

RENEWING SPIRITUAL CAPITAL: AN URGENT PRIORITY FOR THE FUTURE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION INTERNATIONALLY

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ABSTRACT

When researching the responses of 60 Catholic school leaders to their demanding work in English inner-city secondary schools, I encountered evidence of a deep vocational commitment. These headteachers were clearly drawing upon a spiritual and religious resource which empowered them and which gave them a sustained sense of mission, purpose and hope in their educational work. In the concluding chapter of *Catholic Schools: Mission, Markets and Morality* (2002), I referred to this sustaining and inspirational factor as 'spiritual capital'. What I did not do, as some critics have pointed out, was to provide an adequate historical and theoretical elaboration to this concept which might be used in future research and academic writing. What follows is an attempt to remedy this omission and to provide a more detailed understanding of what spiritual capital is, and of its crucial relevance for the future effectiveness and integrity of the Catholic education mission worldwide.

Keywords: spiritual capital; vocation; charism; formation; renewal.

On the emergence of the concept of spiritual capital

During my fieldwork research for the book, *Catholic Schools: Mission, Markets and Morality* (Grace, 2002a), I had the opportunity to interview 60 Catholic secondary school leaders working in schools largely serving inner-city and other deprived urban communities in London, Liverpool and Birmingham in the UK. These school leaders were not simply theorists of 'the preferential option for the poor' in Catholic education; they were front line practitioners and agents of its realisation in the everyday activities of the schools. In their professional lives they encountered crises, conflict and challenges from many sources as they attempted to develop educational cultures characterised by faith, hope, love, moral and social formation and the fulfillment of talents according to Catholic principles¹.

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On the one hand, the communities which they served were frequently marked by the dysfunctional effects of poverty, unemployment, broken families, drug and alcohol abuse and criminality in general. In other words, the structural dysfunctions and contradictions of the wider society, were present in a concentrated form in the localities in which they tried to realise the Catholic educational mission. They had to deal with the consequences of this as mediated by the behaviour and attitudes of the young people who entered their schools from these disadvantaged communities. To be a Catholic school leader in such contexts was to encounter day to day challenges to one's own faith, hope, love and charity.

On the other hand, the English state in the 1980s and 1990s intensified its expectations for academic performance and 'output' of measurable examination results, regardless of the social and economic challenges which individual schools faced. Schools which failed to show year-on-year improvement in their academic results, would be subject to a process of 'naming and shaming', as local and national media reported these 'results' to a wider public.

To be a Catholic school leader in these contexts at this time was to experience the long historical tension between 'rendering to Caesar' and 'rendering to God' now in an intensified form. The English state ('Caesar') was making academic demands upon the schools of the inner-city which made no allowance for the many difficulties (at the level of staffing, students and community support) which the school leaders encountered. For all their efforts, public humiliation might be the result.

In these circumstances it would not have been surprising if my interviews with these 60 school leaders had revealed a group of men and women who were low in morale, exhausted, embittered and in the process of losing hope about the Catholic school mission in the urban front line. However, this was not the case. While there were variations in the responses which they gave to particular issues, I became aware that I was encountering a constant factor across most of the sample, a factor of vocational commitment. The majority of these headteachers in their demanding work in challenging urban schools were clearly drawing upon a spiritual and religious resource which empowered them and gave them a sustained sense of mission, purpose and hope in their work.

In the last chapter of *Catholic Schools* I tried to reflect upon this unexpected outcome by referring to this 'constant factor' as 'spiritual capital' possessed by these school leaders. What I did not do, as some critics have pointed out, was to provide an adequate historical and theoretical elaboration of this concept which might be used in subsequent research and academic writing. What follows is an attempt to remedy this defect and to provide a more detailed elaboration of spiritual capital and of its relevance for the future of Catholic education.

Pierre Bourdieu: Education and Forms of Capital

My use of the concept of spiritual capital in Catholic education was strongly influenced by my reading of the work of the French social theorist, Pierre Bourdieu, and, in

particular by his paper ‘The Forms of Capital’ (Bourdieu, 1986) and his article ‘Genesis and Structure of the Religious Field’ (Bourdieu, 1991).

Bourdieu (1986) referred to three forms of capital which need to be considered in analysing any educational system, i.e., economic capital whose effects are mediated by social class inequalities in the lives of students; social capital constituted in different access to supportive social networks and cultural capital viewed as resources of knowledge, language and appropriate social relations differentially available to students in their homes. As he argued: “It is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not only in the one form recognised by economic theory” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 242).

In his 1991 article, Bourdieu introduced a further category, i.e., ‘religious capital’. In his analysis of the ‘Religious Field’, Bourdieu suggested that religious capital was: “the monopolization of the administration of the goods of salvation by a body of religious specialists... of a deliberately organised corpus of secret (and therefore rare) knowledge”ⁱⁱⁱ (p. 9). This maintained a strict boundary between the priesthood (possessed of religious capital) and the laity (excluded from such capital).

As David Swartz (1997) observes in his valuable overview of Bourdieu’s work, all these various forms of capital are also forms of power, whether they are material, social, cultural or religious, and for Swartz this constitutes a ‘political economy of symbolic power’ (Swartz, 1997, p. 65).

However, what I was trying to describe, arising out of my research analysis was not a political economy of symbolic power instantiated in social and cultural structures but rather a symbolic power instantiated in individual school leaders.

They were not, in general, possessed of religious capitalⁱⁱⁱ (in the manner described by Bourdieu) but they were possessed of individual spiritual capital which was, on the basis of my analysis, a source of personal power. This was not ‘power over’ but it was ‘power to maintain’ an educational mission and to animate and inspire others in that mission. In this way I extended Bourdieu’s analysis of socially structured forms of power-capital, to include a form of power-capital that was located in people.

My preliminary and inadequate attempts to elaborate this concept were expressed in 2002 as: “resources of faith and values derived from commitment to a religious tradition”, and also in the form:

Spiritual capital can be a source of empowerment because it provides a transcendent impulse which can guide judgement and action in the mundane world. Those within education whose own formation has involved the acquisition of spiritual capital do not act simply as professionals but as professionals and witnesses (Grace, 2002 a, p. 236)^{iv}.

This left many questions unanswered, for instance, how did these school leaders come to be possessed of spiritual capital and what other forms of spiritual capital might exist in other participants in the schools? Another crucial question was that, if the acquisition of spiritual capital by these school leaders had been an historical process, how was spiritual capital being renewed or not, in their successors as leaders and also among

Catholic school teachers and school governors in general? What does ‘Spiritual’ mean in these contexts^v? These questions and others will now be considered in more detail.

Spiritual capital, theological literacy and charism

It is necessary in elaborating the meaning of spiritual capital as a feature of Catholic education to distinguish it from two related terms which can be found in the literature. These terms are ‘theological literacy’ and ‘charism’.

In 2007, Nick Weeks, formerly Diocesan Director of Schools for the Diocese of Lancaster, made an original contribution to the field in his text *Theological Literacy and Catholic Schools*. Weeks argued that faced with many contemporary challenges, what was required from Catholic school leaders, governors and teachers was a higher level of theological literacy which he defined as: “Theological literacy is the ability to communicate knowledgeably how the faith of the Church relates to contemporary everyday experience...” (Weeks and Grace, 2007, p. 8).

While Catholic schools were involved in the development of new forms of literacy such as information technology and computer literacy, the development of theological literacy among both teachers and students, was, Weeks argued, relatively neglected and this threatened the long term vitality, authenticity and distinctiveness of the Catholic education mission. Such literacy was essential.

There are clearly important relationships between the concept of ‘theological literacy’ and of ‘spiritual capital’ but there are also qualitative differences which will be discussed later.

The concept of ‘charism’ now makes frequent appearances in the literature of Catholic education and, once again, there are obvious relationships between charism and spiritual capital but, at the same time, some differences.

In a ground-breaking article, in *Transmission of the charism: a major challenge for Catholic education*, John Lydon (2009) provided a detailed and scholarly examination of the various meanings of charism and of their relevance for the future of Catholic education. In essence, charism refers to a special gift of the Holy Spirit given by the grace of God to those individuals who are called to various forms of leadership with the capacity to inspire others in the mission of salvation^{vi}. Lydon shows how the charism of inspired leadership was given to individuals such as St Paul, St Francis of Assisi and the founders of major religious congregations such as St Ignatius and St John Bosco.

In the case of the many religious congregations with missions in education established from the Counter-Reformation to the present day, Catholic educational history records an impressive number of charismatic leaders including John Baptist de La Salle, Angela Merici, Mary Ward, Madeleine Sophie Barat and others who had the capacity to inspire disciples in the educational missions of the Church in the modern period^{vii}.

In what senses therefore can spiritual capital be distinguished from theological literacy, on the one hand, and charism on the other? Theological literacy, as defined by Weeks and Grace (2007), involves a command of theological knowledge, an ability to

communicate it effectively and to relate it to the challenges of everyday life. Charism is a particular gift of the Holy Spirit to certain individuals empowering them to become charismatic leaders of new movements in the Church. Spiritual capital, it can be argued, draws upon theological literacy but adds to it the dimension of a personal witness to faith in practice, action and relationships. Spiritual capital compared with charism is also a form of personal empowerment but not of such a high order – it is not the dramatic charism and charisma of exceptional leadership but rather the sustaining resource for everyday leadership in Christian living and working^{viii}.

It is the argument of this paper that it is spiritual capital understood at this level which has historically provided the animating force and dynamic motive power of Catholic schooling internationally. The crucial question for the future is: are the reserves of spiritual capital in the Catholic school system being renewed or is the system in contemporary conditions living on a declining asset?

The Church, Lay Catholics and witnesses to Faith.

In 1982 the Congregation for Catholic Education issued an important document: *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith*. Recognising the continual decline in the number of priests and members of religious orders working in Catholic schools, the document sought to provide a serious theorisation of the vocation of the lay Catholic educator and of the concept of an education profession as a form of vocation. This was stated in ‘ideal type’ constructs:

The Catholic educator must be a source of spiritual inspiration... The Lay Catholic educator is a person who exercises a specific mission within the Church by living the faith... with an apostolic intention... for the integral formation of the human person (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, p. 14).

The whole document can be read as an attempt by the Church to reconstitute lay Catholic teachers in schools as a mediated form of a religious congregation albeit secular and not bound by formal vows. They were however expected to be a source of spiritual inspiration and to have an apostolic intention in their work. Lay Catholic teachers were called upon to become witnesses to faith in the school context:

The more completely an educator can give concrete witness to the model of the ideal person that is being presented to the students, the more this ideal will be believed and imitated... It is in this context that the faith witness of the lay teacher becomes especially important. Students should see in their teachers the Christian attitude and behaviour that is often absent from the secular atmosphere in which they live (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, p. 19).

It can be argued that what the Church was attempting to do at this historical juncture was to reconstitute its declining resources of spiritual capital in education (as the religious congregations weakened) by generating new resources of spiritual capital in the lay school leaders and teachers who had become the contemporary agents of the education mission in many countries. The *Lay Catholics in Schools* document identified a need for processes of permanent formation (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, p. 36) to be available for the religious and spiritual nurture of the lay missionaries

of education in school and called upon bishops, priests and religious congregations to provide such formation.

Much of the formal teaching of the Catholic Church is provided in the mode of 'apostolic exhortations'. The 1982 analysis and suggestions from the Congregation for Catholic Education in Rome followed this historical pattern. It was a document of exhortation to the international Catholic community to recognise the seriousness of declining spiritual capital in Catholic schooling and to take action to reconstitute it in new forms.

This provokes the necessary question; in such circumstances, is exhortation alone sufficient to meet the scale of the major transformations required in the spiritual formation of the next generation of Catholic educators?

On the formation of spiritual capital

In 2006 Archbishop Michael Miller, CSB, and then Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education in Rome reflected upon the changes from religious to lay leadership in the Catholic schools of the USA.

Archbishop Miller noted that in 1965 there were 180,000 religious sisters in the USA compared with fewer than 75,000 in 2006 and those religious women now constituted less than 4% of the professional staff of Catholic schools, while 95% of the teachers were lay persons. He concluded that 'The shift to lay leadership in Catholic schools which has followed from the dearth of religious, presents its own set of challenges' (Miller, 2006, pp. 4-5).

Reflecting upon these challenges the Archbishop implied that consecrated religious in Catholic education had been possessed of special characteristics (which I would call spiritual capital) arising from their lengthy formation:

Because of their special consecration, their particular experience of the gifts of the Spirit, their constant listening to the word of God, their practice of discernment, their rich heritage of pedagogical traditions... and their profound grasp of spiritual truth, consecrated persons are able to be especially effective in educational activities (Miller, 2006, p. 4)^{ix}.

This is, I believe, a particularly clear statement about the ways in which spiritual capital was instantiated in the members of religious congregations across the world who were responsible for the development and leadership of the Catholic education systems internationally. Thus John Baptist de la Salle insisted that the members of his teaching congregation must be thoroughly formed in three core values: 'The spirit of faith', 'zeal in the ministry of teaching' and 'trust in God's Providence and Holy Will' (Koch et al., 2004, p. 21).

As laypersons have increasingly come to replace religious as both school leaders and teachers, Archbishop Miller points out that: 'To be effective bearers of the Church's educational tradition, laypersons who teach in Catholic schools need a religious formation that is equal to their... professional formation' (Miller, 2006, p. 5). This opens

up the question, are Catholic laypersons, now school leaders and teachers, receiving such extended and in-depth religious and spiritual formation as did their predecessors?

The formation experiences of 60 Catholic headteachers in England

In interviews conducted with 60 school leaders involved in my research project (1997-2000) questions were asked about their own formation experiences^x. This revealed that many of them had come from family backgrounds of prayer and regular attendance at Mass, which had been reinforced by attendance at Catholic primary schools. Particularly influential, according to their accounts, were their subsequent attendance at secondary schools under the jurisdiction of religious congregations and their further attendance at teacher education colleges also operated by religious congregations. As a result of these latter influences, 15 of these school leaders had encountered their own vocational call to the religious life and had become members of congregations such as the Society of Jesus, the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of Notre Dame, the Faithful Companions of Jesus, the Congregation of La Sainte Union, the Sisters of Charity of St Paul, the Society of the Sacred Heart, the De La Salle Brothers and the Irish Christian Brothers.

The majority of the research participants who had not encountered a call to the religious life, witnessed to the experience of having acquired a strong sense of lay vocation for teaching as a result of the role models they had observed among their religious teachers and college lecturers. As one of them expressed it:

I saw teaching as a vocation. It was on a par, believe it or not, with going into the priesthood. I have always taught in Catholic schools. I think it's an enormous challenge to actually spread the Faith in a community like this (Headteacher of St Dominic's in a deprived community in Liverpool at Grace, 2002a, pp. 135-136).

Questioned about their personal constructs of the Catholic educational mission (as distinct from formal statements of the Church and the formal commitments of school mission documents)^{xi} over half of the sample made strong and explicit references to faith leadership and conveyed a committed sense of personal spiritual vocation as central to their conceptions of the role of a Catholic school leader. This sense of personal mission was expressed in various ways:

The question is what have you personally got to bring and the answer is, one's own relationship with Christ... to be a role model where it is quite clear that one's own beliefs and practises are firmly rooted in the teachings of Christ and built on a prayer life not neglected because of 'busyness' (Female lay headteacher).

The importance of regular attendance at spiritual retreats. I think that has allowed me to focus. It is not well behaved boys, it is not school uniform, and it is not academic results. At the end of the day the mission is achieved through spirituality (Male lay headteacher)^{xii}.

I always give priority to some spiritual aspect of the life of the school. I try to do that to remind myself and the community at large that the purpose of the mission of this place is to further the Christian ethos (Female religious headteacher).

It can be argued from the research evidence^{xiii} that this particular sample and generation of Catholic school leaders had been significantly influenced by formative experiences arising from their home backgrounds, their Catholic school education and their teaching formation in colleges operated by religious congregations. There was evidence that transmission of spiritual capital had taken place from religious congregations to these mainly lay headteachers in forming a distinct sense of teaching as a vocation.

Some of them explicitly acknowledged this during the course of the interviews. They were possessed of resources of spiritual capital derived from these formative experiences which sustained them during the day-to-day trials of inner-city headship.

This is a leadership phenomenon which must be apparent across the whole international network of Catholic schools. What is happening to Catholic school education internationally now is that with the decline in the numbers of consecrated persons as leaders and teachers in the schools, the spiritual capital of these religious has been passed on to a first generation of lay leaders and teachers who have experienced the formative influence of their charisms. These first generations are the inheritors of the animating spiritual capital in education formerly possessed by members of the religious congregations. The reconstitution of spiritual capital in Catholic education has therefore, in many locations, completed (for better or worse) its first stage transmission process. The urgent question now to be considered is what is happening to this spiritual capital in subsequent transmission processes?^{xiv}

The renewal of spiritual capital in contemporary Catholic education

In commenting on these transmission processes, in the context of Catholic schools in the USA, Archbishop Miller argued that: “It is up to the ecclesial community to see to it that such formation is required of and made available to all Catholic school educators...In this regard, Catholic universities have a special responsibility to assist Catholic schools” (Miller, 2006, p. 5). Have Catholic universities and colleges responded to this need?

Reviewing the situation in the USA, Sister Patricia Helene Earl, IHM, (2007) has noted that while programmes to assist the formation of Catholic school principals have been established in a number of universities, the focus of the programmes has been largely upon relevant educational and theological knowledge. She argues that in addition to such knowledge content, ‘teachers also need guidance to develop their spirituality’ (Earl, 2007, p. 55). In her chapter in the *International Handbook of Catholic Education*, Earl outlines an innovative programme of Spirituality and Virtues Seminars provided by the Arlington Diocese, Virginia in conjunction with Marymount University. However, given that this is described as an ‘original’ approach to this issue, it suggests that programmes for the formation of spiritual capital among Catholic school leaders and teachers are not yet a significant feature of Catholic higher education in the USA.

The findings of the *International Handbook of Catholic Education* (Grace and O’Keefe, 2007) seem to confirm this situation as applying also to the programmes offered by Catholic universities and colleges across the world. Each contributor to the *Handbook* was invited to identify the challenges for Catholic schools in over 30 different societies and to report upon the responses being made to these challenges. A close reading of the 45 chapters in the *Handbook* reveals very little evidence that Catholic universities and

colleges across the world are assisting diocesan administrations in programmes designed to strengthen spiritual capital among school leaders and teachers. However, the natural historical constituency to organise programmes for the transmission of spiritual capital is clearly the religious congregations with missions in education. Lydon (2009) reports the initiatives being taken by the Salesians and there is evidence of the provision of programmes of spiritual formation by the Jesuits, the De la Salle and Christian Brothers, the Marists, the Sisters of Notre Dame and the Sisters of Mercy among others. What we lack is any sense of a coordinated policy in this crucial area (as suggested by Archbishop Miller) or any extensive research and evaluation studies to draw together the outcomes of such programmes.

In the opinion of Thomas Groome: ‘If the foundation charisms of religious institutions cannot be broken open among teaching colleagues, there will be no alternative but to call it [the Catholic education project] off’ (Groome, 2001; quoted in Lydon, 2009, p. 51). This is probably overstating the case, because charisms or spiritual capital exist in other forms,^{xv} but given the central significance of spiritual capital in the formation of Catholic school leaders and teachers, present responses to the challenge do appear to be disturbingly *laissez faire*. In other words, there does not seem to be enough practical response to the need to regenerate spiritual capital among lay Catholic educators exhortation alone has not produced enough practical programmes to meet the scale of the contemporary challenge.

The Conferences of Catholic Bishops internationally who have responsibility for the mission integrity of Catholic schools in each country should place the renewal of spiritual capital in Catholic education high on their priority agendas and should give leadership in encouraging (and even requiring) formation programmes to be created by various agencies.

Failure to do this will result in the inevitable depletion of the historical deposit of spiritual capital in our schools and the gradual incorporation of Catholic schools into a secularised and marketised contemporary educational culture^{xvi}.

Seeing spiritual capital as an urgent priority.

It is now possible to make a more developed historical and theoretical elaboration of the concept of spiritual capital, as understood in the Catholic tradition in education, than that first attempted in 2002. In summary form, spiritual capital may be said to be:

- resources of faith and values derived from a vocational commitment to a religious tradition (in this case the Catholic tradition),
- a source of vocational empowerment because it provides a transcendent awareness which can guide judgement and action in the mundane world so that those whose own formation has involved the acquisition of spiritual capital do not act in education simply as professionals but as professionals and witnesses,
- a form of spirituality in which the whole of human life is viewed in terms of a conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ and the saints, through the indwelling of the Spirit,
- a form of spirituality which has been the animating, inspirational and dynamic spirit which has empowered the mission of Catholic education internationally

largely (although not exclusively) through the work of religious congregations with missions in education in the past,

- a form of spirituality now in urgent need of renewal in the contemporary world of Catholic education faced with growing secularisation, ideologies of secularism^{xvii}, global marketisation and materialism and the decline of religious congregations in the field of education,
- a form of spirituality which needs to be reconstituted in lay school leaders and teachers by formation programmes which help them to be Catholic witnesses for Christ and not simply professional deliverers of knowledge and skills as required by the secular state and the secular market.

It is hoped that this article will encourage all relevant agencies in Catholic faith and culture to provide the formation programmes which are necessary for this great transformation.

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Notes

ⁱ In relation to the fulfilment of talents (academic results), the Catholic 'formula' has always been: Fulfilment of talents + commitment to the common good = the good Catholic citizen. This was clearly expressed by the Congregation for Catholic Education in its 1977 text *The Catholic School*: 'This is the basis of a Catholic school's educational work. Education is not given for the purposes of gaining power... Knowledge is not to be considered for material prosperity and success but as a call to serve and to be responsible for others' (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, p. 43). See Grace (2002b) for a discussion of 'the challenge of academic successes in Catholic schools.'

ⁱⁱ One anonymous referee of this paper has described this as 'a very tendentious definition' which should be challenged. In his view the Church's 'goods of salvation' have not been 'a deliberately organised corpus of secret knowledge' but a treasure to be shared openly with everyone. While Bourdieu emphasises the power relations of doctrine and liturgy, this reference emphasises their openness to all.

ⁱⁱⁱ Of the 60 school leaders, 45 were laypersons and 15 were extant or former members of religious congregations. In Bourdieu's terms it could be said that some of these latter were possessed of religious capital in addition to spiritual capital.

^{iv} In arriving at this definition I was greatly influenced by the profound statement of Pope Paul VI in his Apostolic Exhortation: *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975: 'Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers it is because they are also witnesses.' (Pope Paul VI, 1975: 23). See also *Lay Catholics in schools: Witnesses to Faith* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982).

^v There are many definitions of spirituality. The one used in this paper may be expressed as: 'In catholic Christian terms, Spirituality is the whole of human life viewed in terms of a conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ and the saints, through the indwelling of the Spirit and lived within the Church as the community of believers'. I am grateful to an anonymous referee for help in formulating this definition.

^{vi} Lydon shows that many religious congregations with missions in education are currently involved in programmes called 'transmission of the charism' for the benefit of their lay successors as school leaders and teachers. However, it could be argued that if charism is an exceptional gift of the Holy Spirit to certain individuals, it cannot easily be transmitted in a formation programme. There is a case for saying

that what these programmes are attempting to do is to renew the resources for spiritual capital, as defined in this paper, for the empowering of a new lay leadership in the schools.

^{vii} In his classic study *The Evolution of Educational Thought* (English translation), Emile Durkheim (1977) devoted three chapters to an analysis of the educational impact in France of the Jesuit order founded and inspired by Ignatius Loyola. Durkheim recognised that the Jesuits were able to be educationally effective for many reasons but a crucial one was their sense of personal spiritual mission. This sustained them in the many struggles which they encountered in developing their educational work in France. Durkheim believed that secular education in France needed to acquire a similar ‘sustaining resource’ and this would be a secular form of morality, what we might call secular moral capital. As Peter Collins observes in the Translator’s Introduction:

Ultimately Durkheim hoped that these lectures would result not merely in the acquisition of knowledge by future teachers but in the generation of a new educational faith – a secular faith certainly, but nevertheless one which would issue in passionate commitment to the vocation of teaching (Durkheim, 1977, p. xx).

The Jesuits had spiritual capital. Durkheim wanted the teachers of France to have moral capital in a new secular context.

^{viii} I want to argue that this ‘sustaining resource’ is for most people, what I have called spiritual capital. However, it can be noted that Archbishop Michael Miller, CSB, describes this in other terms: ‘I believe that men and women, precisely as members of the lay faithful have their own charism of teaching, independent of the charism of a particular religious congregation’ (Miller, 2006, p. 6).

^{ix} Archbishop Miller is quoting from the Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (1996) of Pope John Paul II, page 96. See also, *Consecrated Persons and Their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines* (2003).

^x See Grace (2002, p. 245) for the interview schedule and pp. 236-240 for first reflections on spiritual capital.

^{xi} In schools founded by religious congregations it was interesting to note that references to the founding charisms had been incorporated into contemporary mission statements e.g.: ‘Jesuit education is inspired by the vision of St Ignatius Loyola in which God reveals his love for us in all things. The aim of Jesuit education is the formation of people of competence, conscience and compassion who are men and women for others.’ (Pope Paul III School: London). ‘In the spirit of St John Bosco we turn our efforts to those who stand in special need because of the lack of material or emotional security’ (St Robert Bellarmine School, Liverpool). For other examples see Grace (2002, pp. 129-130).

^{xii} See Grace (2002, p. 135) for these and other statements.

^{xiii} This research evidence can also include the findings of the large-scale (and now classic study) by Anthony Bryk, Valerie Lee and Peter Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good* (1993). In noting the importance of social capital in explaining the effectiveness of the schools, they also identified another crucial factor which they called ‘inspirational ideology’. This included:

The power of the symbolic... it is here that Catholic religious tradition is most directly manifest.... the words and life of the ‘man called Christ’ stimulates reflections about how students should live as persons-in-community. The notion of the ‘Kingdom of God’ offers a vision toward which human effort should be pointed. Finally, the image of the ‘resurrection destiny’ nurtures hopefulness... Here is the sustaining force for the day-in and day-out struggle against tyranny, poverty and injustice. Such images evoke our humanness. They add depth to a schooling process that is otherwise dominated by rhetoric of test scores, performance standards and professional accountability (Bryk et al., 1993, p. 303).

Could this be ‘spiritual capital’ by another name?

^{xiv} Wallace (2000, p. 191) viewing the issue from a United States perspective expresses the question in dramatic terms: ‘There is a major identity crisis occurring in Catholic Schools. The dramatic shift from religious to lay personnel raises the question of whether or not some Catholic schools are becoming private schools with a religious memory but a secular presence.’

^{xv} I recognised this in earlier writing:

It is fully recognised that the resources of spiritual capital in Catholic schooling extend well beyond that possessed by individual headteachers. Spiritual capital is also

constituted in school governing bodies, in classroom teachers, in priests and school chaplains, in parents and not least in the students themselves (Grace, 2002, p. 238).

We clearly need to research the various sources and forms of spiritual capital which exist within the whole community which constitutes the Catholic school.

^{xvi} Such an outcome was predicted by James Arthur in his study of Catholic secondary schools in England (1995). While not endorsing all of Arthur's suggestion about a weakening culture of Catholicity in the schools, my own research pointed to problems at the level of school leadership:

There is evidence that many candidates for the headship of Catholic schools in England can now talk confidently about achievements in test scores and examination results, business planning and budgets, marketing and public relations but are relatively inarticulate about the spiritual purposes of Catholic schooling. This is a major contradiction in a system of schooling which exists to give the nurture of spirituality a top priority (Grace, 1995, p. 237).

^{xvii} For important distinctions between secularisation and secularism see Arthur (2009).

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