïve and that's the background from which I come, so I'm very sensitive to that. But to, in a non-intrusive way, encourage students, while that will always be an important issue, to give themselves some space, freedom to put that aside. Not to put it away but to put it aside and to be deliberate about life and their talents, their interests. (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

One advantage that the two colleges in our study have is that they are Catholic colleges which have a particular set of values that they do not need to be silent about. In fact, their very mission requires them to be intentional about presenting these values to the students that choose to be a part of their educational community.

Catholic education, Jesuit education specifically, is not value neutral. We're not a state university and we're not the Ivy League which is largely value neutral too. We're driven by the Gospel values so we'll give you the technique that will enable you to reflect on what you should be doing, but, because of who we are, we'll be whispering in your ear that there are certain values that we think are important. Now this is a dance, because it's a liberal education and it's not a seminary and it's not indoctrination, but there are a set of values that we stand for that as we're providing the process we can also be the gentle voice in the background saying, "you should be thinking about the world beyond yourself, and listening to that call too." (personal communication, November 17, 2008)

Conclusion

Lilly has given these colleges the ability to "make explicit what was implicit" regarding their values, their educational mission, and, for Saint Norbert College at least, to rediscover and reclaim their very reason for existence as a Catholic institution of higher learning. The Lilly grants gave schools the resources to raise the questions surrounding vocation. Each school designed slightly different programs but each essentially used the monies to create space and some inertia around the exploration of vocation. The lessons learned through the design, implementation, and adaptation of the PTEV initiatives at these two schools may help other colleges wishing to cultivate cultures on campus where vocational exploration is recognized and promoted a central part of the Colleges' very identity and institutional purpose. In the final chapter of this study, I will recapitulate these lessons, identifying broad topics of concern for other colleges interested in undertaking a similar initiative on campus.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Recapitulation of the Purpose and Design of the Study

The undergraduate college years offer many young adults a unique opportunity to define for themselves what is most important to them. The college years have been called the critical years for young adult faith and vocational development (Parks, 1986). In the words of Sharon Daloz Parks (2000), college is a time for asking big questions and exploring worthy dreams. Colleges and universities have a unique opportunity to cultivate a mentoring environment which supports young adults during these critical years as they struggle to address life's bigger questions and to formulate a worthy dream for their lives. This study was designed in the hopes of learning more about how colleges might create a more intentional, supportive, and efficacious mentoring environment for students in this search for meaning, purpose, and vocation.

The Lilly Endowment, Inc. generously invested in 88 select religiously affiliated colleges to fund programs that were designed to help students consider a sense of God's call in their life, or vocation, and to assist them in exploring their vocation during their undergraduate years. This study is one effort to glean wisdom from the creativity and experience of two of the PTEV colleges. The case studies consisted primarily of interviews with students, faculty, and staff involved with programs specifically designed to explore vocation, as well as a review of key documents which chronicle the history and evolution of the two initiatives. Studying the vocation initiatives at the PTEV colleges, and particularly the two highlighted in this study, provided a wonderful opportunity to

build upon Sharon Daloz Parks' (1988, 2000) contention that college has the potential to become a crucial mentoring environment for supporting young adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and vocation.

Knowing that the PTEV schools created "whole environments for the exploration of vocation" (Dykstra, 2007) on their campuses, I initially proposed to undertake an in-depth case study of one exemplary PTEV initiative. My hope was that such an individual case study would yield some clues as to how to cultivate this mentoring environment for the exploration of vocation on other college campuses. I chose a Jesuit college as my initial case study. It became clear early in the study that the Jesuit tradition and Ignatian spiritual heritage of the college played a significant role in the creation of a culture of vocation. Therefore, it seemed like a comparative case study with a similarly exemplary PTEV initiative at a college—that was not grounded in the Jesuit tradition—would reveal more of the impact of PTEV upon their college campus cultures. I approached Saint Norbert College and asked if they would be willing partners in the study, having some familiarity with the Norbertine tradition. The Norbertine tradition, as discussed in Chapter 2, seemed to be significantly distinct enough from the Jesuit tradition to provide a helpful contrast, at least in the founding religious order and spiritual heritage of the two colleges.

Summary of Major Findings

In order to summarize the major findings of this study, it seems important to return to the study's primary research questions. The research questions can be summarized in three rather basic areas of inquiry: (a) What did each college accomplish

with their PTEV grant and how did they do it? (b) To what extent (if at all) did the colleges' religious heritage and spiritual foundations play a role in the design, implementation, and adaptation of their Programs? (c) What can other colleges learn from their experiences? The first question has been addressed at length in Chapters 4 and 5. The second question likewise was answered in the chapters describing the cases studies and also in Chapter 6, which compares and contrasts the case studies and gleans their particular approaches for cultivating the theological exploration of vocation on campus. I will summarize the major findings of the study by addressing the third question and speaking about the lessons that can be drawn from the cases studies for colleges that wish to support their students in the exploration of vocation.

First Things First—Cultural Appropriateness of the Initiative

The data from these two case studies suggest two success stories. Each school was successful in cultivating a culture of vocation on campus, albeit in different ways. What is common to both cases is the central importance of the spiritual foundations and religious traditions of both colleges. In each case, these colleges needed to recognize the significant resources already available to them for cultivating a culture of vocation by building upon the rich spiritual traditions of each school. In the case of Santa Clara University, Ignatian spirituality and the Jesuit educational tradition offered multiple resources to the community for engaging in vocational exploration. DISCOVER allowed Santa Clara to “make explicit what was implicit” in the Jesuit tradition of higher education. In the case of Saint Norbert College, FLV gave the College an opportunity to reclaim its Norbertine roots and to explore its spiritual foundations. This reconnection with their founding story

grew into a larger movement on campus that engaged the community in an exploration of Saint Norbert College's institutional vocation.

For other colleges, then, that are interested in cultivating a culture of vocation on campus, it seems an important first step would be to recognize and respect the religious foundation of the college. This could include recovering spiritual practices from the tradition that are particularly well suited to equip and inspire students to conduct their own vocational exploration. Likewise, it would be necessary to identify and build upon aspects in the college's culture that already encourages students to explore vocation. Some of these resources may already be present in mentoring programs offered through student services or academic course that encourage students to engage in reflection upon their life experiences and/or to consider their life choices in the context of their core beliefs, personal aspirations, and communal values. Many of these courses may already be offered through the liberal arts curriculum.

Alignment with Institutional Priorities

Connected with tapping the resources available in a college's spiritual foundations, it seems equally important to be sensitive to the college's institutional priorities at the time. In Santa Clara's case, DISCOVER began just following the launch of two major initiatives: the housing of all residential students within Residential Learning Communities and a renewed commitment to Jesuit higher education's mission to "educate for faith and justice." At Saint Norbert College, a relatively new Office for Mission and Heritage was just getting started on campus. In both cases, the colleges need to see both the opportunities and threats inherent in the campus environment at the time

of implementation. They were both successful to the extent each college was able to adapt their Programs to serve institutional priorities and to capture some of the momentum on campus already favorably pre-disposed to cultivating a culture of vocation.

For other colleges seeking to cultivate a culture of vocation, then, it is important to conduct an environmental scan to ascertain the threats and opportunities that could enhance or impede efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation. Timing the implementation of such a comprehensive initiative as cultivating a culture of vocation becomes a key factor for success. Likewise, it would be very helpful to identify which initiatives already underway on campus could be a natural ally in cultivating a culture of vocation.

Money as Motivator

While aligning their Programs with institutional priorities was a key factor in their success, these colleges also flourished with their PTEV initiatives because they were able to establish the theological exploration of vocation as a priority in its own right. Winning a \$2 million grant from an outside foundation, which was also supporting over 80 other colleges in similar Programs, went a long way to establishing the credibility of their PTEV initiatives, as well as giving their Programs sufficient financial backing to carry out a comprehensive strategy for engaging the whole campus in the theological exploration of vocation.

Both colleges agreed that some important elements of their Program did not require a lot of money. One example both schools provided was the low cost of gathering people together just to discuss the concept of vocational exploration. Nevertheless, it seems that colleges wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus would need

some significant backing to establish and maintain the programmatic structures necessary for a broad and deep exploration of vocation throughout the campus, whether that comes in the form of an outside grant or from the school's operational budget.

Administrative Support

As important as financial backing is to launching a comprehensive initiative like cultivating a culture of vocation on campus, administrative support was equally important for the success of these two Programs. Both schools mentioned the central importance of higher administration's support. For Santa Clara University, former President Locatelli's support for DISCOVER was constant from the writing of the grant to its implementation and subsequent adaptations. At Saint Norbert College, FLV introduced the Board of Trustees to the theological exploration of vocation by hosting a well attended retreat for them on the vocation of the Trustee at Saint Norbert College. From that moment forward, FLV received the Board's staunch support and their support continued throughout the duration of the Program. Clearly, universities embarking on such major initiatives as this one can benefit from the role that their Trustees can play in providing support.

For colleges wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation, then, it seems crucial to assess the administration's support for such an initiative in the design stage of the initiative. More than just theoretical support for the idea of promoting vocational exploration on campus, it may be necessary to enlist more active support from higher administration. The leaders of a proposed vocational exploration initiative would need to be clear and specific about the kind of support that would be necessary to facilitate the process of cultivating a culture of vocation on their campus.

Program Leadership

While support from the highest level of leadership in the college were crucial factors for their Programs success, the quality of the leadership of the Programs themselves may have been the single most important day-to-day factor impacting the success of the initiatives. In the case of Santa Clara, the loss of Bill Spohn, S.J., was a devastating personal loss and also a significant challenge for DISCOVER's leadership. DISCOVER was only able to maintain the momentum that it started for vocational exploration through the committed and collaborative leadership of a team of program managers who stepped into the breach. At Saint Norbert College, FLV was blessed with consistently excellent leadership for its many programs, both curricular and co-curricular. In fact, it was the reputation of the FLV leadership that helped FLV to create a level of enthusiasm for the Program and to earn respect from faculty, staff, and students alike.

For colleges wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation, then, it seems critical to select the most appropriate people to lead the Program. While this may seem to be a rather obvious point, selecting and maintaining appropriate leadership is especially important for an initiative that could so easily be dismissed as superfluous or as an impractical topic since vocational exploration is such an all-encompassing concept. Additionally, vocational exploration can easily raise uncomfortable questions surrounding the college's religious identity, a topic of conversation that can be contentious and even controversial. A successful initiative needs leadership that would be adept enough to navigate some of the political dangers potential in such a value-laden project but who are

also leaders of deep conviction and passion for the topic that would not compromise on the lofty ambitions of the initiative, even in the midst of unforeseen challenges.

*Symbiotic and Synergistic Relationship Between Co-curricular
and Curricular Efforts*

Related to the topic of capable and committed leadership is the design of the Programs themselves. Since much has been said already about specific programs that have been successful in these two initiatives, I want to focus on the relationship between co-curricular and curricular efforts within a vocational exploration initiative. At both colleges, the program offerings within the initiatives built upon one another and relied on each other for their continued success. At Santa Clara, DISCOVER leadership shared that the deepest impact of their vocational initiative upon the lives of the students was seen when students participated in more than one aspect of DISCOVER. Indeed, DISCOVER was most effective when their programs were “interlocked and overlapped.” A similar type of synergy was seen at Saint Norbert College. FLV’s leadership described FLV programs as “building blocks” that worked most effectively when seen as a collection of related experiences with one end goal—a consistent commitment to ongoing vocational exploration manifested in the lives of their students.

For a college seeking to cultivate a culture of vocation, it is important, then, in the design of any initiative to recognize how the discrete elements of any Program would support vocational exploration synergistically, or put another way, holistically. The initiative would need to recognize the necessity of incorporating vocational exploration in all aspects of campus life, from the student service side, to the classroom, to life in the

residence halls. When a student hears a clear message of unified support for their exploration of vocation, it will be more encouraging to those who choose to engage in vocational exploration during their college years and will, at the very least, be communicated as a core value of the university community to those who are not ready or unwilling to undertake some form of vocational exploration at this time in their life. The educational import of the latter may be in planting a seed for future thought and reflection as a graduate continues to search for meaning and a sense of purpose in life, and possibly be of assistance to them as they make choices about their commitments to communities and causes.

The Central Role of Faculty Support for Vocational Exploration

Recognizing the symbiotic relationship of the programs within any vocational initiative highlights perhaps the strongest finding from these case studies; namely, the central role of faculty support for vocational exploration. Faculty support was the sine qua non for cultivating a culture of vocation in these case studies. At Santa Clara, it was bringing vocational exploration into the classroom that elevated it as a topic worthy to be taught and further researched. Once the faculty began to engage in the conversation, the theological exploration of vocation went from an isolated project in the campus ministry department to a university-wide concern and institutional priority. Their PTEV initiatives even became something that distinguished their colleges from other Catholic colleges, a hallmark of commitment to the holistic development of their students. At Saint Norbert College, one faculty member shared with me conversations with both students and staff that selected to come to Saint Norbert College, among other reasons, because this

theological exploration of vocation was an ongoing concern for the college. It is primarily through the faculty that the theological exploration of vocation will be sustained on these campuses, as students come and go every four years, and faculty, especially tenured faculty, are the mainstays of campus life.

For any college that wishes to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus, it seems evident that sustained faculty involvement is essential. In order for the exploration of vocation to grow beyond simply a few co-curricular programs, the classroom must become a primary locus of vocational exploration. Engaging faculty in a conversation around vocational exploration begins the process, but encouraging an ongoing dialogue entails faculty who will take up the topic both in their teaching and in their research.

Conclusions: Guidelines for Colleges Seeking to Cultivate a Culture of Vocation on Campus

All of these lessons from the major findings of the study may prompt the reader to ask the question: So, how do I do this on *my* campus? Unfortunately, this is where the limitations of the study become evident. Both colleges in this study cultivated a culture of vocation in a way that was culturally specific and most appropriate for the institution's mission, vision, values, and religious heritage. Given the centrality of these institutionally specific aspects related to cultivating a culture of vocation, it is clear that no blanket prescriptions for building a culture of vocation can be drawn from this study. However, a framework of recommendations can be posited and considered by colleges interested in cultivating a culture of vocation. In looking at these two cases studies and the initiatives of the eighteen other Catholic colleges with PTEV initiatives, some common practices

emerged but whether those practices will be effective on a particular campus with its unique campus culture and religious foundations might only be discovered by those who are intimately familiar with both.

Trustees/Presidential Support

The experiences of both colleges underscore the central importance of having consistent support from the highest levels of college administration from the beginning. Therefore, any college seeking to cultivate a culture of vocation would need to secure genuine support from the President and, ideally, from the Board of Trustees for such a bold and broad based initiative. Approaching the President would prompt the questions of what cultivating a culture of vocation means and what would that look like on *this* campus. The 88 PTEV colleges have demonstrated the fact that a culture of vocation may look quite different on each campus, but some common elements are consistent across PTEV campuses. Those that were most successful in cultivating a culture of vocation were those that created whole environments for the exploration of vocation through a concerted and comprehensive strategy that sought to engage all aspects of the college in the exploration of vocation, as illustrated in the two case studies described in Chapters 4 and 5. A conversation with those setting the vision and direction of the university would seem necessary, then, to ensure that sufficient support for such a wide ranging initiative on campus, along with the formal authorization to begin such an initiative.

One form of support requested from higher administration would necessarily be financial. While the colleges in this study did admit that some of their programs required relatively little money to implement, both colleges recognized the need for some

significant financial backing in order to engage the entire campus in the exploration of vocation and to sustain their initiatives. As far as dedicated staff members, it seems that at least one full time director with some administrative support was necessary, and, equally important, hiring a faculty liaison for the initiative was crucial to ensure that vocational exploration would make some inroads into the classroom.

Exploring and Confirming Institutional Identity and Purpose

While asking the question of what it means for a Catholic college to cultivate a culture of vocation on a particular campus, at Saint Norbert College, it raised questions of institutional purpose and vocation. This question of institutional vocation had resonance with many of the other Catholic PTEV colleges as evidenced by the presence and participation of 12 of the 20 PTEV colleges at a conference exploring institutional vocation hosted by Saint Norbert College in the fall of 2008. At the Institutional Vocation conference, participants shared some significant common insight from their experiences with cultivating a culture of vocation on campus. First, simply, that cultivating a culture of vocation raised the larger question of institutional vocation on their campus. Second, that being in conversation about institutional vocation is itself transformative for the college as well as for their efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation. Third, there was a pressing need to explore and engage the question of institutional vocation with the college's founding religious orders, mining the founding story and working together in discerning the institution's ongoing call to serve in higher education. Fourth, the fact that the participant institutions were still reflecting on what it means to be Catholic and the importance of articulating the Catholic tradition for themselves. Finally, the colleges

expressed an ongoing need to navigate the tension between being rooted in the broader Catholic heritage and in that of the founding religious community (Wadell, 2008).

For Catholic colleges seeking to cultivate a culture of vocation, then, it seems important to be attentive to questions of institutional vocation. The Catholic PTEV colleges became aware of this later in the process, but it may be instructive to other Catholic colleges interested in cultivating a culture of vocation to be attentive to these questions from the outset and to recognize the larger questions that vocational exploration may bring. One of those questions could be what impact will the effort to cultivate a culture of vocation have upon the members of the college community that are not Catholic? How can a culture of vocation be inclusive (or exclusive) of all members of a Catholic colleges campus? Is there a secular language for and application of cultivating a culture of vocation on campus? While answering these questions is beyond the scope of this particular study, they are nevertheless important questions for any college to consider that is interested in cultivating a comprehensive and efficacious culture of vocation on campus.

Recognize and Respect the Religious Heritage of Your College and

Be Ready to Amplify the Spiritual Dimensions of Your Tradition

Both colleges wisely leaned upon the riches of the religious tradition at their respective colleges. Saint Norbert College, as described in Chapters 5 and 6, needed to first reclaim their Norbertine roots and recover the spiritual riches of their tradition in order to be successful in cultivating a culture of vocation on campus. This would seem to hold a particular heuristic value for other colleges that have lost some connection with

their religious foundations. Likewise, their experiences may be particularly helpful for colleges that do not have a readily identifiable religious order that defines the religious character of the college. It is particularly instructive that Saint Norbert College's PTEV initiative experienced some level of resistance from faculty members who came to the college, either ignorant of or indifferent to the Norbertine tradition, at a time when the Norbertine heritage was downplayed or outright dismissed as being irrelevant. Many Catholic colleges find themselves beginning to redefine what it means to be a Catholic institution of higher learning, especially in the past twenty-five years following the papal encyclical, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, which elevated the importance of Catholic identity and its implications on a college campus.

In a similar way, the experience of Santa Clara University also raised the question of both Catholic identity and Jesuit higher education, but in their experiences, it was clear the much more pronounced tradition of Jesuit higher education and Ignatian spirituality had a profound impact upon DISCOVER. Given the prevalence of Jesuit influence already on campus, there was relatively little resistance to their PTEV initiative; however, it may have made it easier for those who were familiar with Ignatian spirituality to dismiss it as another attempt to heighten the Jesuit influence upon campus. Ironically, it is entirely possible that—precisely because the Jesuit tradition was so pronounced and already pervasive on campus—DISCOVER's impact was limited by the strong presence of the Ignatian tradition already well established on campus.

So, what lessons can other colleges draw from their experiences? First, it seems crucial that any college wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation would need to recognize

and respect the religious heritage. Next, it is equally important to recognize how aligning the college's efforts to cultivate a culture of vocation with the college's religious heritage, while necessary, is also potentially risky. As in the case with both colleges in this case study, their PTEV initiatives both benefited and were constrained by their alignment with the college's religious traditions. This is in no way to say that a college needs to be half-hearted or, even guarded, in its affiliating with the religious foundations of the college, but rather to recognize all the important larger issues that the religious identity of a college brings up, not the least of which are some confusion and/or ambivalence of some campus community members with respect to the college's religious heritage.

Assess Existing Campus Efforts Educating for Vocation

Another important recommendation for other colleges, based on the experiences of these two case studies, is the need to assess the structural readiness of the campus for vocational exploration. Which elements already exist in the campus culture that encourage, equip, and inspire students in the exploration of vocation? What other areas of campus life could be natural places for introducing vocational exploration? What structures still need to be built to support students in vocational exploration? The findings from these two case studies highlight some of the structural pieces that need to be in place. First, a comprehensive co-curricular program would include some common practices found at many of the PTEV colleges, namely: immersion trips, vocational exploration groups, service opportunities, ministry internships, and a particular emphasis on introducing vocational exploration in the residence halls. On the curricular side, complementary structures to ensure curricular impact for vocational exploration include:

retreats and seminars for faculty to explore the concept of vocation; book studies which incorporate themes of vocational exploration for faculty and staff; and ultimately, targeted courses for students that incorporate vocational exploration.

Cultivate a Common Language Through Community Education

What the 88 PTEV colleges understood so well was the generative potential of the concept of vocation, as well as the broad appeal and relevance of the questions that vocational exploration raises. Vocation is a broad, deep, and by definition, mysterious concept that defies simple formulas and methods. Therefore, most PTEV colleges needed to come to a working definition of vocation as their community understood it. The colleges in this study did likewise, and, in doing so, settled upon some common formulas and discernment methods to start the process and to help everyone share a common language of vocation from a shared understanding of their community's approach to vocational exploration. This common language helped to weave vocational exploration into the fabric of campus life and into the very identity of the college.

For other colleges wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation, it would be necessary to establish a common understanding surrounding vocation as well as a common language for communicating ideas about vocational exploration. Some of the concepts used by the colleges, like Himes' (2002) *Three Key Questions* and Buechner's (1973) pithy formulation of vocation, had broad resonance on a number of other Catholic PTEV colleges. These popular understandings and practical formulations describing the process of vocational exploration may be a trustworthy place to start building a common language. As a result of the experiences, writings, and research of PTEV colleges, more

literature is being added to the field of vocational exploration, as explored in Chapter 2. Any of these titles may offer a book study which could begin a community wide education effort on what vocational exploration means. It is important, however, not to become too attached to any one formulation of vocation, since it is in the community's own articulation of what vocational exploration means for them that the most authentic, effective, and reliable common language for vocation will be created.

While it is crucial to recognize and respect the religious riches of a college's tradition, it is also important to note that students, faculty, and staff alike in these two case studies were often much more comfortable conducting vocational exploration using spiritual rather than overtly religious terms. Put another way, these colleges valued and responded more enthusiastically to the use of spiritual language to describe their vocational exploration in favor of denominationally specific understandings of vocation. In the words of one student, religious language was both "scary" and therefore severely limiting for the students, as well as faculty and staff, even for those that had a facility with their college's religious tradition. Therefore, colleges wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus need to simultaneously and somewhat paradoxically embrace their religious roots while also being careful about the language and methods used for vocational exploration, erring on the side of a more "secular friendly" approach using more spiritual language. For example, students found it more inviting to discover where "your deep gladness meets the world's deep needs" rather than "seeking the will of God," a more traditional religious notion. While both questions may be getting at essentially the same kind vocational exploration, one method was clearly more appealing to a wider

audience than the other. A college wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus, then, will need to find ways to translate the richness of their religious traditions into a language and methodology that is accessible for a generation which prefers to describe themselves as “spiritual but not religious” (Hoge, Dinges, Johnson, & Gonzalez, 2001).

*Engage the Faculty from the Outset, Establish Faculty Liaison, and
Promote Faculty Development in Vocational Exploration*

Since, as one PTEV executive director put it, “what we do in college happens in the classroom,” it is imperative to engage the faculty from the outset. A comprehensive culture of vocational exploration cannot be accomplished by relying solely on co-curricular programming. The classroom must become a locus of vocational exploration. Both colleges in this study did this very effectively by employing a faculty liaison who could invite colleagues into the conversation around that nature of vocation and to encourage them to participate in programs designed to educate faculty on what is entailed in encouraging students to explore vocation. Also, the faculty liaison has central value because the liaison can encourage her/his colleagues to consider integrating vocational exploration into their course work and perhaps even to take it up as a serious topic of study for academic research. Integrating vocational exploration into a variety of courses is an essential component for introducing vocational exploration into the classroom thereby increasing the chances of institutionalizing vocational exploration as a part of the curriculum. Naturally, developing these courses has a stronger chance once faculty “buy-into” the concept and value of vocational exploration. This only happens if the college

pays attention to educating the entire community on the concept of vocation, creating a common language on campus for vocational exploration.

Embrace a General Catholic Ethos

The experiences of these two case studies, since they come from particular religious traditions within the wider Catholic tradition, still leaves unanswered the question: Is there a Catholic ethos common to all Catholic colleges that would support (or impede) cultivating a culture of vocation like at Saint Norbert College and Santa Clara University? Seeking and following God's call in life is a core Catholic value. Catholic colleges wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation may find support in recognizing that encouraging, equipping, and inspiring students to undertake vocational exploration is a core value of Catholic higher education, regardless of whether the college is founded by a particular religious order, is run by a Catholic diocese, or is overseen by a Board of Trustees. What may vary from college to college is the way in which that vocational exploration is understood and undertaken. A potential impediment from the "generically Catholic" approach to vocational exploration is that for centuries vocation in Catholic culture referred to a specific call to religious or ordained life. This more narrow understanding of vocation has historically ghettoized that concept of vocation and relegated it to the privilege of a relative few.

Another learning from these case studies is the need to define a vibrant and clear enough Catholic identity so that students, faculty, and staff can make an informed decision as to whether they want to embrace such an identity and the extent to which they want to participate in that Catholic identity. Because Catholic has meant many different

things to many people over two thousand years, Catholic higher education finds itself grappling with the difficult task of defining what it means to be both authentically Catholic and an institution of higher learning. For Catholic colleges wishing to cultivate a culture of vocation, then, it seems necessary to assess the state of the particular way this college chooses to define and manifest its Catholic identity, aligning its understanding of vocation and its strategy for engaging the campus community in vocational exploration with the college's stated mission, vision, and values, especially as related to its particular understanding of being Catholic.

Limitations and Significance of the Study

Some of the limitations of this study should be quite evident. As this was a study of just two colleges' attempts to create a culture of vocation on campus, the ability to generalize the findings across a broad spectrum of colleges is limited. Many factors go into creating a campus culture, both related and unrelated to the notion of the vocational climate. How one can positively impact campus culture is a complex topic. Therefore, any insights gleaned from a cross case study comparison of two colleges cannot necessarily be relied upon as prescriptions—but rather a framework—for building a culture of vocation on other college campuses.

Given these limitations to the study, there is still considerable significance in the findings that could be used to inform future research efforts and for a broader array of colleges—both religious and secular—seeking to cultivate a culture of vocation on campus. What the study may yield is a richer understanding of what is possible, rather than just a reporting of what is typical. Additionally, since there are common cultural

elements on all Jesuit campuses, namely the Jesuit philosophy of education and Ignatian spirituality, the findings may be even more significant for Jesuit colleges and universities. Here Lincoln and Guba's (1985) notion of transferability is useful, recognizing a "degree of congruence between sending and receiving contexts" (p 124), i.e., one Jesuit university to another.

Finally, Donmoyer (1990) sums up the potential usefulness of case studies, such as these, recognizing that its findings may function heuristically, rather than prescribing particular actions (p. 182). As one educator at a Jesuit college put it so succinctly, our job is not to give answers but rather to ask better questions (Groome, personal communication, 1997). These case studies may allow colleges to ask better questions—rather than provide a blueprint—as they seek to construct a campus culture of vocation.

Areas for Future Research

Some additional questions derived from conducting the study involve the issue of how to create and cultivate a mentoring environment on campus. Regarding structural issues, the study left unanswered the question of which co-curricular programs seem to have the greatest impact upon students' vocational reflection. To help answer this question of great interest, especially to practitioners in the field, it may be helpful to conduct a study of best practices among the 88 PTEV schools. Likewise, the study left unanswered the question of what is the most effective curricular strategy for embedding vocational exploration into the curriculum. It seems clear from these case studies that co-curricular and curricular structures work best when they build upon already existing structures at the college. Therefore, any college wishing to build structures to create a

mentoring environment for meaning, purpose, and vocation, would necessarily need to adapt their efforts to structures on campus, especially identifying which areas on campus may already support such efforts. Nevertheless, a best practices study of curricular strategies at the 88 PTEV schools could yield some interesting findings. It may be possible to conduct a best practices study that queries schools on both co-curricular and curricular strategies through a Delphi study.²

Another set of questions left unanswered concerns the long-term impact of participation in PTEV for students, as well as for faculty and staff, upon their vocational decisions. It would be interesting to see how participation in various elements of DISCOVER and FLV impact students' decision making about vocational choices following college. A longitudinal study could yield some interesting findings and would have important implications for the design and implementation of vocational exploration programming in the future. It would be particularly interesting to test if student involvement in multiple programs increased students' commitment to vocational exploration following college, given DISCOVER's observation that the Program seemed to have the most impact upon students who participated in multiple programs providing a certain synergy as an "interlocked and overlapped" experience.

Another set of studies that could be useful includes more in-depth case studies of other PTEV initiatives. Since one of the major findings from these case studies was the

²The Delphi technique is a structured process for collecting and distilling knowledge from a group of experts through a series of questionnaires interspersed with controlled opinion feedback. It allows for geographically dispersed, pre-selected experts to deal systematically with a complex problem or task (Hanson, 2007)

profound impact of adapting to, allying with, and eventually influencing the culture on each campus, it may be instructive to conduct more in depth case studies of other PTEV initiatives. A comparative case study of Jesuit schools may reveal which vocational initiatives work best in a culture formed in the values and traditions of Jesuit higher education. Likewise, a comparative case study of PTEV initiatives at a Catholic college with a similarly situated college founded in a Protestant tradition may highlight the impact of the different approaches that Catholic and Protestant colleges took toward vocational exploration. It also may yield interesting findings about the differences in their understanding of the theological notion of vocation, itself, in the Catholic and Protestant traditions.

One last set of questions that still need to be answered surrounds the issue of creating a mentoring environment on a secular campus. All 88 PTEV colleges are religiously affiliated schools. The theological exploration of vocation naturally presumes a religious, or at the very least, a theistic orientation and interpretation of vocation. However, non-religiously affiliated schools may borrow insights from the PTEV experiences in their attempt to create and cultivate a mentoring environment for students to explore a sense of purpose and life-direction.

Potential Contributions to the Field of Leadership Studies

In her recent article entitled "Leadership, Spirituality, and the College as a Mentoring Environment," Sharon Daloz Parks (2008) argues that colleges have a privileged place and ever more urgent responsibility to create a mentoring environment

for young adults as they prepare for life and leadership in our complex, interdependent 21st century world. She asserts:

In every time, but especially in these times, our students require mentoring environments. A mentoring environment provides vital support for a critical transformation: that is, the move from a more limited world view and capacity to make a meaningful contribution to a more adequate world view and enhanced capacity to contribute in positive ways to the ongoing evolution of life. **By intention or default**, every college and university is a mentoring environment—especially for students and for the younger members of the faculty and staff. (Parks, 2008, p. 6) (emphasis added)

If Parks' assertion is true that every college operates as a mentoring environment either by intention or by default, studying how to create and cultivate a more intentional, supportive, and efficacious mentoring environment on campus becomes even more imperative. This study may offer some insights for how to create such a mentoring environment on college campuses.

The first insight from the study that I would highlight for colleges wishing to cultivate a mentoring environment on campus is the central importance of respecting and engaging pre-existing cultural elements that might already be in place to cultivate a mentoring environment. In the case of our two colleges, the religious foundations and spiritual heritage of the two colleges provided fertile ground for creating a mentoring environment. For non-religious affiliated colleges, the liberal arts core curriculum may provide a natural ally for cultivating a mentoring environment on the curricular side, since liberal arts courses may most easily be adapted to provide students opportunities for reflecting upon their deepest beliefs, shared values, and maybe even personal passions. For example, a humanities course could give students a writing assignment to journal

about their life experiences and interpret what meaning that has for them and for their future life direction.

In a similar way, there may be existing structures on campus that might be natural opportunities to mentor students. For example, many colleges offer and may even require academic advising for students as they choose courses and eventually a major. Such advising opportunities offer a natural entrée into conversations about meaning, purpose, and life direction. Likewise, co-curricular programs for a student's holistic development may offer a good starting place for cultivating a more intentional mentoring environment. For example, student services may already provide peer mentoring programs which could be augmented to include professional mentors as well.

Another insight from the study is the importance of recognizing the power and potential of creating a shared language on campus that supports a deep and meaningful exploration of vocation. Establishing a common language for mentoring students in their search for meaning, purpose, and vocation, can go a long way towards creating a mentoring environment. The two colleges in the study invested significant resources to familiarize community members with the idea of vocation and helped to generate a language for exploring vocation. Other colleges could undertake an educational effort on campus, based on verbiage that reflects the professed values of the college, to create a language which would support the creation of the intellectual infrastructure necessary to cultivate a mentoring environment.

One final key insight from the study is the role of appropriate leadership and the need for higher administrative support. In order to establish and sustain a mentoring

environment on campus, the role of effective leadership within staff, faculty, and student populations cannot be overstated. In our study, both colleges had leaders who believed in collaborative, broad based leadership for their Programs. This shared leadership enabled the Programs to make inroads into many corners of campus life. Any college seeking to create a mentoring environment on campus clearly would need to engage partners from across campus, both in academics and in student services. Likewise, both colleges had staunch and consistent support from higher administration. Naturally, it helped to have a two million dollar grant backing your efforts. "Cultivating whole environments for the exploration of vocation" may take significant resources in addition to sustained institutional commitment. However, helping to build a more adequate and intentional mentoring environment may be possible even without a multi-million dollar grant since many of the examples discussed would cost relatively little, except time, energy, and the willingness to be an active part of a mentoring environment.

Researcher's Reflections and Final Conclusions

"Every institution of higher education serves in at least some measure as a community of imagination in which every professor is potentially a spiritual guide and every syllabus a confession of faith" (Parks, 2000, p. 159). In higher education today, Parks (2000) notes, there seems to be an epistemological assumption that colleges need to be neutral with respect to questions of meaning, purpose and values. Along with this shift of focus in higher education, talk of vocation for the common good has given way to more utilitarian concerns and careerism. The academy seems more ready to prepare college graduates to get a job rather than pursue a calling for some higher good. It is

precisely during the college years that the critical thought, imagination, inner authority, and the leadership potential within young adults is formed. These truly are the “critical years” (Parks, 1986) for vocational formation.

“If higher education is to serve the formation of faithful citizenship in a complex world, attention needs to be given to the myriad of opportunities in the context of higher education to recover the practices of hearth, table, and commons, to reclaim the art and duty of contemplation, and to create safe spaces for constructive encounters with otherness.” (Parks, 2000, p. 172). The PTEV colleges in this study have recovered many of these practices that Parks (2000) cites as necessary for the formation of concerned and responsible global citizens in a complex world.

Practices of hearth, table, and commons, for Parks (1986, 2000), refers to re-creation of a vibrant common life where significant conversations that support and enhance the quality of our communal life, locally and globally, routinely take place. The PTEV colleges in this case study provided multiple opportunities for students, faculty, and staff, to gather together in conversation about meaning, purpose, and passion in life. Their understanding of vocation as the intersection of an individual’s talents and personal passions with the true needs of the world challenged students to think of their vocation and life plans in terms beyond themselves and directed toward the common good. Similarly, the Colleges in this study made “the art and duty of contemplation” central to their PTEV initiatives, embedding significant vocational reflection in all their educational efforts. Finally, the Programs created by the PTEV colleges have created “safe space for constructive encounters with otherness” (Parks, 1996, 2000) by enabling their students to

build community with and to serve those different from themselves through local service opportunities with the economically disadvantaged and immersion trips serving those in “marginal communities” abroad.

Developmental opportunities that support and challenge young adult in these “critical years” do not happen automatically, nor do they occur in a social vacuum. Young adults need a more adequate mentoring environment (Parks, 2008). Colleges that make a concerted effort to cultivate a more intentional, supportive and efficacious mentoring environment can become a vibrant community of imagination where all members work together “planting the seeds of profession and vocation” (Parks, 2000, p. 172) oriented toward the common good, as these PTEV colleges have so beautifully demonstrated.

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Appendix A**Interview Guides for Santa Clara University**

Questions for Program Director

1. Which strategies have been employed to help students to explore vocation?
2. What is the overall goal of the DISCOVER initiative? What do you hope to accomplish?
3. What programs for the theological exploration of vocation were initiated as a result of the Lilly Foundation grant?
4. Why were each of these programs selected?
5. What has facilitated or inhibited the implementation of DISCOVER initiatives? What challenges did you encounter as you attempted to create a campus culture of vocation?
6. How did the campus culture appear to change (if at all) as a result of the initiative? Conversely, how did the initiatives need to adapt (if at all) to the campus culture?
7. What religious themes, and or spiritual traditions were utilized in the design and implementation of DISCOVER at Santa Clara University?
8. In your estimation, what is the relationship between Ignatian spirituality and the vocational development efforts at Santa Clara University?
9. Where is this relationship strongest, or most evident? Weakest, or least evident?
10. How does this relationship help and/or hinder the cultivation of a culture of vocation on campus?
11. What lessons and implications from the colleges' efforts might be useful for other Jesuit and non-Jesuit Catholic colleges seeking to support students in exploring vocation?

Questions for PTEV Program Administrators

1. Which strategies have been employed to help students to explore vocation?
2. What is the overall goal of the DISCOVER initiative? What do you hope to accomplish?
3. What programs for the theological exploration of vocation were initiated as a result of the Lilly Foundation grant?
4. Why was each of these programs selected?
5. Who participated in each of the programs?
6. Please describe in detail each of the DISCOVER programs that you are responsible for administering.
7. What is the purpose of your piece of the program? What are the primary hopes/goals/outcomes for your particular piece of the DISCOVER initiative?
8. How has the DISCOVER initiative, in your area, evolved over time?
9. What has facilitated and/or inhibited the program's implementation?
10. What do you understand to be the strengths and weaknesses of DISCOVER at Santa Clara University? What have you experienced to be the successes and failures of DISCOVER at Santa Clara University?
11. In your estimation, what is the relationship between Ignatian spirituality and the vocational development efforts at Santa Clara University?
12. How has the Jesuit tradition and/or Ignatian spirituality impacted the design of DISCOVER? How does it help students with the exploration of vocation?
13. What lessons and implications from the colleges' efforts might be useful for other Jesuit and non-Jesuit Catholic colleges seeking to support students in exploring vocation?

Questions for Faculty PTEV Participants

1. Which strategies have been employed to help students to explore vocation?
2. What is the overall goal of the DISCOVER initiative? What does it hope to accomplish?
3. What has been your involvement with the DISCOVER program at Santa Clara University?
4. What prompted you to participate in DISCOVER? What motivated you to select the program(s) that you ultimately participated in?
5. What were your hopes, goals, and/or objectives in choosing to participate in DISCOVER?
6. How has your participation in DISCOVER influenced your teaching and research, if at all? How has your participation influenced your own exploration of vocation, if at all?
7. In your estimation, what is the relationship between Ignatian spirituality and the vocational development efforts at Santa Clara University?
8. What lessons and implications from Santa Clara University efforts might be useful for other Jesuit and non-Jesuit Catholic colleges seeking to support students in exploring vocation?

Questions for Student PTEV Participants

1. Please describe in detail each of the DISCOVER programs in which you have participated?
2. What was your experience like? What happened? What did you learn, if anything?
3. What prompted you to participate in DISCOVER? Why did you select the program(s) that you ultimately participated in?
4. What did you hope to gain from your participation?
5. What, if anything, do you think you have gained from your participation in DISCOVER?
6. How has your participation in DISCOVER impacted your exploration of vocation, if at all? How has your vocational journey changed, if at all, since your involvement with DISCOVER?
7. How could the DISCOVER experience been more helpful for you?
8. How has the Jesuit tradition and/or Ignatian spirituality impacted the design of DISCOVER? How did it help you to explore of vocation, if at all?
9. How could DISCOVER at Santa Clara University be more impactful for students, faculty, and staff? How could DISCOVER be improved?
10. What advice would you give to other Catholic colleges seeking to support students in exploring vocation?

Appendix B

Interview Guides for Saint Norbert College

Questions for Program Director

1. Which strategies have been employed to help students to explore vocation?
2. What is the overall goal of the FLV initiative? What do you hope to accomplish?
3. What programs for the theological exploration of vocation were initiated as a result of the Lilly Foundation grant?
4. Why were each of these programs selected?
5. What has facilitated or inhibited the implementation of FLV initiatives? What challenges did you encounter as you attempted to create a campus culture of vocation?
6. How did the campus culture appear to change (if at all) as a result of the initiative? Conversely, how did the initiatives need to adapt (if at all) to the campus culture?
7. What religious themes, and or spiritual traditions were utilized in the design and implementation of FLV at Saint Norbert College?
8. In your estimation, what is the relationship between Norbertine spirituality and the vocational development efforts at Saint Norbert College?
9. Where is this relationship strongest, or most evident? Weakest, or least evident?
10. How does this relationship help and/or hinder the cultivation of a culture of vocation on campus?
11. What lessons and implications from the colleges' efforts might be useful for other Catholic colleges seeking to support students in exploring vocation?

Questions for PTEV Program Administrators

1. Which strategies have been employed to help students to explore vocation?
2. What is the overall goal of the FLV initiative? What do you hope to accomplish?
3. What programs for the theological exploration of vocation were initiated as a result of the Lilly Foundation grant?
4. Why was each of these programs selected?
5. Who participated in each of the programs?
6. Please describe in detail each of the FLV programs that you are responsible for administering.
7. What is the purpose of your piece of the program? What are the primary hopes/goals/outcomes for your particular piece of the FLV initiative?
8. How has the FLV initiative, in your area, evolved over time?
9. What has facilitated and/or inhibited the program's implementation?
10. What do you understand to be the strengths and weaknesses of FLV at Saint Norbert College? What have you experienced to be the successes and failures of FLV at Saint Norbert College?
11. In your estimation, what is the relationship between Norbertine spirituality and the vocational development efforts at Saint Norbert College?
12. How has Norbertine spirituality impacted the design of FLV? How does it help students with the exploration of vocation?
13. What lessons and implications from the colleges' efforts might be useful for other Catholic colleges seeking to support students in exploring vocation?

Questions for Faculty PTEV Participants

1. Which strategies have been employed to help students to explore vocation?
2. What is the overall goal of the FLV initiative? What does it hope to accomplish?
3. What has been your involvement with the FLV program at Saint Norbert College?
4. What prompted you to participate in FLV? What motivated you to select the program(s) that you ultimately participated in?
5. What were your hopes, goals, and/or objectives in choosing to participate in FLV?
6. How has your participation in FLV influenced your teaching and research, if at all? How has your participation influenced your own exploration of vocation, if at all?
7. In your estimation, what is the relationship between Norbertine spirituality and the vocational development efforts at Saint Norbert College?
8. What lessons and implications from Saint Norbert College efforts might be useful for other Catholic colleges seeking to support students in exploring vocation?

Questions for Student PTEV Participants

1. Please describe in detail each of the FLV programs in which you have participated?
2. What was your experience like? What happened? What did you learn, if anything?
3. What prompted you to participate in FLV? Why did you select the program(s) that you ultimately participated in?
4. What did you hope to gain from your participation?
5. What, if anything, do you think you have gained from your participation in FLV?
6. How has your participation in FLV impacted your exploration of vocation, if at all? How has your vocational journey changed, if at all, since your involvement with FLV?
7. How could the FLV experience been more helpful for you?
8. How has Norbertine spirituality impacted the design of FLV? How did it help you to explore of vocation, if at all?
9. How could FLV at Saint Norbert College be more impactful for students, faculty, and staff? How could FLV be improved?
10. What advice would you give to other Catholic colleges seeking to support students in exploring vocation?