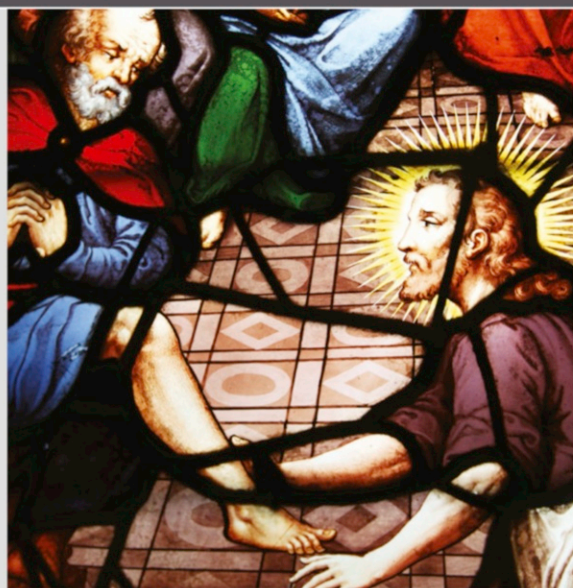


The Servant

Leadership Role of Catholic High School Principals

Joseph Nsiah and Keith Walker



SensePublishers

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THE BOOK IN A NUTSHELL

This book explores the servant-leadership role of Catholic high school principals, informed by our conversations with six exemplary servant leaders in that role and by our review of the literature on the subject. Family background, professional and extra-curricular experiences, and priests were important sources of their notions of servant-leadership. Principals' faith in Jesus Christ, and the positive outcomes of their Faith-informed professional practice motivated their servant-leadership.

We will say at the outset that we believe servant-leadership is well practiced outside of the Faith Community but the Catholic school settings provide both the particular context for our background research and our descriptions in this book. This said, our readers will notice that our culminating conceptual frameworks emphasize the personal identity formation and faith identify in Jesus Christ as foundational for authentic servant-leadership in the context of Catholic high schools. Accordingly, childhood experiences, mental models, passions, motivations, and professional convictions serve as antecedents to the identity formation of principals and variously propelled these dedicated persons towards the effective and authentic practice of servant-leadership. We delineate five aspects of servant-leadership: faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, community-inspired vision, relational credibility, sustained trust, and service. Service is identified as the culminating dimension of their work, with the understanding that servant-leadership is established and strengthened in the very act of a high school principal's rendering of service. Servant-leadership for Catholic school principals is considered one of the most meaningful and effectual callings imaginable.

This book is based on findings from our study of servant-leaders, wherein the signifying and inspiring qualities of servant-leadership were explored, including: altruism, patience, compassion, caring for the interests and growth of followers, living by example, and the unselfish desire to serve others. Additional fruits of servant-leadership that we identified were empowerment and respect for followers, establishment of healthy relationships, support for one another, collaborative leadership, offering constituents different possibilities for development, community building, self sacrifice of the leader for his/her community, and the servant-leader's representative of the idea and ideals of service to members of the school community.

Strategies for success in the kind of servant-leadership advocated in this book include: tenacity of purpose, respect for all in the school community, fostering collaboration, care and trust of followers, and avoidance of needless reprimands in the event of failure. An underlying theme is that servant-leadership provides hope for followers because of its exceptional interest in helping them develop their potentials and grow to become leaders.

We assert the need for policies requiring principals of Catholic high schools to be practicing Catholics and to pattern their servant-leadership practices on the servant-hood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have provided several models or heuristics for

THE BOOK IN A NUTSHELL

understanding and practicing servant leadership but none of these will be efficacious without “looking to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12). True servant leadership is about having a dynamic and transforming relationship with Jesus and being empowered by the Holy Spirit. We emphasize the importance of understanding and aligning one’s agentic leadership attitudes and practices to the educational mandate and mission of the Church. Second, we encourage formal and informal policy that will support superintendents of Catholic school districts to make intentional choices to promote servant-leadership in their school jurisdictions, at all levels and with all those involved in the learning communities. We advocate servant leadership as a school system ideal for personal and professional development, performance expectations and as a measure for Catholic school leadership. We believe that creating a culture and expectation of servant leadership for all school leaders (whether parents, students, staff, teachers, or school-based administrators) is important. Third, using vivid servant-leadership symbols as a way of making a lasting impression on new principals during the hiring process is a practice worth developing and sustaining. Fourth, superintendents, principals, and chaplains continued practice of being exemplary servant-leaders is a means to inspire new and other leaders.

This book is about servant leadership as ideally expressed in the lives of leaders in Catholic high schools. We have gained the “hands-on” insights of six principals who are the main contributors to this book. We think their lives and work warrant our attention. We have much to learn from their stories and insights. We have sorted through our conversations with these women and men, and attempted to convey the themes and the richness of their generously provided experiences and practiced wisdom. The book is divided into four sections. At the beginning of each section, we highlight some of the content contained in the chapters.

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Words cannot fully express our gratitude to the superintendents who permitted our contact and engagement with the six principals. We wish to convey heartfelt

gratitude to our co-researchers, the six will high school principals, for their insights, precious time, kindness, candor and willingness to share their experiences and reflections of servant leadership in action. We were basically their scribes and messengers; as now they humbly and respectfully offer advice and encouragement to other school leaders who join with them in the aspiration of becoming more effective and authentic servant leaders to their learning communities. From the beginning we had hoped to honour the best of these leaders' ideas and observed actions but have been somewhat limited to do so, in detail, because of our promises and necessary conditions of providing anonymity to principals, their schools and school system. To these anonymous but well-known and loved persons: May God continue to richly bless you and continue to make you a blessing to those you serve.

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We both give thanks for the privilege of the transforming friendship we each have with Jesus Christ.

THE BOOK IN A NUTSHELL

THE INTENDED AUDIENCE FOR THE BOOK

This book is not intended as an academic treatise on ethics nor classical ethics; but rather as a tool to be used by instructors and students of ethics who are concerned with having a firm grounding of the main concepts and processes involved with ethical discernment. It will be apparent to the reader that this book is intended for use by those in education as the plays and the cases take place in educational settings. Indeed, as will be noted later in this book, some of the issues which will be considered relate specifically to the duty of care owed to the children in schools and fundamental fairness owed to those in the educational community. However, ethical analysis – that is the process by which one arrives at an ethical decision which is at the core of this book – may be applied to any ethical issue facing an individual, a group, or an institution. One can argue whether or not there are universal ethical values but one cannot argue that it is possible to avoid making ethical decisions, that is, decisions between what one considers good and bad, and at times, bad and bad. Further, institutional decisions produce consequences for the decision-maker which she or he must live with both in the private and in the public square.

Therefore, although this book has been primarily written for school teachers and school administrators, it will be found useful by many others should they wish to know more of how one can utilize ethical reasoning in dealing with ethical decision-making in their personal and public lives.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION TO SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

Section one provides what we believe to be some necessary context setting considerations for this book. After all, the notion of servant leadership in Catholic high schools affords opportunity to set forth some distinctive and situated understandings for both those within the Catholic tradition and those readers who might consider themselves outside the Catholic domain. Background contexts and understandings help us interpret the words spoken and written words shared; so in this section we provide a number of “briefings” on the Catholic and leadership context of this book. Those who may not be familiar with the education and Catholic high school sector should know that education and forms of schooling do vary in expression throughout the planet. Our principals, and the schools they served, are located in Canada. Again, each province and territory in Canada is unique in certain ways. For these reasons we have taken some space to provide some thoughts, descriptions and connections to the mission, the agency of Catholic schools to the mission of the Church and to the respective roles of various groups (i.e., parents, Church community, teachers/staff) within Catholic schools. By no means do we wish to be exclusive in these declarative statements at the beginning of this book. The contexts of the book may be just as relevant and appropriate for elementary principals and post-secondary educational administrators as to high school principals. Further, we think that leadership is typically and ideally dispersed or distributed in organizations; so the ideas, insights and inspirations of these words may have just as much use to the classroom teacher or school secretary.

We hope teachers, staff, parents, and community members will learn from these pages, should they pick this book up. Many human services professionals will resonate with the ideas and experiences presented here. In fact, we would not be surprised if, having read this book, any leader or follower¹ benefits from hearing from these Catholic high school principals. This book tunes into the best of human experiences, in the service of others. We like to see more of this and have given lots of attention to what is working for these principals. This may give the text a pollyanna or sanguine feel to it but this, if experienced, was not our attention. We’ve just focused on the positive aspects of servant leadership that is working well (for our purposes,

¹ We constantly struggle with what to call followers, those served, constituents and those in the community being led. We’ve used numerous ways of describing or labeling these persons or groups and do so in a fashion that always has in mind their dignity, co-equality, and our upmost sense of respect. Usually we are referring to respective roles, leaders with Others.

SECTION 1

not wanting to be distracted by elaborating on the “warts,” messy interactions and imperfections that MUST be assumed in every, yes, “every” situation and context where servant leadership is exercised). The first section introduces some basic ideas around extant leadership theories, and the relationship of these to servant leadership. We finally say a few words about our approach to collecting insights from Catholic high school principals and who these people are, together with some brief descriptors of their school and school system contexts.

CHAPTER 1

THE MISSION FOCUS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The mission of Catholic school leadership is focused on the good of human beings, in all aspects of their lives (Sullivan, 2001). This is not different from the Church's mission of ultimate salvation for all humankind (Wallace, 2000). In order to better fulfill their responsibilities, Mulligan (2005) suggested that Catholic school leaders need to constantly ask themselves whether or not their followers are reaching their potential; that is, learning, serving, and achieving their goals? The relevance of Catholic educational leadership depends on its contribution to the mission of the Church and to the good of followers and it is definitely not for aggrandizement of its leaders. Catholic school leaders need to be willing to commit themselves, wholly, to Catholic education and to assure the transmission of Catholic culture and beliefs to future generations (Hunt, Oldenski, & Wallace, 2000). These leaders need to be spiritually attuned, fully alive to Christ and His work in the world. According to Hunt, Oldenski, and Wallace, through this kind of commitment, they "guarantee that Catholic schools will continue to be a means of transforming society from the perspective of peace, justice, and love in order to ameliorate the plight of the poor and victims of oppression and injustices" (p. 2).

The mission of Catholic educational leadership and the inestimable value of servant-leadership (see the leadership shown by Jesus, depicted in the New Testament book of in Philippians, Chapter 2) can be examined through what is sometimes called "the security triangle of home, school and church." We will say a bit here about mission and Catholicism before unpacking the security triangle.

Mission

The meaning of the word *mission* is generally determined by the context and the vision for which it is used. Mission signifies an aim, a duty, an undertaking, a task, a responsibility, an activity, or a function. For the Catholic Church, it signifies the responsibility of all believers in spreading the Gospel (Ordo, 2009). This is the purposeful activity of Gospel work – work commissioned by Christ. Catholic educational institutions play a vital role in the Church's primary mission of evangelization. Schools are integral agents in the mission of the Church (Pope Benedict; *The National Congress*, 1992). Catholic institutions may be viewed as places of encounter with the living God who, in Jesus Christ, reveals his transforming love and truth (Pope Benedict XVI, 2008). According to Belmonte and Cranston (2009), schools reflect the holiness of the Church, their distinguishing marks being in their

CHAPTER 1

“... religious character and mission ... [that identifies them] as agencies that help to hand on Catholic religious traditions” (p. 295). The implication is that leaders in Catholic schools ought to exercise leadership in ways that compliment the mission of the Church and that seeks to promote the pursuit of holiness on the part of staff, students and school families.

The mission of Catholic schools, as enunciated in various Church documents, has been well summarized (Grace, 2000) as follows:

- Education in the faith (as part of the saving mission of the church);
- Preferential option for the poor (to provide educational service to those most in need);
- Formation in solidarity and community (to live in community with others);
- Education for the common good (to encourage common effort for the common good); and
- Academic education for service (knowledge and skills: a means, not an end).

These five points indicates that faith plays an important role in Catholic education and that Catholic school leaders need to demonstrate their faith by living it (Miller, 2007). Ideally, Catholic education has a holistic, non-discriminatory view of education for all who wish to avail themselves of it. Community formation is important because living in community helps in the cultivation of solidarity with others. The common good of humanity cannot be divorced from Catholic education. Groome (2002) pointed out that “*Common* does not mean totalitarian, as if the group counts for everything. Rather, the good served is *common* precisely because society serves the personal good of every member” (p. 119). Catholic education leaders must understand the need for the “whole-person” formation of students (academically, socially, physically and spiritually) for the enhancement of humankind and to further God’s salvific purposes.

Using Christ and Scripture as its foundation, *The Congregation for Catholic Education* (1977) described the mission of Catholic schools as follows:

The Catholic school is committed ... to the development of the whole man, since in Christ, the Perfect Man, all human values find their fulfillment and unity. Herein lies the specifically Catholic character of the school. Its duty to cultivate human values in their own legitimate right in accordance with its particular mission to serve all men has its origin in the figure of Christ. He is the One who ennobles man, gives meaning to human life, and is the model which the Catholic school offers to its pupils. (para. 35)

For those who assume leadership in Catholic schools, this statement implies that they must be aware that Catholic education is concerned with the good of the person, that Christ is the mission of Catholic education and He is the divine force who inspires and enables the school leader. Catholic education aims to give meaning to the lives of students through the fostering of human values and appropriating the grace of Christ into their lives. Catholic education does not serve itself but serves the people who participate in it (Woodard, 2009). This means that Catholic education leaders

perceive each person as important and that the ‘dignity of the person’ principle dictates the leader’s spirituality, morality, and justice commitments (Grace, 2002). Catholic school leaders need to read the *signs of the times*, so as to be able to appropriately respond to the needs of the Church and the world in fulfillment of the Church’s educational mission (*Gaudium et spes*, 1965).

Canon 795 explained that true education must strive for complete formation of human persons; looking to their final end as well as to the common good of society. This requires raising of children and youth in ways that enables them to develop their physical, moral, and intellectual talents that leads them to attain a good sense of responsibility and of right use of freedom so as to be equipped to actively participate in society. This is why the formation advocated for Catholic educational institutions is holistic (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965) and why morality is seen as an integral component (Grace, 2000). Miller (1990) argued that this holistic approach to the education of students means that “human experience is integrated; we cannot isolate facets of children’s lives without doing violence to their healthy development. Children do not simply learn through their minds, but through their feelings and concerns, their imaginations and their bodies” (p. 153). This calls for leadership to place a premium on the moral development of students and the school community for the good of society in general, since “The Catholic . . . ‘mission’ for education is the moral nature of God and the Church” (Arthur, 1998, p. 50).

The emphasis on moral education and respect for the human dignity of students does not disregard academic rigour (Woodard, 2009). Instead, *The National Congress* (1992) reminded Catholic school leaders that “Catholic schools are called to be models of academic excellence and faith development” (p. 21). These schools contribute to the evangelization work of the Church, by being transmitters of the Good News (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965). For Catholic education, academic accomplishment is not an end in itself but a venture serving a purpose (Grace, 1999). In short, Catholic education leaders should promote an education that becomes a means for the salvation and sanctification of all involved.

The United States Catholic Conference (1976) exhorted the Catholic school leadership to consider adopting a wide-ranging approach to youth ministry so as to promote student growth, participation, and empowerment (for example through retreats, prayer and worship, community service, and social action experiences for students). To such approaches Heft and Davidson (2003) added liturgical celebrations, plays, and leadership training. These provide students with a language and forum to comprehend and express their faith.

At Vatican II, the Church Fathers invited Christians, and non-Christians to send their children to Catholic schools (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965); while pointing out that no one who chooses to attend a Catholic school is to embrace the Christian faith against his/her own will. This respect and universal invitation for the religious freedom of non-Catholics confirms that the mission of Catholic education is for all of humanity, and this same mission must be the concern of every Catholic educational leader (Mulligan, 2005). If Catholic school leadership is to be relevant, it must promote the mission of the Church.

Catholic

In the literature on Catholicism, the meaning of the word ‘Catholic’ is complex and has changed over the centuries. Frequently its use carries diverse understandings from different periods in the history of the Catholic Church. While ‘Catholic,’ with reference to allegiance to the Papacy may connote isolation, sectarian, elitist, discriminatory, and distinctiveness (Groome, 1996), the word’s etymology broadens its meaning and, ironically, signifies inclusiveness and universality. ‘Catholic’ means ‘general or universal’ and is derived from *belonging to the whole* in Greek (Sullivan, 1995); coming from a combination of the words *kath holou*, ‘according to the totality’ or ‘in keeping with the whole,’ for short ‘universal’ (Redford, 1999).

The names that Christian Churches attribute to themselves generally reflects what they believe about themselves, and what they profess is important (Redford, 1999). The various ways the Catholic Church interpreted the term over the centuries reflects her beliefs and ways of viewing her relationship with other Christians, non-Christians, all of humanity, and her education. In relation to the Papacy, the term marks the distinctive divide between the Catholic Church and other Christian churches and traditions (McBrien, 1980). Interpretation of the term in broader terms implies there are common grounds. These common grounds include respect for human dignity, freedom and justice, a radical openness to all truth and to every value, and salvation for all of God’s children. Catholicism identifies with other churches and with all of humanity where these hunger for truth, dignity, and freedom (McBrien, 1980).

Before Vatican II, the Catholic Church took a more inward looking and self protective posture with regard to the world. Distinctiveness was interpreted with clearly marked borders that tolerated no ambiguity regarding who was inside and who was outside the Church. Catholics were encouraged to refrain from external influences that might contaminate their faith. Similarly, Catholic schools isolated themselves from outside influences (Sullivan, 2001).

However, at Vatican II, because of their developed understanding of human existence and of education, the Church Fathers considered all believers in Christ, who have been truly baptized, as being in communion with the Catholic Church (*Lumen gentium*, 1964). Since then, the Catholic Church has not hesitated in sharing her faith and beliefs with people of other faiths and with anyone willing to share her convictions (Byk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). Inclusiveness does not mean that the Church harbours intentions of converting those enthusiastic about sharing in the benefits of the Catholic faith (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965); but rather inclusiveness stems from Catholic schools’ commitment to educate students of different economic, cultural, religious, racial, and ethnic backgrounds (*The National Congress*, 1992).

Distinctiveness and inclusiveness function in tension with each other and both are needed for Catholic education that has integrity (Sullivan, 2001). The distinctiveness of ‘Catholic’ has meaning for education as it determines the identity of Catholic education (Groome, 1999), since:

... the distinctiveness of Catholic education is prompted by the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism itself, and these characteristics should be reflected

in the whole curriculum of Catholic schools. By 'curriculum' [it is meant] the *content* taught, the process of teaching, and the *environment* of the school. (p. 107)

Miller (2007) added that inclusiveness must go hand-in-hand with keeping the strengthening of the Catholic identity of Catholic schools on the front burner. Drawing from Gilkey (1975), Groome (1996) identified five distinctive characteristics of the Catholic understanding of human existence and of education:

- its positive anthropology of the human person;
- its sacramentality of life;
- its communal emphasis regarding human and Christian existence;
- its commitment to tradition as source of its story and Vision; and
- its appreciation of rationality and learning, epitomized in its commitment to education. (p. 108)

For Groome, these characteristics had the following implications. First, a positive anthropology of the human person admits the potential of the human being to sin, but maintains that human beings are fundamentally more good than evil. As a result, Catholic education affirms essential goodness of all students by promoting their worth and dignity and respecting their basic rights in ways that help them develop their gifts to the fullest (Long & Schuttloffel, 2006). Additionally, Catholic education encourages students to live in ways that enhance and advance the well-being of all. Second, the sacramentality of life means that God's creation is fundamentally good, though the possibility of misuse and abuse exists together with the profound consequence of sin. A sacramental awareness perceives God's presence in all of creation and what He wills for the human person. This presence of God in all things means that students are encouraged, regardless of their subject of study, to use the critical and creative powers of their minds (reason, memory, and imagination) to look at life so as to raise questions that lead them to the quest for Divine truth. Third, the emphasis on community that human beings have arises from a natural attraction for relationship and their capability for relationship with others (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965). As a result, the school environment has to provide for a community in which such relationships are nurtured. Community life is not merely an ideal but a value to be realized, because the school influences people's identity, their ways of viewing the world around them and their values (*Gavsissimum educationis*, 1965). The school becomes an environment of accepting and welcoming, inclusion is cherished, and students learn that being a good neighbour does not imply boundaries, but openness and care for others (Groome, 1999). Fourth, the commitment to tradition goes hand in hand with scripture to illumine the way forward. Signs and symbols are cherished as they make the past present and contribute to the educational process. Fifth, appreciation of rationality and learning acknowledges the right of every student to the truth provided by faith and education for their holistic formation and eternal salvation. These characteristics explain the perception of Catholic education with regard to humanity and students' formation.

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McBrien (1980) observed that ‘Catholic’ must not be viewed in its exclusive sense. But rather, the term must be understood as distinctiveness, not meaning exclusiveness, but an identity that generates other characteristics that show a radical openness to all truth that is comprehensive, all-embracing, that is to be shared with all of humanity. ‘Catholic’ and ‘catholic’ call on Catholic school leaders to view distinctiveness and diversity as integral to Catholic education without diminishing its unity (Sullivan, 2001).

THE INEXTRICABLE PARTNERSHIP OF HOME, CHURCH AND SCHOOL IN THE RAISING OF NEW CITIZENS

Although it may be possible for education to just *happen*; normally, education takes place through people who work for it: agents. An agent is person (or institution, structure, or organism) that undertakes an activity that generates an outcome (Buetow, 1988) for a “principal,” cause, mission or larger purpose. At this point we would like to set forth some expressions of the larger purposes of Catholic education and its mission. We claim that the Catholic school administrator is first and foremost a servant of Jesus Christ and His Church. So, perhaps ironically, the Catholic school principal is first an agent of the Principal, Jesus Christ. There are a number of ways of seeing this:

The primary agents of education are God and the student. God sustains the whole educational enterprise in its existence . . . three principal groupings are in partnership: the family, the Church and the State, and ‘education which is concerned with man as a whole, individually and socially, in order of nature and in the order of grace, necessarily belongs to all these three societies.’ The family, the Church, and the State are the *secondary agents* or partners of education. (Buetow, 1988, p. 139)

The above quotation views students and God as the key partners in education. Students have a reliance on God, family, Church, and State, with each meaningfully playing their roles in the students’ education. In the context of this book, our focus is on the role of a Catholic school principal in missional context of the family, the Church and the school. For students to have meaningful and holistic education, family, Church, and school serve as cooperating partners to animate and guide fruitful human formation. We will see, later, how the principal serves to “make the space” for family, Church and school to work in partnership on behalf of the best interests of children, and young adults.

But First . . . the Family

Except under extraordinary circumstances, which, sadly, are all too common, parents are to be the first and most important educators of their children (Strommen & Strommen, 1985). The role of the family in the education of children and young

adults can not be assumed. *Gravissimum educationis* (1965) made parents' role poignantly clear:

Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators. This role in education is so important that only with difficulty can it be supplied where it is lacking. Parents are the ones who must create a family atmosphere animated by love and respect for God and man, in which the well-rounded personal and social education of children is fostered. Hence the family is the first school of the social virtues that every society needs. (para. 3)

The role of the family as the "domestic church" (Holy See, 1983) was given emphasis by Canon 774 in its statement that "before all others, parents are bound by the obligation of forming their children by word and example in the Faith and practice of Christian life" (para., 2).

However, it is clear that parents are not to be left alone in fulfilling this nurturing responsibility. They need help and such help must be provided by the Church (Grochowski, 2009). Canon 796 para 1, urged parents to hold schools in esteem, as "schools are the principal assistance to parents in fulfilling the function of education." In a joint venture with parents and with the help of the entire Catholic community, the mission of a Catholic school system is focused on promoting the human dignity, self-transcendence, and liberation of students (Dobzanski, 2001). Again, parents are the key educators of children and vital partners in the work of developing them under the stewardship and trust of school learning communities.

Church's Role in the Nurture of Children and Young Adults

Gravissimum educationis (1965) noted:

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

The Church's contribution to education and schooling has been evident for nearly two thousand years (Buetow, 1988; Grace, 2000). Buetow identified three reasons that dictate the Church's right to be involved in education and schooling as "social justice, the betterment of human life, and the nature of education as essentially moral enterprise" (p. 167). The Church views herself as *mother* with the responsibility of providing education for her progeny so that their lives may be inspired by the Spirit of Christ. She views schools, with parents, as major carriers of social values that shape society and determine the future of society. Buetow explained, "As people who

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are, if you like ‘specialists’ in the area of values and meaning, the people of God . . . have a serious interest in those values and in the shape of the society which those values will form” (p. 167). The Church views improvement in the quality of life as directly connected with the Kingdom of God, for, “There is no dichotomy between the natural and the supernatural, the spiritual and human progress, human values and the values of the Gospel” (p. 168).

Additionally, the Church’s involvement in education is conceived of as a moral enterprise whose purpose is dialogue and making people good:

Because the Church and the world are mutually related, Catholic Church members should be prepared to enter into dialogue and cooperation with others who have completely different ideas from theirs. Catholics individually and the Church communally must be involved, as part of their vocation, in the major problems of the age. (Buetow, 1988, p. 168)

The Catholic Church perceives herself and her members as contributors to making the world a better place. She exhorts her members to be concerned about education and schooling because the work of salvation must be done while living with the daily concerns of the world (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965).

Gaudium et Spes (1965) encouraged the people of God to enthusiastically participate actively in the activities of the world, and to see the Church as being not alongside the world, but within it; and not in a position of dominance over the world, but acting as its servant. Catholic schools must therefore be seen as servants of those in their charge by being actively involved with their daily concerns. Pope Benedict XVI (2008) indicated that the Church feels it her duty to help in the education of children because involvement in education is a fulfillment of her evangelizing mission (Grochowski, 2009).

Because of her rights and responsibilities, the Church deems it important to establish schools as an integral part of her evangelization work. Catholic and non-Catholic parents who wish to benefit from Catholic education are encouraged to send their children to Catholic schools (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965).

The School’s Role in Nurturing Children and Young Adults

Gravissimum educationis, (1965) acknowledged the rights of parents to the fullest freedom with regard to choice of school. Catholic education leaders should bring joy to parents for their choice of Catholic education because as (Grochowski, 2009) observed:

If . . . parents, concerned about the religious education of their children, entrust them to a Catholic school, the school must not disappoint them. Just as on the other side, the school must not disappoint the Church, which entrusts it with such an important mission. (p.156)

Catholic school leaders should ensure the delivery of educational content to the reasonable satisfaction of parents and closely examine the objectives and aims of

Catholic education. Along with the various organs of education, the school is of outstanding significance (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965) and must be appreciated and supported by parents for the good of their children. For those parents interested in both the academic and religious formation of their children, it ought to be heartening to know that sharing Christ with the world is the rationale for the existence of Catholic schools (Woodard, 2009).

The United States Catholic Conference (1991) exhorted Catholic school systems to support parents in their mission of educating their children, because the school environment is the place where the systematic formation of students occurs (*The Congregation*, 1977, para. 27). In the school environment, students experience the meaning and truth of their individual faith-journey experiences, and important values are derived from and through faith.

The Catholic school is to teach as Jesus did, by teaching all subjects as best as they can be taught; especially teaching the Good News of Jesus Christ, and forming learning communities where God's presence is experienced among a faith-filled people, and by serving others (Heft, 1991). In carrying out their educational mandate in schools, leaders need to remember that the spiritual dimension can never be severed from this work. This essential dimension can never be eliminated because it determines the identity of the Catholic school (Klein & Izzo, 1998). It seems to us that any "Catholic school" that ignores, denies, diminishes or avulses the spiritual dimension of its work or merely nominally associates with Christ and the Church will at that point of departure cease to be a Catholic school. Apart from its pedagogical aims, the goal of the Catholic school is to transmit the values of faith and rationality to students. The transmittal of faith and rationality demands constant nourishment through the examples of those who live the faith; principals of Catholic schools are to be amongst those examples (Moore, 2000). But the vision for Catholic schools is much grander than transmission. As we have said, the Catholic school is to be an agent or instrument of the very heart of God in His divine desire for and loving transformation work with each child, each young person and each member of the school community.

It is important for Catholic school leaders to reiterate that Catholic schools have the important characteristics of the church. First, they are inspired by a supernatural vision because of Christ's presence; so that the education provided is not only about good citizenship and Christian life in the world, but is intended to lead the school community to their eternal destiny. Second, the Catholic school is founded on the Christian anthropology of the person which views each person as a child of God with a dignity derived from their natural and supernatural natures. Third, the Catholic school is animated by communion and community, because of its social nature as a community of faith working together. Fourth, the school is to be permeated with a Catholic world view throughout its curriculum with a concern for the holistic formation of the person, the development of all the human faculties, preparation for professional life, development of social and ethical awareness, and attention to the transcendent and to religious education. Fifth, the Catholic school is sustained by Gospel values stemming from the vital witness of its teachers and administrators

because with them lies the immediate duty of engendering a Christian school climate (Miller, 2007). By promoting and living these characteristics, Catholic school leaders ensure that students and their parents understand how the gospel and church teaching call on all to choose life, to serve the least within communities, to hunger and thirst for justice, and to be peace-makers (*The National Conference of Catholic Bishops*, 1998).

The Code of Canon Law 803, para 3 prescribed that instruction and education in a Catholic school must be grounded in the principles of Catholic doctrine [with] teachers [being] outstanding in correct doctrine and integrity of life. In short, the Catholic school forms students in order that they can participate in the evangelization mission of the Church by being living examples of faith, based on sound Catholic doctrine.

Catholic High School Leadership

Having considered the crucial elements of the “security triangle,” (home, school and Church) for the raising of children and youth, we now consider the mediating and catalytic work of Catholic high school principals in this triangle. Catholic principals and their counterparts in other school systems/schools have similar leadership roles (Shaffer, 2004), but because the Catholic school is a ministry of the Church (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965), the Catholic principal has added responsibilities, including that of being a faith leader. The link between faith and mission of Catholic school was emphasized by Pope Benedict (2008) when he expressly exhorted Catholic educators to educate and prepare students in a faithful and fruitful understanding of the role of the Catholic school in the mission of the Church. Mulligan (2005) emphasized that the purpose of leadership in Catholic schools is:

intended to serve the Catholic education community. We do not need careerists who look for power, perks, status, enhanced salary and upward mobility. We urgently need the non-careerist whose first concern is, in a spirit of faith, what is best for the kids. (p. 188)

For Woodard (2009), a major task for the Catholic school principal is to focus on *who* the students are becoming. The kind of person being formed in schools comes as priority over the job that person will eventually perform. Here, character formation of students takes precedence over tasks, since good character formation will naturally influence their future responsibilities, roles and responsibilities. Persons in positions of authority in the Catholic school need to have standards of behaviour which include the promotion of discussions regarding how the weakest members of the school community are treated and cared for in the prospect of their formation as students (Woodard, 2009). For Grace (2000), educational leadership as a *vocation to serve* is the way to total dedication to one’s responsibilities for the holistic formation of students.

Like other Christians, Catholic school principals share in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly ministry of Christ, which they live out as their vocation to holiness in

THE MISSION FOCUS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

the sphere of education (Miller, 2007). Thus, they should see themselves as doing more than exercising themselves in a socially valuable profession. They carry out a valuable service in the context of an ecclesial community. The priestly function challenges the leaders to view themselves as exercising leadership on behalf of Christ rather than on their own behalf. They therefore should exercise leadership in imitation of Christ. The prophetic ministry requires that they establish a sound foundation for the future successful life of students. The kingly ministry demands that they see themselves as servants of their constituents: To lead is to serve.

While serving their local churches, Catholic schools form part of the larger church community, the universal church (Ristau, 1991). Because Catholic school principals serve the Church community (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965; Drahmman & Stenger, 1989), they should bring spiritual qualities to their work priorities by living their own faith every day. They become effective if they are clear and honest about the role that faith plays in their schools (Miller, 2007). Faith and spiritual life are so important in the Catholic school context that the leaders need to view themselves as spiritual leaders who are called to be Catholic school principals and not vice versa (Cappel, 1989). The expression of a principal's faith in the Catholic school was the most distinguishing characteristic of effective Catholic school principals in a study conducted by Ciriello (1989). In effect, faith is the foundation of all success in the Catholic school.

The National Congress (1992) summarized the nature of Catholic school leadership in five key propositions:

- Leadership in and on behalf of Catholic schools is rooted in an ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ;
- Leadership in and on behalf of Catholic schools is deeply spiritual, servant-like, prophetic, visionary and empowering;
- Effective leadership is critical to the mission of the Church and the future of Catholic schools;
- The recruitment, selection and formation of leaders is essential to the future of Catholic schools; and
- Leadership in and on behalf of Catholic schools involves a shift from vertical models to collegial models.

These propositions emphasize that the faith, spiritual, and religious dimensions, being the forces that propel everything in Catholic school leadership cannot be underestimated.

The responsibilities of the Catholic school leader are such that the leadership approach appropriate for the Catholic school context is servant-leadership, because this orientation to leadership calls on the leader to lead as Jesus did (Schafer, 2005). This call for servant-leadership in Catholic schools reflects a similar view as held by Greenleaf (1991) that the leader of an institution consider it their role to be one of a servant. In fulfilling their priestly, prophetic, and kingly roles in the mission of the Church, principals are reminded that the leadership required of them is faith-based

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and promotes the dignity and freedom of students. As members of the ecclesial community fulfilling their Christian vocation, Catholic school principals need to renew their understandings of leadership for a better exercise of their role.

According to Ristau (1991):

Catholic educators should understand what leadership means. Ideas about a great leader, one in a position at the 'top' who has all the answers and who can make anything happen are out of date. . . . In fact there may be good people at the 'top' who are doing the wrong things well. There is a need for a new kind of leadership. (p. 12)

Implied in this observation is that contemporary societal changes demands that leadership ought to cater to the present day needs of students. Leadership for its own sake is not relevant in our times. In short, school-based leadership centered on the principal's role and single leader approach has outlived its usefulness and is severely outmoded. Rapid societal changes call for a new form of leadership (Crowther, Kaagen, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002).

THE INESTIMABLE VALUE OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP FOR HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

There is no universally approved leadership concept which suggests a unique source of leadership success (Walker & Scharf, 2001; Philips, 2002). However, a leadership model that promotes effective, ethical, supportive, and responsible leadership, and engenders an enabling environment for constituents to attain their highest potentials is desirable for our times (Sergiovanni, 1993; Wheatley, 2004). Servant-leadership may be this kind of leadership (Spears, 2006) because of its adherence to ethics, morality, and spirituality (Greenleaf, 1970). Walker (2007) advocated for servant-leadership in today's school institutions. He declared, "The servant-leadership concept can become an incredible force of good in school systems when infused into the culture of learning communities. Servant-leadership builds trust in relationships" (p. 21). Walker further noted, "Servant-leadership is safe to follow and, consistently models a value-based core of commitments as people are served and educational purposes are pursued" (p. 21).

Servant-leadership is collaborative, empowering, and a serving way to build learning communities, and is built upon the premises of individual respect, stewardship, and service to one's school community (Crippen, 2006). Servant leadership offers hope and insight for a new epoch in human development, and for the establishment of better, more caring, institutions (Spears, 2006).

For Catholic school leaders, servant-leadership in their daily professional life is "a fundamental, foundational and essential expression of their vocation within the Faith-community" (Walker & Scharf, 2001, p. 16) because of their special calling as Christian leaders. The Vatican II document *Gravissimum educationis* (1965) stressed that the purpose of Catholic schools is to provide holistic education to children

while promoting Gospel values. In Catholic theology, these qualities include: trust in God, honesty, compassion, forgiveness, mercy, community, servant-leadership, simplicity, justice, peace, love, faith, and hope; all of which were taught by Jesus Christ in the four Gospels and epitomized in the beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10). Of course, these valued qualities are by no means to be considered exhaustive of the Gospel values. The emphasis in the documents of Vatican II for the promotion of Gospel values in Catholic schools is an implicit call to live up to the responsibility of promoting Gospel values by leadership. The promotion of Gospel values and Catholic identity in Catholic schools has to be an intentional choice (Duignan, 2007). Catholic school leaders need to decide on their schools' future direction and affirm their values. The decision to promote a school's Catholic mission ought not be understood as a decision to maintain the *status quo*. Instead, such a decision implies making positive institutional changes that guarantee a vibrant catholicity (Duignan).

When leaders perceive themselves as servants they appreciate that "... serving others is the most glorious and rewarding of all leadership tasks" (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Leaders who value self esteem, power, and prestige over humility, selflessness, and service, end up serving themselves rather than those they are responsible for (Barach & Eckhardt, 1998). Echoing the holy words of Jesus Christ, Depree (1998) reminded leaders that it is service that leads to greatness.

Servant-leaders are not necessarily extraordinary human beings, but their commitment, and the right use of power and position in humble service is what makes them extraordinary (Greenleaf, 1970). Though paradoxical, the desire to serve for the good of followers is the force that unleashes the power of servant-leadership.

Servants, by definition, are fully human. Servant-leaders are functionally superior because they are closer to the ground – they hear things, see things, know things, and their intuitive insight is exceptional. Because of this they are dependable and trusted, they know the meaning of that line from Shakespeare's sonnet: 'They have power to hurt and will do none.' (Greenleaf, 1991, p. 42)

In brief, servant-leaders are down-to-earth (or "of the earth" – *humis*), and in the context of Catholic leadership, servant leaders are united with the incarnate Christ who lives his servant life through them (Galatians 2:20). This is the secret of the effectiveness of their service.

Have This Mind in You (Philippians 2 Kenosis Passage with Focus on Jesus)

Jesus, who taught and embodied leadership as service, provided our ultimate model of servant-leadership (Wilkes, 1998). In His life and work, Christ demonstrated greatness that comes from humility and servanthood. To reiterate, the two main qualities that led to the greatness of Jesus, the exemplar of servant-leadership, are: *humility* and *service* (Philippians 2:5-11). The supreme act of humility was giving up His divine prerogatives and taking on the form of a human being and then dying

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on the cross (Philippians 2:8). Newly appointed Catholic principals have the position and power of their new office but they trade the conventional understandings for the paradoxical role of service (paradoxical in sense that their promotion up is a call to bend down to serve).

Leaders are cautioned against hubris as they interact with those they serve. With Christ as exemplar, they are reminded to hold those they serve in high esteem so as to serve them better. Jesus' attitude teaches Christian leaders that stooping low to relate with those they serve ensures their dignity and freedom (Wilkes, 1998). Jesus left His heavenly kingdom to relate with sinful humankind. Unfortunately, humility is sometimes slighted and viewed as a weakness; but for Jesus, humility was strength. We are further reminded through His example that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. As Paul wrote, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2: 5). Jesus' authority was not in force and power, but in gentleness and humble service. Humility does not imply a degradation, or reduction of oneself before others, rather it is having "an awareness, acceptance, and appreciation of one's true worth and value" (Munroe, 2009, p. 159). Genuine leaders are by nature humble in the full sense of the word.

Jesus was exalted by His self sacrificing action and attitude. Self-abnegation has greater value than making a reputation. Jesus' readiness to serve is exemplified in emptying Himself and taking the status of a servant, and accepting death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2:6-7). Jesus' message on servant-leadership is best summarized in His own words in Mark 10:43-45: "... whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be a slave of all." An "others first" attitude is necessary for the leader; for with selfishness, true service is not possible (Greenleaf, 1970).

For Christian leaders servant-hood is not degrading and does not lead to loss of power or authority. The attitude of Christ leads to pertinent questions: whose needs is the leader satisfying? His/her own, or those of the ones he/she is to serve? Who is the leader's model? Is the leader's first aim for service dictated by a search for glory (Sims, 2005; Neuschel, 2005)? Is service about direct need meeting behaviour or about connecting with a Cause greater than all other causes?

Jesus' example of service requires the Catholic high school principal be approachable. The principal needs to ensure that their relationships encourage growth in others, that they see their leadership position as a privileged gift and he/she needs to be exemplary in their faithfulness to Jesus and to those they serve. Wright (2000) wrote, "If our vision ... [and] values are not shaped by the presence of Christ, if our strategies do not point people to God, then we have failed and probably should go out of business" (p. 93). It is to these characteristics and leadership model that Catholic school principals are called.

CHAPTER 2

SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRINCIPALSHIP

The success and failure of the educative and evangelizing mission of the Church in and through Catholic schools lies heavily on the shoulders of principals (Wallace, 2000) because school principals have the distinctive custodial responsibility for the Catholic heritage. In the previous chapter we have asserted that the Catholic school principal is a mediating influence on the missional roles of partners: home, Church and school. It is obvious that principals play, or ought to play, a crucial stewardship role of promoting the quality and future of Catholic schools (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009). The Catholic school principal is required to promote both the religious and academic mission of the school (Earl, 2005) by guiding the spiritual formation of teachers and students through the promotion of sacramental life, prayer, study, and serving others and through ensuring that the teaching and learning processes employed are monitored and aligned to mission. Catholic school principals exercise leadership in contexts that demand not only their leadership expertise and skills, but also constancy and integrity in their own daily interactions with people and life experiences. To be effective, principals need to be pastoral leaders combining spiritual, moral, and managerial leadership skills and dispositions (Grace, 2000).

The Pastoral Role of Principals

Principals' influence and shape school cultures in ways that no other persons or roles can (Kimbrough & Burkett, 1990; & Grint, 2003). In order to shape and impact on school culture, Catholic school principals need to bring spiritual qualities to their work through their personal lived faith experience (Drahman & Stenger, 1989). Such qualities require knowledge of the Catholic faith (Manno, 1988) and the assumption of pastoral responsibilities so that Catholic school principals ought to be vitally concerned about the faith formation of the students entrusted to them (Heft, 1991). This faith formation effort incorporates learning experiences that engender convictions in students to influence the way they make decisions, especially concerning relationships with others (Grace, 2000). As a result of his/her pastoral role, the Catholic school principal could be considered as 'pastor' or 'lead pastor' of the school.

Webster's Third New International Dictionary (2002) defined *pastor* as one who gives protection or guidance to a group of people, and *pastoral* signifies spiritual care, guidance, and counseling. The vision of Catholic school leadership is based on the biblical metaphor of the shepherd and is about service, about shepherds who care for the sheep (Wright, 2000).

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A shepherd is at the same time a leader and a companion (one who shares bread with others) who defends his flock. The shepherd is aware of the flock's condition, adapts to its needs, cares for each and everyone, and cherishes each sheep as one does for his or her own children (Leon-Dufuor, 1973). The Catholic principal does not only care physically for students, he/she is also a spiritual leader as in Jesus' saying "I know my sheep, and they know me" (John 10: 15). To borrow Sullivan's (2001) words, "A pastoral approach to [leadership] starts with people where they are ... in their ... circumstances" (p. 4). This shepherd leadership is marked by mutual trust between the principal and constituents (students, teachers/staff and parents) and by the principal's confidence in the school community which leads to increased freedom and growth of followers.

We pause here to say that the inevitable focus of a book like this will be on the character and chemistry with school constituents' aspects of leadership. We believe that leaders succeed or fail depending on their character, chemistry and competence quotients. We will give some attention to technical competencies but this aspect is not a priority for us in the project. Nonetheless, a principal's skills, work ethics and technical knowledge are vital to success.

Principals have managerial, relational, and educational roles (Earl, 2005). The establishment of an orderly school environment conducive to learning requires a substantive set of managerial skills. The existence of cooperation, cordiality, respect, care for one another among staff and students signifies the relational role. And, the principal's ability to engender the best features of a learning community denotes the educational skills (Earl). These skills are general and are applicable to all schools, public and separate (Sergiovanni, 1984).

For Schafer (2004), the Catholic school principal's role is generally divided into three areas: spiritual, educational, and managerial, and it is the spiritual role that differentiates the Catholic school principal's role from the typical non-Catholic school principal role. Fulfillment of the pastoral role includes spiritual leadership, vision for Catholic education, enhancing staff morale, recognizing the leadership of others, and remaining interested in personal growth and development (Cierello, 1998). Other roles include instructional leadership, manager, mediator, public relations person, creator of school climate and goal setter. And, additional responsibilities may include babysitter, trash collector, traffic cop, painter, and bus driver (Augenstein, 1988).

Pastoral leadership involves creating an environment for enabling growth in faith and developing skills, and fostering excellence through which dignity and freedom blossoms. The pastoral role of the Catholic school principal does not imply a dichotomy between academic work and prayer life (Buetow, 1988) but it involves a synergy that leads to the holistic formation of students and growth of the school community.

Focus on Aspiring, Beginning Principals

Studies confirm that despite the valuable role principals play in their schools, there is often a lack of adequate preparation and attention to ongoing formation, and most of principals have to learn on the job (Belmonte & Crantson, 2009). Similarly, most

novice principals indicated they did not have sufficient theological knowledge and spiritual leadership skills (Schuttloffel, 2003). These findings indicate that there is a need for greater attention towards the preparation of Catholic school leaders.

The decrease in the number of religious persons and the changing roles in schools, together with challenges that confront the contemporary Church demand that teachers and principals be given more opportunities for extensive religious formation. This is so that aspiring and future educators might better provide the quality and type of leadership required in Catholic schools (Rogus & Wildenhaus, 2000). Travis (2000) stressed the need for on-going formation for Catholic school teachers. One reason for this was because aspiring principals inevitably come from among teachers. The importance of continuous religious and educational formation of teachers, and for aspiring principals cannot be underestimated as the vitality of an enlivened Catholic culture in the school environment depends on this. For Catholic education to continue to effectively participate in the mission of the Church, there is a need for leaders to be knowledgeable in education, work in the service of education, know the Church, have innovative ideas, and renew what it means to lead well (Ristau, 1991).

Grace (2002) determined that the cultural and spiritual background of principals highly impacted on their success as Catholic school leaders. This finding suggested that the appointment of aspiring principals to leadership in Catholic schools should be based on suitably qualified and skilled principals. Thus, in the hiring process, candidates for the principalship who demonstrate a commitment to Catholic leadership ideals that promote both the Catholic identity and inclusiveness should be considered as warranting preferential consideration in selection (Grace, 2002).

To gradually form future leaders, incumbent principals have the responsibility to collaborate with aspiring principals as a way of helping them develop their leadership skills. Of course principals should collaborate with teachers, through encouragement, role modeling, and promoting values through daily living of the Catholic faith. But beyond this, they should also help aspiring principals with vivid and inspirational examples of Catholic school leadership. Aspiring and beginning principals need a clear understanding of the different types of leadership and the requirements of the kind of leadership they embrace in the Catholic school context.

TRANSACTIONAL AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Burns (1978) believed that leaders are either transformational or transactional, but according to Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004), other people "... view leadership as a continuum with transactional leadership at one end and transformational leadership at the other" (p. 2). For many, *transactional leadership* is the traditional industrial model of leadership (Daft, 2002), while *transformational leadership*, is the modern style of leadership in which leaders devote considerable energy to leading and valuing the gifts and abilities of their workers (Bass, 1985). By contrast, servant-leadership is propelled by the overarching desire to serve others (Smith, Montagno & Kuzmenko, 2004).

Transactional Leadership

According to McShane and Glinow (2000), transactional leadership is "... leadership that helps organizations achieve their current objectives more efficiently by linking job performance to valued rewards and ensuring that employees have the resources needed to have the job done" (p. 450). A diligent transactional principal moves across the action, to where the people are and where important things are happening in the life of a school. This is a good thing. Primary components of transactional leadership have been identified, such as:

- Providing contingent rewards, where the leader identifies paths that link the achievement of goals to rewards;
- Exhibiting active management with the leader actively monitoring the work of subordinates, employing corrective measures in the face of deviations from standards, and enforcing rules to prevent mistakes; and,
- Emphasizing passive management where the leader intervenes after deviations from accepted standards occur. Corrective measures or punishment are utilized in response to unacceptable standards. (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2007)

Power is a major concept of transactional leadership (Stroh, Northcraft & Neale, 2002). The transactional approach coincides with *Theory X* assumptions of McGregor (1957/2005) in which the leader is the traditional boss who oversees employees (Tracey & Hinkin, 1998). Transactional leadership approach follows highly structured bureaucratic systems in administering day-to-day tasks, being concentrated on task completion and employing reward and punishment. For example, politicians who win votes by promising tax reduction exhibit transactional leadership (Northouse, 2004). Such approaches are leader focused or, at best, transactions for mutual benefit (reciprocal altruism: lower taxes and re-election). And, according to Chemers (1984), the relationship between leader and follower is one in which "... [t]he leader is clearly the central figure and prime actor" (pp. 90–91). This approach to leadership "... assumes that the best information and ideas for solving problems are found in the upper echelons of the organization and should be passed down and implemented by those in the lower echelons" (Owens, 2004, p. 280). The transactional principal effectively transacts exchanges and brokers arrangements in favour of school goals.

Transactional leadership appears to have characteristics similar to those of servant-leadership (Burns, 1978). However, the leader's actions may not benefit the follower and may lead to detrimental ends (Whetstone, 2002). According to Yukl (2002), in contrast to servant-leadership, transactional leadership focuses attention on the personal growth and benefit of the leader or organization first, and attends to the follower second; while servant-leadership primarily focuses on the follower first (Greenleaf, 1977). We have no doubt that brokering, bartering, and otherwise transacting are important aspects of the principalship. Our view is that transactional leadership is an important and likely expression of leadership but that it is not sufficient for exemplary Catholic leadership.

Transformational Leadership

Northouse (2004) referred to transformational leadership as “the process whereby an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower” (p. 170). Transformational leadership has become the more popular way of describing ideal leadership during the last two decades, and has challenged the traditional, more top down or bureaucratic orientation of transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994). For Bryant (2003), “transformational leaders are active leaders that have four distinguishing characteristics: Charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration” (p. 36). Charisma is the degree of pride, faith, and respect leaders stimulate their constituents to have in themselves, their leaders, and their organization. Inspiration is the capacity to encourage constituents mainly through communication of high expectations. Intellectual stimulation is the regularity with which leaders stimulate constituents to be innovative at work. Individualized consideration is the extent of personal care and encouragement of self-development a leader conveys to constituents (Bass, 1990).

The main focus of the transformational leadership is to establish a mutual relationship between leader and follower through which both act to improve each other’s lives (Burns, 1978), and to bring about personal and organizational change or transformation (Northouse, 2005). Owens (2004) noted, “the result is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders” (p. 269). This relationship empowers people within the organization and increases efficiency and effectiveness, while personalizing the worker and the work environment (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2007). Such positive relationships create an organization that desires and craves success. This leadership has its roots in the *Human Relations* approach to leadership (Bryant, 2003). More specifically, it builds commitment to organizational objectives and then empowers followers to achieve those objectives (Yukl, 2002). Transformational leadership’s similarities to servant-leadership have led to the question: “Is servant-leadership just a subset of transformational leadership or vice versa” (Stone et al., 2004, p. 4)?

Differences between Transformational Leadership and Servant-Leadership

Servant-leadership is seen by some to be preferable to transformational and transactional leadership (Lubin, 2001). Transformational leadership and servant-leadership are so similar that the question has been raised by Stone et al. (2004), “Are transformational leadership and servant-leadership the same theory, except for their use of different names” (p. 4)? Both emphasize the appreciation and valuing of people, and listening to, mentoring, and empowering followers, but, according to Stone et al., “transformational leaders tend to focus more on organizational objectives while servant-leaders focus more on the people who are their followers” (p. 349). Walker and Sackney (2007) argued that “transformational leadership is usually about achieving significant organizational purposes and servant-leadership is about helping each person grow a wholesome sense of personal significance” (p. 258), so that the extent to which

leaders transfer their focus from organization to followers is the crucial difference in determining whether the leader is a transformational leader or a servant-leader (Stone et al.). We don't wish to push the distinctions too far – perhaps it is possible to be both.

For Stone et al. (2004), servant-leaders focus on their followers, and "... do not have particular affinity for the abstract corporation or organization; rather, they value the people who constitute the organization" (p. 5); in other words, they both value and privilege human dignity. The transformational leader may have a more macro focus related to organizational success and takes initiative that involves for instance certain risks to end outmoded practices. For the servant-leader, relationships take priority over task and product (Lubin, 2001), and, as Smith, Montagno and Kuzmenko (2004) indicated, may result in more "... skilled people, more interpersonal relationships, creation of shared visions and clear goals" (p. 87). In the context of business organizations where servant-leadership is practiced, chasing of profits becomes secondary, as attention to people is the priority (Harvey, 2001).

Russell and Stone (2002) pointed out that while both transformational and servant-leaders are influential, the latter achieve influence in a nontraditional way through persuasion and a respect for constituents that allows them extraordinary freedom to exercise their gifts. Thus, servant-leaders use service to define the reasons for meaningful work and to provide needed resources (Stone et al., 2004).

Smith, Montagno, and Kuzmenko (2004) further suggested that another difference between servant-leadership and transformational leadership is that "... servant-leadership leads to a spiritual generative culture, while transformational leadership leads to an empowered dynamic culture" (p. 80). This is a distinction worth our attention for Catholic school principals, especially in the context of the mission of Catholic education. Spiritual generative culture allows followers to focus on their own development and on that of others, and provides organizational processes that promote growth, while empowered dynamic culture leads not only to better skills of followers, but to higher expectations being placed on them. While we won't elaborate, we see transcendent leadership as a natural progression from transmissive (command and control), transactional (interpersonal exchange), and transformative leadership approaches.

According to Wheatley (2004), spirituality in servant-leadership is "... an awareness that people have something beyond the instrumental or utilitarian. People have deep yearnings, a quest for meanings, and an ability to wonder. This is a non-religious view of what spirituality might mean" (p. 246). For Kurtz and Ketcham (1992), spirituality is that which allows a person to get *beyond* the narrow confines of self.

Drury (2005), for example, viewed servant-leadership as far too complex to be reduced to a set of attributes, but for others like Stronge (1998), Blanchard (1997), Covey (2002), and Yukl (2002), such leaders do exhibit distinctive characteristics that are in harmony with the ten identified by Spears (1995, 2002, 2004) from Greenleaf's (1977) writings. These characteristics include: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and, building community. These characteristics should be viewed as lenses through which the servant-leader's role can be viewed rather than a set of skills or

techniques (Jennings & Stahl-Wert, 2003). These characteristics are both consciously and unconsciously displayed as every servant-leader exercises leadership.

Relevance of Servant-Leadership in Catholic Schools

The National Congress (1992) argued, “Leadership in and on behalf of Catholic schools is deeply spiritual, servant-like, prophetic, visionary and empowering” (p. 22). Ciriello (1996) concurred and pointed out that “the heart of Catholic school leadership lies in effective spiritual leadership ... that ... is servant-leadership – to use Robert Greenleaf’s term – in which the leader is a servant who needs people as much as they need him or her” (p. 1). For Arthur (1998), the Catholic school was to be considered as one dynamic unit, interrelated, interconnected, and interdependent community in which “leaders are essentially the servants of the needs of people in the faith-community and the moral idea that binds them together” (p. 58). Duignan (2007) echoed the perception that the Catholic school is a community of the ‘people of God’ and not just an institution or organization, and Miller (2007) agreed:

Leadership is understood as a *diakonia*, a ministry for the Church and the wider society. It is about being in the midst of colleagues as “one who serves” (cf. Lk 22: 27); it is about stewardship of a great intellectual, cultural and religious patrimony. (p. 16)

Understandably, a faith and learning community needs an adaptive leadership that espouses an ethic of care, justice, and moral leadership (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Fullan, 2003; Starratt, 2004). For Blanchard (1996), Sergiovanni (2000), and Covey (2002), this kind of leadership is servant-leadership.

Walker and Scharf (2001) pointed out that “Catholic educators have a high calling as they obediently follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and seek the grace to bear His image and likeness in their work” (p. 15). Walker and Scharf further indicated that for Catholic school principals, servant-leadership is “... a fundamental, foundational and essential expression of their vocation within the Faith-community” (p. 16). Congruent thinking led Mulligan (2005) to state, “Catholic education, by its very nature, is a call to live differently and offer something more: a perspective about our world rooted in the scriptures and social teachings of the church” (p. 39), implying an imitation of the leadership style of Jesus. Arthur (1998) maintained that “for a Catholic school the values underpinning its leadership would indeed largely be derived from religious belief” (p. 51). As the Vatican II document, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (1990), reminded Catholic school leaders:

At least since the time of the [Vatican II] Council, therefore, the Catholic school has had a clear identity, not only as a presence of the Church in society, but also a genuine and proper instrument of the Church. It is a place of evangelization, of authentic apostolate and of pastoral action-not through complementary or parallel or extra-curricular activity but of its very nature: its work of educating the Christian person. (para. 33)

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In short, the Catholic school discovers its meaning and vision in the Church and does not separate faith from education. Because of its Judeo-Christian origins and its applicability in varying contexts, servant-leadership offers that opportunity (Wilkes, 1998).

It is no surprise that Catholic Education Boards and authorities recommend servant-leadership to their administrators. Mulligan (2005) wrote that leadership in Catholic education is not a career but a vocation, and is intended to serve the Catholic education community.

GENESIS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

According to Metcalf-Turner and Fischetti (1996), Greenleaf (1977) is credited by Spears (1996), Blanchard (1997), Covey (2002), and Frick (2004) for formulating and popularizing the notion of servant-leadership. As a devout Quaker (a Religious Society of Friends founded in England in the 17th century that tended toward minimal hierarchical structure), Greenleaf was familiar with the concept of servant-leadership. He spent most of his 38 year professional career at the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT &T) in the field of management research, development, and education. After retirement, Greenleaf started a second career that focused on the role of education in society and he spent 25 years as consultant to businesses, foundations, universities, churches, institutions, and seminaries in the United States, Europe, and the Developing World. In 1964, he founded the Centre for Applied Ethics, now renamed the Robert Greenleaf Center.

Greenleaf coined the term *servant-leadership* after reading Hesse's (1971) *Journey to the East* (Spears, 1995) in which a group of men accompanied by their humble servant, Leo, undertook a mythical journey. All went well until Leo disappeared. This created confusion and aimlessness, and, lacking the leadership of their *servant*, the journey had to be abandoned (Sims, 2005). The wayfarers later discovered that Leo was not merely their servant, but the Head of the great Noble Order of a distinguished monastic community. The image of Leo as the servant and leader transformed Greenleaf's understanding of leadership. He concluded that a true leader must be willing to first be a servant to others, and that this aspiration to serve makes a leader great. Greenleaf's "... seminal work, *The Servant as Leader* (1977) and continues to exert a powerful and growing influence on educators and leaders in business, higher education, service-learning organizations, and religious institutions" (Metcalf-Turner & Fischetti, 1996, p. 114).

Wilkes (1998) pointed out that the notion of servant-leadership originated in Judeo-Christian theology. God demanded of the patriarchs and kings of the Old Testament (i.e., Abraham, Moses, Jacob, Joseph, David, Rehoboam) that they serve the people and not lord it over them. According to Wilkes, the Israelites demonstrated their preference for servant-leadership when the elders advised King Rehoboam, "If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever" (I Kings. 12:7, The New King James Version). According to Blanchard (1998), the word *servant* (along with serve and service) features more than 1,300 times in the Bible.

Jesus Christ's life, His work, and His words depict Him as a leader whose deeds and vision changed the course of human history, and provide a leadership ideal worth emulating (Batten, 1998); whether one is in the Church or outside of a faith community, Jesus gave this advice to his disciples in Matt. 20:25-26:

You know that the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. (as cited by Blanchard, 1998; Sanders, 1994)

The appointment of the seven deacons in Acts 6 represents the service nature of leadership intended for those who served. Mark 10:43,44 says: "... whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be the first must be slave to all." According to Wilkes (1998), the term *servant* used in Mark 10:43 is the Greek word *diakonos*, which means *to wait at table, to provide or care for, to minister, or to serve*. *Diakonos* is the root of the English word *deacon*. The word *slave* used in Mark, 10:44 is the Greek word *doulos*. Wilkes, further pointed out that the radical nature of Jesus' concept of leadership lies in the use of *slave* because slavery was repulsive to the Jews of the first century who considered such a comparison to be a terrible attack on their dignity because it connoted a person bound to do the will of a master or superior. Jesus used *servant* and *slave* to describe the highest form of leadership.

In Luke 4:18-30, Jesus declared in his inaugural homily that he had come to serve and to proclaim the good news to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind. This central message was that he had come to serve and not to be served (McNeal, 1998). Philippians 2:5-11 links Jesus' divinity, with His coming to earth as a servant. The passage says:

In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus. Christ himself was like God in everything. But he did not think that being equal with God was something to be used for his own benefit. But he gave up his place with God and made himself nothing. He was born to be a man and became like a servant. And when he was living as a man, he humbled himself and was fully obedient to god, even when that caused his death – death on a cross. So God raised him to the highest place. God made his name greater than every other name so that every knee will bow to the name of Jesus – everyone in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. And everyone will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and bring glory to God the Father.

Jesus exemplified what it means to be a true servant by what he said and did when he washed the feet of his disciples (Jennings & Stahl-Wert, 2003). According to these authors, in Luke 22:26, Jesus, seeing his disciples not understanding his message about service, said to them:

But not so among you, on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the one who serves.

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And in Mark 9:35, he told them, “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be the last of all and servant of all.” The words and actions of Jesus offer a challenge as well as a good example. Jesus’ words “It was not you who chose me, it was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit” (Jn. 15:16), are a reminder to Christian leaders to imitate Him in their practice of leadership (Helm, 1996).

From the foregoing, it is clear that the Catholic school leader, for whom the proclamation of Gospel values and virtues forms an important and vital part of his/her leadership (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965), needs to exercise leadership in imitation of Jesus the servant-leader.

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP APPROACH

Servant-leadership highly values followers and seeks to promote their welfare and interests as an effective way of promoting organizational goals (Patterson, 2003; Drury, 2005). The primary purpose of the servant-leader is to serve others by investing in the development and well-being of constituents for the benefit of accomplishing tasks and goals for the common good (Page & Wong, 1998). Much of the current literature that supports serving and valuing people was presaged by Greenleaf’s (1977) work on servant-leadership (Sarkus, 1996). Greenleaf’s model established service as the characteristic of the leader that attracts followers who will pass on this quality to others (Spears, 1996; Nixon, 2005). An important aspect of servant-leadership is the ability to create leaders from followers (Covey, 2002; Winston, 2005).

Spears (1995) pointed out that at AT & T, Greenleaf experienced the management practices promoted by Taylor (1916/2005) and McGregor (1957/2005) whose theories influenced business leadership education. Greenleaf (1970) concluded that old leadership practices increased level of stress within organizations and often involved leaders who were more interested in power than in serving their followers. He declared, “the great leader is seen as servant first, and that simple fact is the key to his greatness” (p. 21). According to Greenleaf, servant-leadership:

Begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. (p. 27)

For Greenleaf, servant-leadership is a moral principle whose *raison d’etre* is the satisfaction of the needs of followers. Yukl (2002) also wrote that servant-leaders must attend to the needs of their followers to help them become healthier, wiser, and more ready to accept responsibilities.

To reiterate, Blanchard (2002) identified two types of leaders: those who are leaders first and those that are servants first. The former tend to be controlling and to give orders when it comes to decision making, while the latter take on leadership if they perceive an opportunity to serve. The difference is that servant-leaders have

as their primary aim to be helpful, while those who are leaders first lead because of their love for power. According to Greenleaf (1977), the best test of the servant-leader can be seen through answering the following questions:

Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived? (p. 27)

Duignan (2007) interpreted these questions as the test for any form of leadership in Catholic schools. According to him, such leadership must be emancipatory, elevating, mutually empowering, and driven by love, and demands careful stewardship and husbandry of very valuable resources; that is people. Since the core of servant-leadership is service, self-interest should not motivate the servant-leader, instead, the leader should ascend to a higher plane of motivation (Pollard, 1996; Russell & Stone, 2002; Greenleaf, 1977).

For power sharing, collaboration, and development of people to be effective, leadership must be based on meeting the needs of the followers rather than of the organization (Patterson, 2003). Collaboration by the servant-leader means abandoning of the self to the strength of others and admitting that we cannot know or do everything by ourselves (DePree, 2004; Wheatley, 2004). The core of the servant-leadership model is the leader's ability to turn the traditional hierarchical power structure upside down (Spears, 2002a), so as to put others first. Bruffee (1993) maintained that collaboration is the "... willingness to grant authority to, courage to accept the authority granted to oneself by peers and skill in the craft of interdependence" (p. 12). Active collaboration with followers allows the servant-leader access into the thoughts of followers for better service (Walls, 2004). Servant-leadership is service orientated and advocates a group orientated approach to decision making so as to strengthen institutions and to improve society (Spears, 1995).

As a servant, the leader is always searching, listening, and expecting to make the world a better place for his/her followers (Blanchard, 2002). The servant-leader listens to concerns and problems rather than acting on prejudgments or from a position of authority. Listening and getting to know the needs and aspirations of followers, and a readiness to empathize with their difficulties and frustrations is a servant-leader's worthy responsibility (Autry, 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). The servant-leader's concern and care for people is reflected in listening to them, and in redirecting them when they deviate from goals; the focus is on service that leads to the growth and development of followers (Blanchard, 1997).

Servant-leaders detract from their aim if they are primarily motivated by the desire for power or personal gratification (Metcalf-Turner & Fischetti, 1996). They work hard to accept and empathize and not to reject outright the suggestions, methods, and ideals of others so as to develop people and help them strive and to flourish (Blanchard, 1997). For Russell and Stone (2002), vision, honesty, integrity, truth,

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modeling, pioneering, and appreciation of others are key attributes and values in servant-leadership that helps followers to grow.

From his study of Greenleaf (1970, 1977), Spears (1995, 1998) concluded that servant-leadership leads to a holistic approach to work, and to promotion of a sense of community at the work place. According to Spears (1994), servant-leadership is a transformational approach to life that motivates leaders to build a better and more caring society. Greenleaf (1977) attributed the founding of caring societies to individuals; thus, he indicated that becoming a servant-leader begins within the servant and not within society. Autry (2001) observed that initiating the process of servanthood within a person demands a strong foundation of beliefs, values, and ethics, while role modeling of servant-leadership behaviour encourages group functioning at a higher level.

In sum, servant-leadership is not a quick “fix approach” and should not be construed as something that can quickly be instilled within an institution or person (Spears, 1998). According to Spears, servant-leadership, at its core, is a long term transformational attitude to life and work and is essentially a way of being that creates the capacity for bringing about positive change throughout society. In transformational leadership, the leader’s primary focus is on organizational objectives. As indicated in servant-leadership, the focus is on followers, because leaders trust them to undertake actions that are in the best interest of the organization (Stone, Russell & Patterson, 2004).

Daft (2005) explained, “servant-leadership is leadership upside-down” (p. 230). This is because the leader does not seek to promote his/her self interest, but rather ardently desires to encourage followers to grow as persons and become leaders themselves. According to Daft, leadership flows out of service as it enables followers to grow and become what they are capable of being. Power is not the primary aim of the leader, but is shared with constituents. The servant-leader’s first responsibilities are to relationships and people. But what do these ideals look like in the context of “highly peopled communities,” such as Catholic high schools?

CHAPTER 3

OUR APPROACH TO STUDYING SERVANT LEADERSHIP WITH CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Our purpose for this book is to explore the servant-leadership role through the voiced and observed work of Catholic high school principals and to consider how the leadership ideals they talk about fit into their daily professional lives. What does this servant-leadership look like in the life of a Catholic high school principal? We were interested to find out how six school principals made sense, for themselves, of their servant-leadership roles and then to convey their insights and our syntheses with a wider audience. We know that meaning making is largely influenced by life events, circumstances and surroundings. We used what is sometimes call “an interactive researcher-participant dialogue” through several interview sessions with each of the principals and then several weeks of extended observations with two of the principals.

We reflected on the principals’ experiences reflected and then expanded on the culminating conceptual framework, and provided deeper insights into the study. In the following section, we take a few pages to present our approach to the research aspects of this portrayal.

THE PRINCIPALS AND THEIR CONTEXTS

We have used pseudonyms for our principals, their schools, and school systems. It is likely that the principals would have been fine with our using their real names but they lead communities of people who were integral to their servant-leadership and, therefore, were difficult to “write out” of the transcripts (in lieu of not usually speaking directly to them). We thought it best to provide the fullest possible description and safeguard the contexts of their insights, without involving the community members or even checking with members to see if perspectives were shared. Extending our study in this way might make a great study – but not for this time around.

All of these Catholic high schools were within a publicly funded, provincial educational system. Like the non-Catholic public school system, the Catholic school systems are divided into administrative territories (geographic areas) called school districts or divisions, each of which has a mission statement as a roadmap for the direction to follow in the multiple schools within the jurisdiction. Their common mandate to proclaim the Gospel message of Jesus Christ (*Lumen gentium*, 1965) seems to unite them. Consequently, their mission statements reflect similar characteristics. A recurrent feature and objective of these mission statements is community

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building and so most schools have their own complementary mission statements in addition to the more generic system-wide statements. This is reflected in descriptive terms that they contain, for example *local church*, *Church teachings*, *Catholic community*, *Catholic education*, *Christian freedom*. We have displayed examples of school district/system mission statements in the table to follow.

Table 1. Mission statements of selected catholic school districts

<i>School districts</i>	<i>Mission statements</i>
Ronald	Education is a lifelong process of seeking and coming to know God in the fullness of creation. To assist parents and the local church community in the formation of students in heart, mind, body and spirit. Catholic schools strive to provide an atmosphere of love in which students are inspired to hope in Jesus Christ and have their faith through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Colorado	Dedicated to working with the community and the local church to provide a quality Catholic education that fosters excellence and the development of informed, responsible citizens.
Michigan	To nurture learning and spiritual growth guided by Gospel values and Church teachings.
Munroe	We give glory to God by educating children within a caring Catholic community in God's name, we, in the Munroe Catholic school system, provide opportunities for students: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To address their individual needs, interests and gifts 2. To achieve their full potential, with emphasis upon service to others; and 3. To meet challenges of their life-long journey.
St. Patrick	To improve student learning in a Catholic community guided by Christ our teacher.
Toulon	Our mission is to create hope by fostering learning and honouring diversity in a Catholic environment.
Foxford	To provide a strong, relevant, purposeful, and distinctively Catholic Education which ensures each of our students achieves his or her God-given potential.
St. Ephraim	We are committed to the growth and development of the whole person, in an atmosphere that is characterized by Christian freedom, moral responsibility and a spirit of openness to others that is based on respect and love for all.

Ronald school district comprised about 15,000 students in about 40 schools. Of these K-12 students, there were about 4,000 students in grades 9 to 12. Colorado school district, comprised about over 20 schools and about 11,000 students in the total populations. Again, there were about 4,000 students in grades 9 to 12. The six principals lead schools of between 50 and 100 teachers, 10 and 30 support staff, and

710 to 1200 students. These were urban schools with 25% and 35% of the student populations coming from a diversity of racial backgrounds including Eastern European, Aboriginal Canadian, Asian, and African descent.

In order to accomplish our aims for this book and the research it represents, we used purposive sampling. This is where the researchers choose specific cases or persons to maximize the potential for learning from those persons. Based on telephone conversations with secretaries of two Catholic school districts, we learned that both Ronald and Colorado Catholic school districts recommended the servant-leadership ideal for their administrators. We confirmed that all of the Catholic high school principals in these school districts were somewhat familiar with notion of servant-leadership, because of the explicit advocacy of the approach by the school districts.

Our initial intention was to use a nomination technique in the identification and selection of principals. However, the superintendents of both school systems declined to nominate principals; believing that their involvement might compromise the study. We surmised that they felt uncomfortable naming, preferring, judging or privileging one principal over another. In order to gain access to principals, we requested that the superintendent provide permission to undertake research about selected principals' servant-leadership role in their schools. As there were only two female high school principals in these two school systems we chose to ask both to participate. We selected the remaining four male principals by random sampling using the list of principals provided by the superintendents. We then contacted principals by e-mail or phone to invite their involvement in conversations with us. We were pleased that those who were invited agreed to work with us. We'd now like to take a few pages to tell you a bit more about each of these Catholic high school principals.

Meet Angela. Angela is one of two principals who you will hear a great deal from in the coming pages. Angela had all her K-12 education in Catholic schools. Her mother was an Eastern European Catholic, and her father was a Roman Catholic. She was brought up with two faith backgrounds, but grew up mainly as a Roman Catholic. She was greatly influenced in her faith formation by her mother and a few priests who were dedicated educators and chaplains. Coming from a family of eight children, she learned early in life that she was not always the centre of attention. At the time of this study, Angela was in her early fifties, and had spent over 10 years as a principal. She had over 30 years experience in the field of education, having taught mainly in four high schools and apart from being a classroom teacher, she had been involved in many extra-curricular activities including coaching of different sporting activities. Before becoming a principal, she had served as assistant principal for three years in two schools. She was in her second school as principal, and at the time of this study had about 700 students under her care.

Meet Denis. Denis is the second principal with whom we spent some extra time and therefore, he with Angela get the most "air-time" and scrutiny in this book. Denis described himself as a product of the Catholic education system. He was baptized Catholic, and was greatly influenced in his faith formation by his single parent mother and an older brother. He later enjoyed a faith journey with his girl friend who became his wife. He learned early in life, from the sacrifices of his mother who

devotedly raised him and his brothers, that children can be guided to succeed if they have the necessary care and motivation. In addition, the example of some priests in the Catholic school system when he was growing up, inspired him in his approach to caring for students. Denis was just over fifty years old. He had elementary school experience for about half a year before going on to teach in the high school. He had served six years as assistant principal in two high schools before becoming a principal. During his almost 30 year career in education, he had been in six schools. His extensive experiences with special needs children, and students of alternate schools taught him that for all students to succeed, each student needs to be treated differently, and according to their particular needs. He was in his sixth year as principal, and in his second school, taking care of over 700 students.

Meet Gerald. Gerald grew up in a family of teachers, in a community blessed with over six different church denominations. As a result, he learned early in life to respect and appreciate difference, and that diversity is a rich source of learning and growth. Gerald did not attend a Catholic school while growing up, but he felt privileged to have been in contact with religion in elementary and high school as prayer and religious instruction were part of school life in his student days. He was greatly influenced in his faith formation by his faith-filled parents and the general faith community with whom he lived. At the time of our conversation with him, he was entering his 26th year of experience in the field of education. He had entered school administration after 13 years of teaching, and served as assistant principal for about four years in two schools before being promoted to principal. Gerald had over 1,000 students in his school. He had had nine years of experience as a principal and this was his second school in the role. Gerald also enjoyed a long history of serving as a coach in different sports during after school hours.

Meet Simon. Simon was raised in a committed Catholic family where faith and belief in God, and a Christ-like approach to life, were emphasized. He attributed his Catholic faith to his mother, but gracefully ascribed the deepening of that faith to his wife's parents. Simon started coaching sporting activities at a young age, and it was through coaching that he started to develop leadership qualities early in life. He had had over twenty years experience as a teacher, having been involved in the formation of students in four schools. His leadership qualities projected him on a rather quick trajectory of school leadership. He was department head for three years and assistant principal for over four years. Simon had over 800 students in his school, and did not have elementary school teaching experience. He had spent over five years as principal at the time when we interacted with him.

Meet Terese. Terese viewed her mother as the most significant influence on her Catholic faith and leadership qualities. Her mother always made her think of the impact of her actions on other people. Her father was not Catholic, but both parents were a huge inspiration to her and encouraged her to pursue excellence in whatever she did. Terese had had two years experience as an elementary school teacher, and became assistant principal after 12 years as a high school teacher. She was in her ninth school. She was promoted to principal after serving two years as an assistant

principal, and at the time of this study had been serving as principal for over 15 years out of her almost 30 years service in education. She had over 800 students in her care when we met her.

Meet John. John grew up in a faith community with parents who took their faith seriously. He was an altar server, throughout his high school and university years, for some very good priests who helped and inspired him in his faith. He had been in education for close to 28 years when we talked together. He started his teaching career in the elementary school and had taught a variety of subjects in most grades. He became an elementary school principal, for one year before he went on to teach in a high school. During his teaching career, he was a consultant for physical health and social sciences. John felt that he had joined the ranks of school administrators because of opportunities to fill in for principals when they were away from school attending to other school business. He became high school principal after serving three years as assistant principal. He was serving in his second school as principal, and was in his fifth year as principal in a high school with over 700 students.

You will hear more from these principals in the next two sections but we need to say a bit more about how we collected their insights and then how we brought the six voices together. We adopted the collective case study design for this research because this approach provides the medium for in-depth data collection of the servant-leadership role of selected Catholic high school principals. After the interviewing process, two principals were selected for observation for two weeks each. The criteria for the selection of the two principals for observation were based both on the richness of data provided during the interview process (and therefore possibility of more of same), availability, time of interview completion, and accessibility to researchers. We employed semi-structured interviews because these are well-suited for case study research. We conducted several 60 to 90 minutes' face-to-face semi-structured interviews and telephone interview sessions, with each principal, spaced three days to two weeks apart. We began the first session by asking general semi-structured questions regarding the principal's personal and professional experiences. The intention of the first interview with each principal was to learn the background of each principal as a preparatory ground for subsequent questions which dwelt on principal's daily lived experiences of servant-leadership. We employed one face-to-face interview session with one of the three telephone interviewees during the second interview session with him. During the telephone interviews, we tape-recorded each interview, and made detailed notes. In order to increase the richness, depth, and rigor of the research, we observed each of the two selected principals for two weeks. We structured the observations so as to be able to witness a broad view of their daily servant-leadership roles. We created an observation protocol that served as a guide to recording information during the observation. We operated and observed in as unobtrusive a manner as possible. In course of the observation period, we made time to write short notes and comments. And, as principals were very open to discuss and explain events as the observations progressed, we asked them to clarify incidents that were unclear.

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After the transcription of the interviews and recording of observations, we continued the analysis process by coding the data for patterns and themes. This approach led to organizing the data topically, by arranging the material into narrative account, then systematically classifying the data into some sort of schema consisting of categories, themes, or types. We compared data from the different principals and developed codes for each theme.

In order to establish credibility, we used member checks by taking interview transcripts and observational reports back to principals to ask them if the findings were plausible. The principals were given the opportunity to review and confirm the completeness and accuracy of the interview transcriptions. In addition, we employed peer debriefing by engaging three university colleagues in discussion of interview and observation processes, findings, tentative analyses, and conclusions. Triangulation was observed by interviewing six principals from two different Catholic school divisions in different school contexts to allow a rich comparison of data. A combination of interviews and observation techniques was another avenue for triangulation. In course, throughout this research, we adhered to the ethical principles and the study protocol application approved by the Research Ethics Board of our university.

SECTION 2

SIX PRINCIPALS: SERVANT LEADERS IN ACTION

Section two affords us an opportunity to share the insights and experiences of our six Catholic high school principals with special attention to their understandings of what servant leadership is about, how each has come to understand and practice this approach to principal-leadership and what this looks like in the realities of school life and the challenges of these settings. As we encounter each of these themes from our interviews, we also have woven in some reflections from the general literature. We were taken with the sources and meaningful substance of these principals' notions of servant leadership, their metaphors and meaning making around the role of servant leader. Their various expressions of the challenges and strategies that attend to sincere efforts to "live out" servant-leadership in their work settings. So then, this section invites you to hear from these leaders about their notions of servant-leadership, their perceptions of the expectations associated with the role, and the way that servant leadership was expressed in their daily lives. We later weave the principals' responses and understandings with those of other writers in the field of leadership studies.

SOURCES AND SUBSTANCE OF CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' NOTIONS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP: INFLUENCING AGENTS

Working together with six principals, we sought to explore the sources and substance of servant-leadership. In this chapter, we describe the role of their own parents and family members, employers, relationship and activity involvements, faith journeys and other sources that profoundly and subtly influenced their thinking about servant leadership. Of course, most of us would agree that our lives are social constructed to a great degree – and that the people in our lives leave their distinctive marks or signatures on the way we think and act. This was so for these six school leaders. In this chapter we also bring to description the principals' thoughts on the qualities, utilities and features of servant leadership for their school leader role. In this chapter we provide an inside look at these leaders' insights, definitions and concepts around the notion of servant-leadership.

Sources of Catholic High School Principals' Notions of Servant-Leadership

Each of the principals we talked with acknowledged that people and circumstances served as key vehicles through which they had acquired their notions of servant-leadership. These people and circumstances included parents, early childhood upbringing, siblings, former superintendents, school division policies, former principals, professional colleagues, and priests. Principals seemed grateful for the providential circumstances that had led them to their present positions, and often attributed their successes to the guiding hand of God. They perceived their parents, former superintendents, principals, and situations that crossed their paths as part of God's eternal plan for their lives; seemingly, privileging them for participation in the mission of the Church.

Parents, and early childhood upbringing. Without exception, principals gave credit to their parents and their upbringing as contributing value to their concepts of servant-leadership. Angela described her experience as follows:

Families play a huge role. Again I . . . come back to my mom, . . . Because staff, parents, students know that is who I am. I am not faking it. That is who I am, period! Just because I became principal didn't mean I suddenly put on the cloak of servant-leadership. That is how I was brought up. Probably my best example is my mother. My mom will be close to 80 this November; she still works full time as a [profession named]. (p. 10)

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Terese, speaking in a calm and gentle tone, reflected in a fashion similar to Angela's ideas. She said, "It has been a long, long time, probably before I became an administrator. It is probably my upbringing, and I think what Jesus calls us to do." As if he had conferred with Terese, Denis concurred, "I do not think I changed my style because I was introduced to the concept of servant-leadership. I think I was a servant-leader to begin with. And as I think of my colleagues, most of us are." Denis acknowledged that his childhood upbringing had immensely shaped the way he viewed leadership and the care he felt children needed in order to develop to their full potential. Denis' reflection on his childhood seemed to imply that people's background, and the care they had received as children had a direct bearing on their outlook on leadership and the leadership style they adopted as adults.

The valuable role of mothers as sources of notions of servant-leadership was described by Denis:

When I was [a pre-schooler] my dad died. We were living [abroad] at the time. Dad came home Friday night from work. . . . [and] he died suddenly of a massive heart attack. . . . Mom moved . . . because there was university here for her boys. She was a trained nurse, so she worked at St. Anne's hospital. So growing up without a dad, and sort of a lower middle class, when mom didn't go to work there was no sick time. She didn't get paid, so we never had money. I didn't think we were poor, but . . . I know now that we were fairly poor. And I think that really shaped the way I view people, and view kids. I wasn't a privileged kid. And so really, my heart is with those kids that are not privileged. I resent people who talk about the disadvantage of single homes, and single parents. It is a factor, it doesn't have to be a liability. There are lots of single parents who are very successful with their kids, and there are a lot of two parent families with messed up kids. So that has probably been the biggest one . . . So, long before anyone talked to me about servant-leadership, and Christ-centered leadership, my heart was with those kids that needed extra help.

In a similar vein, Terese said:

My parents were a huge influence on me. . . . My mother particularly was a person of strong faith and belief. . . . But my mother was probably more of an influence. . . . She always encouraged us to think about what we did. To think about what we did and the impact it had on other people. To make sure that we were following basically that concept of 'what would Jesus do?' and making sure that whatever we did in life, how we treated people, how we interacted with people, how we treated ourselves followed what we were taught by the stories of Jesus. . . . And because of that, when I went into education, my goal was always to help kids to learn whatever it took them to learn. The values that I was taught by my parents were what I have taken with me into my education, into teaching. I have done the same thing as I moved into administration. . . . I believe very strongly that we need to treat each other with respect and dignity.

... What I always try and do is get kids to be fair and reasonable. Part of what I do is use the lessons I learned growing up, and ask them to do the same kind of thing. To treat people with respect and dignity. ... To treat people with respect and dignity.

According to Simon, attributing one's notions of servant-leadership to family background did not mean his family was perfect. Rather, the family was a place to relate with other people early in life, and where one learned to forgive others, knowing that imperfection is always a possibility in relationships, and that through mistakes one can aspire to become a better person.

Without discounting the role of their fathers, Angela, Denis, Terese, and Simon gave special credit to their mothers for their initial notions of servant-leadership, through the examples of their service, sacrifice, faith, and work ethic. Denis referred to his mother as "My Mother Teresa." In doing so, he was eulogizing her as resembling the sacrificial spirit of service of the Albanian Roman Catholic nun, who for 45 years ministered to the poor, the sick, the orphaned and the dying in India. His single-parent mother, through the care and sacrifice she made to educate him and his older sibling, had contributed immensely to making them what they had become. For Denis, *service* was central to his call as a Catholic high school principal; to bring hope to others, just as his mother did. Angela also praised her mother for her sacrifices and devotion in raising her and her siblings. She observed, "And I guess the same thing ... is the view I saw of my mother [while I was] growing up, how she gave to her kids, and what she did."

Gerald and John did not extol their mothers, but acknowledged that their parents and family backgrounds played influenced their notions of servant-leadership. In effect, the principals' observations alluded to family background and childhood upbringing as the cradle of their notions of leadership. The credit each principal gave his/her parent(s), and early childhood upbringing, as the source of their notions of servant-leadership, echoes Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Interaction with siblings. Three principals were of the view that all experiences are useful as long as one wrapped him/herself in positive assumptions. Angela, Denis, and Terese regarded their interaction with siblings as having helped them to learn early in life about living in community. Depending on their position in the order of birth and the care they had received from siblings, they learned about how to care for and provide support for others, how to look beyond their egos and to negotiate. They learned that other people were as important as they were and often had needs that demanded attention. Angela said:

Growing up in a large family, we are eight, and you have to care for each one. Each and every one. You are not the centre of attention. ... so I see the importance of supporting one another, helping one another, being there. And yes, within each little group, you also learn to negotiate. You learn to love, handle situations. ... I think more than anything, that is where I learned servant-leadership.

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Similarly, Denis observed:

I am the youngest in the family. I think that has something to do with it too. Because I had people looking out for me. I did not necessarily have to look out for them. They were all older. I guess if you had a parent who was stern or a dictator, or told you what to do, then I think you are what you learn. And I think seeing those different styles in the family. My brothers and I are still close. I do not know if it is that uncommon. . . . The idea that servant-leadership, I do not know any other way than how I was raised. But I can certainly see that idea of the old German stern taskmaster parent would create children that either model it or swear never to do it again. But we always said about kids that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. And I think that is true about leadership styles that, what you grew up with will probably determine the style that you will adopt. Whatever you feel most comfortable with.

Denis' observation concurs with the literature that good examples of servant-leadership inspire servant-leadership characteristics in people. Just as his older brother looked out for him, he had learned to look out for others.

Terese intimated that she learned the importance of respecting the freedom of others from interacting with her siblings, because she was allowed the autonomy to pursue her personal interests and goals in making her lifelong career choices. From this influence, she cherished and valued individual freedom and interests in her dealings with students and staff as a way of providing them with hope for their future. Simon, Gerald, and John were silent on the influence of their siblings as sources of their notions of servant-leadership.

Superintendents, school division policies, former principals, professional colleagues, and priests. Superintendents of school districts, former principals, professional colleagues, and priests were also perceived as sources of notions of servant-leadership. Two respondents offered the following comments. Angela said:

Servant-leadership became a real focus of our school system. I heard lots of the word *servant-leadership* from [name] who was our superintendent at that time. And I know as a principal group, we took that on as one of our themes. . . . Someone just used the term. . . . I do not know whether that helps. But I guess watching others, watching other leaders, Tom, John, Randy, and now Maria. What they offer as leaders was always quiet, and behind the scenes. . . . These were examples of wonderful people I have worked with.

In agreement with Angela, Denis said:

Our former school [system] superintendent brought that in an initiative of the whole school system for administrative servant-leadership. And I am not sure why they did that. I think he was just a visionary, and very firm in his beliefs as our superintendent.

These two comments indicate that good examples of exemplary servant-leaders who do not go unnoticed. As well, these comments suggest that providing exemplary leadership sometimes implies treading the lonely path of innovation with an appealing vision. In addition, good initiatives that serve the interest of followers leave fond and lasting memories in people's minds even if not completely understood at their initial stages. John, Terese, and Gerald did not directly cite superintendents as sources of their notions of servant-leadership but referred to conferences, workshops, and retreats organized under the auspices of their superintendents as occasions when they heard of *servant-leadership*.

Denis was alone in mentioning the policies and practices of his school system as a source of his notions of servant-leadership. He observed:

[Servant-leadership] is something that you can hang your hat on and be reminded that it isn't about me. Because, sometimes we get selfish and it can become about me. But because we have the servant-leadership concept with us, then we can't stray from it. Because, it has been sort of defined by some of our symbols. We have symbols of our office [as he picks up a stone to show us]. Each Catholic principal receives a rock when they become a principal. And it is a symbol of which we are all a part of. I think the analogy of Peter and the Rock. But, also that we are anchored to something, and that is the school system. That, we are just a small piece of it. [Principals are also handed] the pot of gold, and the servant-leadership bowl. These are our symbols. So washing of the feet in that Easter vigil, Holy Thursday is probably the most meaningful to me. The washing of the feet is probably the most meaningful experience of the whole Triduum [Liturgical ceremonies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday]. And I think it has to do with what I do for a living, and the idea of serving others.

Denis' comment suggests that apart from speaking about servant-leadership and putting it into practice, its representation through concrete objects helped imprint the leadership concept in the mind. This symbolism was a powerful and memorable sign of servant-leadership.

Some principals, professional colleagues, and exemplary priests with whom principals had the opportunity to work, were also exemplars of servant-leadership. Angela posed a question and then went ahead to drive her point home:

Would I have learned about servant-leadership if I had been in another system? ... as assistant principal, I grew up here. I was allowed freedom to do almost all I needed to do as a teacher as long as it was good for kids. ... I was allowed to laugh and make mistakes. And I have never forgotten that. ... Going to Catholic schools, seeing what Catholic teachers did in the early years to provide me a chance to go to school, to provide me a chance to work in a school, and to provide a chance for my kids to go to a Catholic school was huge. I don't think I understood it as a young teacher. I truly understand it now as an experienced teacher, as a principal.

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In the above comment, Angela seemed to offer advice that servant-leadership departs from just helping people to mastering conventions and established norms. Rather, servant-leadership implies guiding individuals to use freedom responsibly for the promotion of their own growth and the general progress of the communities they belong to. By citing teachers in the Catholic schools she attended, Angela underscored the importance of self-sacrificing leaders as valuable images of servant-leadership.

John concurred with Angela and was especially full of admiration for one of his former principals. He observed:

I think one of the things I gained from, was working with a couple of individuals I have a great respect for. One was my former principal, who really exemplified an ethical, faith-filled character. He was an individual who cared about students, the staff, the community. He was very respectful to everyone that was there. . . . And not only modeled that, but provided his support to all of us in the school. I think that became a part of how we were expected, as staff members, to exemplify and work ourselves. And I think that resonated with me.

Angela and Terese indicated that positive leadership values of their former principals such as their encouragement of initiatives, freedom to explore new methods of teaching, and the departure from an over-controlling leadership style, had contributed to their notions of servant-leadership. Our six principals were unanimous in distancing themselves from an over-bearing leadership style, and believed that an over-controlling leadership smothers healthy initiatives and the human spirit, while stifling healthy and budding leadership gifts. They were full of praise for the positive leadership experiences they had before becoming administrators. In their positions as servant-leaders, they stayed clear of the negative leadership styles they had experienced as teachers. Simon summarized these views as follows:

. . . . Obviously in 18 years, I probably had the good fortune of working with a minimum of six different principals. In the building, as many VPs have been on board. So you see a whole series of styles, and what that allows a person to do in a number of cases. The same thing I have done in my coaching career. You hopefully take what sort of appealed to you in all those leadership styles. And you hope that you can emulate that or at least add those qualities to what you want to do . . . as a leader. So, very many good people. We had one particular administrator though, very well organized person. Well spoken. Represented himself very well, but definitely did many things from the point of view that people were going to do them simply because they were told to do them, if I can put it that way. . . . And I really think that the school ran effectively, and on the basis of, from a teacher's perspective, uncertainty, anxiety, if I can put it that way. And I do not blame any one for that. I think it was just the atmosphere that resulted. And in my mind, it was not an atmosphere that I felt was conducive to long term good health either physically, emotionally, or

spiritually. So I would say that experience for two years, probably shaped me more in terms of how I felt I want to do, lead, when I was thrust into certain positions, or certain roles.

This comment suggests that some principals learned from both the good and bad examples of leaders whose leadership styles they had experienced. Consequently, the need to avoid the top-down administrative style re-enforced their eschewing a leadership model that concentrated on efficiency to the detriment of respect for the individual.

The discussions with Gerald, Terese, Simon, and John, implied that they viewed priests as inspiring sources of their Catholic faith only. But for Angela and Denis, some priests were also sources of their notions of servant-leadership. According to Denis, as a young boy, he saw what servant-leadership was through the sacrifice and service of some priests' behaviour towards his older brother and other boys in the Catholic system. Angela singled out one example:

Very much influenced by a few priests, many unfortunately who have just passed away. ... One of the examples, I guess more than anything. ... I am remembering is at a school function. Fr. Tony was in the hallways, and I watched him picking up garbage, and picking up paper. Just picking it up. And I can remember thinking, he doesn't have to do that. He is doing it because he is proud of what is going on around the school. He is proud of "his kids." He always called them his kids. And if he can do it why can't I?

Principals saw the origin of their notions of servant-leadership as stemming from their parents, siblings, and others. To reiterate Denis' comment, "The apple does not fall far from the tree." This implies that the ideas and images of servant-leadership had been acquired from childhood and family. Other influential sources were superintendents, priests, former principals, and colleagues.

Parenting and sporting activities. For Simon, John, and Denis, their personal role as parents served as an additional source of their notions of servant-leadership. John pointed out, "Personally, the birth of my children ... also helped with the leadership aspect." That some principals perceived the care of their own children helped form their notions of servant-leadership points to the prospect that servant-leadership is a lifestyle more than simply the following of a set of principles. As a father, Denis saw himself as the father of the 700 students in his school.

Angela and Simon acknowledged having acquired some notions of servant-leadership through their involvement in sporting activities. According to Angela, coaching sports sharpened her sensitivity towards other people and their different contexts. Simon agreed and said that he had acquired certain leadership qualities through coaching and engagement in sporting activities. He pointed out:

Throughout my life, I think I was able to develop certain qualities. ... With the sports that I played. And the roles that I took on when I was on teams. And I started coaching at a very young age. And I understood that having an

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impression on youngsters and young adults when you become a coach is not a task to be taken lightly. And definitely I had a lot in the years that I coached.

Simon indicated that extra-curricular activities, such as sports, are not only meant for fun, but also for the acquisition of certain leadership qualities, because the interactions that go on lead to the establishment of people relationship learning.

The Substance of Catholic High School Principals' Notions of Servant-Leadership

We wonder: Does a person need inspiring sources in order to form the notions of servant-leadership? Are servant-leaders self-made? If Catholic high school principals attribute their notions of servant-leadership to their family backgrounds and upbringing, and the inspiration of admirable examples, what forms the basis of their own servant-leadership roles? In answer, to our curiosities, principals identified their faith in Jesus Christ, and the positive results of their practice of servant-leadership as the main substance of their assumption of the role.

Faith in Jesus Christ as substance of principals' notions of servant-leadership.

All our principals unashamedly and clearly pointed out that their faith in Jesus Christ challenged them to live according to His teachings not only in word but also in deed. This challenge was reflected, in part, by the principals' frequent reference to the question: *What would Jesus do?*

The principals were grateful for the liberty to practice their Faith in the school context by giving hope to the people placed under their care. As Simon put it, faith is a gift to be shared with other people. For Gerald, Terese, and John, education is not only about knowledge, but also about faith, about hope for the future of children. In addition, education in the Catholic school context implies meeting a person's holistic needs and involves catering to both the physical and the spiritual dimensions. Denis and John respectively expressed it this way:

Well, it does mean spreading the news of what Jesus taught us. ... It gives us an opportunity to help kids find out who they are. But also with the example of Christ.

I take a look at where I am in the high school. What would Jesus do? Is a kind of a perspective that I would have in dealing with the community whether it be a staff, student ... having that sense of respect for everyone, so that you can deal with the situation in a proper fashion. I like to create a win-win situation as best as we can.

Faith in Jesus Christ invites Christian leaders and their followers to treat others as they want to be treated themselves. The humility of Jesus Christ is an invitation to exercise leadership in imitation of His humble leadership which upholds the dignity of each individual. In one way or another, all the principals viewed their faith in Jesus Christ as helping others discover their potentials, who they are, and the importance

of faith in their lives. Faith in Jesus Christ challenged them to think and reflect on their day-to-day interactions with staff, students, and parents.

The general view was that servant-leadership and faith are in a kind of symbiotic relationship; a faith informed servant-leadership. As Simon said:

I do not think you can have one without the other. And I may go back to my former school. You spend 18 years in a building where you form relationships with people. And you see those people deal with grief, with loss, with things that are part of life. We all know that. And you do not go through almost 20 years where they support you, and you support them, without developing a deeper faith, and . . . without your faith helping you and those around you cope with those on certain issues that happen in life.

Whether servant-leadership and faith are inseparable or not may be contentious for some. The fact that some leaders in non-Christian and public settings may not perceive faith as an important dimension of their leadership does not imply that they cannot be servant-leaders. For the Catholic school principal however, faith and servant-leadership are intertwined and inseparable, because according to principals, exercising leadership in the Catholic school context forms part of their daily living out of their Christian faith. Gleaned from their responses is the understanding that faith in Jesus Christ is the substance of their practice of servant-leadership. In fact, as we have earlier indicated, Catholic schools have the mandate to proclaim the Gospel message (*Lumen gentium*, 1965). This may explain why the principals viewed their servant-leadership role as inseparably connected with their faith.

Positive evidence of servant-leadership style as additional substance of principals' notions of servant-leadership. Although these school leaders seemed not to be motivated by material rewards in their practice of servant-leadership, they were heartened by positive responses from parents, staff, and students. Angela, Denis, Gerald, and John indicated that the positive response from staff and students provided evidence of the efficacy of their servant-leadership role. Both Angela and Denis indicated their joy at seeing a student who had a difficult previous academic year blossom in the following school year as a result of their patient encouragement of that student. Additionally, John and Angela mentioned the delight of meeting students, years after they had left school, and seeing that they had blossomed and were involved in community projects and activities that they had abhorred in their student days. To Angela, such examples were encouraging, and she regarded them as part of the long term nurturing process of servant-leadership that brought about the growth of followers. In a calm but assuring voice, Terese articulated the following example of the positive influence of her practice of servant-leadership:

With some parents, it is just when their children do something that is bad, and they get into trouble and get suspension or something. I do talk to the parents and say to them, 'you know, this is not the worse thing your son could have done or your daughter could have done. They made a mistake. They did

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something very unbecoming, there has to be consequences.' But just by making it okay that kids make mistakes and let us learn from that and let us move forward, and let us make sure it does not happen again. So just taking away that embarrassment that parents feel because their kids do something stupid, about which they feel very embarrassed, and they take ownership for it. Just removing that pressure from them, and allowing them to deal with their children in a more positive way. In terms of teachers, I will always encourage teachers to try different things. And I also let them know, and I always tell them, you know what, why do you not try this? If it does not work well, it does not work. Never getting too excited when things do not go well. We talk about it, we deal with it. We try and salvage what we can from a situation. But for the most part letting people know it is okay to take a risk, and that they are not going to be punished for taking a risk.

These words reveal that the servant-leader is one who inspires hope: sees the silver lining in the darkest cloud, brings about healing, tries to cultivate a deeper understanding of events and happenings, and sees the positive in what others view as negative. Through such encouraging demeanor, it was possible for the small group of principals that we had conversations with to inspire results in parents, staff, and students and to be rewarded with words of gratitude from the school community.

FURTHER THINKING ABOUT WHERE NOTIONS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP COME FROM

Where do servant-leaders ordinarily come by their notions of servant-leadership? The literature is seemingly quite silent on the question. Spears (2002) noted, "The idea of servant-leadership came partly out of Greenleaf's half-century of experience in working to shape large institutions" (p. 3). Likewise, the principals, we worked with, partly attributed their notions of servant-leadership to their experiences from their professional experience as teachers. As indicated, Greenleaf (1977) acknowledged that his notions of servant-leadership were crystallized from reading Hermann Hesse's *Journey to the East* (1971). We found that notions of servant-leadership came to the principals from the inspiring exemplary leadership of people with whom they had worked: former principals, superintendents, and professional colleagues, and priests. Added to these are the hiring practices put in place by their former superintendents. Leadership, well exercised, seems to have had a positive, ripple effects and creates generations of dedicated future leaders.

Principals indicated that before becoming teachers, they already had some notions of servant-leadership from their parents, early childhood upbringing, and interactions with their siblings. Neuschel (2005) argued that certain leadership qualities such as integrity, drive, and inner sense of responsibility are acquired early in life and contribute to shape a person's future life as a leader. Neuschel's argument agrees with the positive family background experiences of our six principals. Bob (2009) acknowledged the value of the influence of good leadership practices and exemplary family upbringing when he observed, "Imagine a world in which individuals who reflect

the principles of servant-leadership lead our institutions. Visualize a community that is filled with citizens seeking to become servant-leaders. Dream of families where children are raised in an environment of servant-leadership” (p. 3). Principals and superintendents who exhibit exemplary leadership sow seeds of leadership in their followers, and that professional colleagues perceive that they have to exchange useful information to contribute to the formation of others, as future servant-leaders.

Two principals attributed their notions of servant-leadership to priests. The rest viewed them only as inspiring sources of their faith. An implication is that in addition to serving as spiritual directors, priest chaplains in Catholic schools should perceive their good examples as contributing to the formation of potential servant-leaders by inspiring students and teachers. Another implication is that the care, sacrifice, and the entire formation of a child’s early upbringing constitute a valuable part of the child’s future worldview about leadership. Thus, as Angela said, “I think more than anything, that is where I learned servant-leadership from my family.” Kahl (2004) expressed a similar view when he wrote, “the . . . values of a family, however big or small and whatever its composition, are the values of the future [servant]-leader. Whatever my mother and father modeled into the clay of my soul became my idea of what is right” (p. 17). In short, as parents sacrifice to provide and care for their children, they are simultaneously teaching them to learn to care for others. None of our principals mentioned negative family background experiences as having served as indirect sources of their notions of servant-leadership, though challenging familial circumstances and economic conditions were acknowledged.

Involvement in sporting activities was an added source of notions of servant-leadership. Simon and Angela were grateful for the leadership qualities they learned from coaching in sports. According to Simon, his engagement in coaching at an early age was an opportunity to learn the importance of collaboration and of relationships early in life. This points to the age-old recognition of the importance of extra-curricular activities in the life of students at school, and that leadership can also be learned under informal circumstances. Parenting was an additional source of the notions of servant-leadership for Simon, John, and Denis. Having to care for their own children taught them to care for other people’s children in the same manner that they would wish others to care for their own children.

None of the principals attributed the sources of his/her notions of servant-leadership to his/her own intuition, awareness or special knowledge. This raises questions which go beyond the scope of this book: 1) Are the notions of servant-leadership only learned or acquired through the inspiring example and influence of others? and 2) Could an individual become a successful servant-leader without having been inspired by some of the sources identified in this study or other exemplary servant-leaders? Beazley and Beggs (2002) provided a direction to investigate these questions when they wrote that practice is fundamental to the development of mature servant-leadership, and because the point of servant-leadership is to live more richly, fruitfully, and effectively. The practice aspect of apprenticeship is what makes an educational institution the near perfect place to learn servant-leadership and to discover its tangible concrete and intangible rewards.

CHAPTER 4

Delellis (2000) observed, “symbols are quite powerful in stimulating feelings related to the values which they represent” (p. 45). Symbols can also be impressive elements in the acquisition of the notions of servant-leadership. Deus (2000) noted, “symbols suggest or point to some . . . reality beyond themselves” (p. 186). The practice of presenting symbols of servant-leadership – such as a rock, a towel, and a basin for washing the feet – provided a forceful image of servant-leadership for Denis. We vividly recall his explanation during interviews with him. Retreats, workshops, and conferences organized, at school system level, were also sources of principals’ notions of servant-leadership indicating that such activities had long-term effects on those who participated in them.

ESSENCE OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE

Faith in Jesus Christ as the substance of the notions of servant-leadership was attested to and affirmed in all our conversations with principals. All were emphatic that faith in Jesus Christ was the foundation of their leadership. This is congruent with *The National Congress*’ (1992) intimation that “leadership in and on behalf of Catholic schools is rooted in an ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ” (p. 34). Principals perceived the challenges associated with proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel in their school communities as a key reason for their leadership. They realized their motivation in the content of the Good News entailed by humble service to those entrusted to them and developing the potential of followers in their care. Is faith in Jesus Christ a *sine qua non* of servant-leadership? The principals felt that in the Catholic school context, the opportunity to exercise leadership implied faith in Jesus Christ, and perhaps they were guided by the observation of the Vatican II document *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School* (1990) and *The National Congress*’ (1992) view that leaders in Catholic schools must be inspiring examples of faith in Jesus Christ.

The practice of praying for members of their school communities was an extension of the injunction to live the Gospel value of concern for one another (John 13:34). For example, Terese kept a notebook wherein she wrote the names of people she had promised to pray for as a sign that she daily lived her conviction that God and Jesus Christ were the foundation of her leadership. The personal involvement of Angela in prayer with staff members on Monday mornings in the staff room, and her promise to pray for staff members reflected a belief similar to that of Terese. In the context of the Catholic school, resorting to prayer or promising one’s prayerful support as a leader implies, *I empathize, I understand, I care, I am with you not only now, but until a solution is found to your problem*, and that faith in Jesus Christ is the substance of one’s leadership. A full-day and half-day prayer or retreats were organized in some schools for the newly arrived grade nine students indicating the importance of prayer as part of their school life. The organization of a retreat for the newly arrived students further echo Beazley and Beggs’ (2002) observation that “a retreat at the beginning of the semester builds community . . . and establishes ground for group learning” (p. 60). Thus, early in their lives in both schools, through prayer

and retreats, students are introduced to community building and the good practice of caring for one another.

Daily prayer over the intercom, before the beginning of classes, and at the beginning of staff meetings, were consistent with the observations of the Vatican II document *Gravissimum educationis* (1965) and Duignan (2007) that the promotion of Gospel values and virtues in Catholic schools must be an intentional choice. Reflecting this train of thought, *The National Congress* observed that “while serving the local church, Catholic schools are part of a larger whole, the universal church” (p. 10). Thus, the identification of faith in Jesus Christ as the substance of the principals’ notions of servant-leadership reflects their willingness to exercise leadership as Catholic leaders, and this resonates, in turn, with I Corinthians 3:10-11 where we see that Christ is the chief cornerstone and foundation of the Church. Reflecting this idea, Terese said:

... being a principal in a Catholic school, it is wonderful to have to be able to express your faith, and to talk about it. ... Some people ... who deal [with] ... very difficult communities, and difficult groups of kids, and show that by using faith, and using a servant-leadership approach to things, that they can bring kids around to developing a spiritual life and developing a better life for themselves.

Principals’ trust in the essence of their faith as a source of success in their leadership harmonizes with William’s (2002) observation that “Faith ... assures the servant-leader that even in the midst of fear and confusion, amid turmoil and uncertainty, appropriate actions and responses will somehow be revealed” (p. 69).

Positive outcomes inspire people to action. This is what happened with principals who were heartened by positive results such as collaboration, community building, care for one another, and growth in their staff members and students. Terese was particularly happy to mention two teachers on her staff, one, a hardworking department head who accepted the position as a result of her support, and the other, an inflexible and strict teacher who gradually developed a better relationship with students. Also, students who began to love being at school because of the safe environment provided for them, and parents who began to feel confident about their children, as encouraged by principals’ practice of servant-leadership. Angela’s experience of two students who had left for another school and returned to seek admission because they did not find the new school welcoming was indicative of the fruits of her servant-leadership.

These examples resonate with Batten’s (1998) remark that, “servant-leaders are proud of their lives and seek to enrich the lives of others by the richness of their own” (p. 40). The servant-leaders in our purview seemed happy to serve the interest of their followers, and are encouraged to see those in their care develop and grow. However, immediate results are not the reason for their exercise of servant-leadership. Servant-leadership is to provide a foundation for community building where meaningful learning can take place for the good of the students’ future, where staff members pursue their interests for growth, and where parents are satisfied with the progress of their children.

THE GIFT AND CHALLENGE OF SERVICE

Perception is a process through which people create meaningful experiences of their environment and their actions. These experiences form the basis of their ideas, influencing their behaviour and their interactions with people. In sharing experiences, positive or negative, people inspire and teach each other. Principals perceived their servant-leadership role as a gift and as a challenge. They presented metaphors and definitions that represented their views of the servant-leadership style.

These men and women cherished their principalship and saw it not for their own glory or aggrandizement, but, rather, for the service of their school communities. They expressed their love for the position, and considered their roles as a gift, and a challenge. They appreciated the freedom they had to express their faith within their school communities. In effect, love for one's job leads to an ardent desire to take up the invitation and challenge of the responsibility that comes with that position. This challenge and invitation is reflected in Blanchard and Hodges' (2005) call that Christian leaders live their faith both in church and at work, and in the invitation of *Lumen gentium* (1964) that Catholic leaders humbly serve the people of God and lead them towards developing their potentials. In short, their leadership must contribute to providing hope for the people of God.

The principalship gave our six participants a place for their passions, because it provided opportunities for them to serve students. Two had a contrary view, as they perceived that the principalship separated them from close contact with students. Each of the principals who voiced their perspectives here passionately care for the welfare of students; through the perspectives of the most effective method or manner of caring for students varies amongst them.

In sum, servant-leadership is made relevant by its direct connection to serving the needs of followers. Kahl (2004) argued, "Great leaders do not procrastinate – they solve problems in real-time, dealing with situations as they arise" (p. 59). While not in their own words, our cooperating principals seemed to voice that as long as I am in the school, I am here to serve with all my strength, mind, and soul, I must exhibit stewardship because I care for this community and the persons in it. In this chapter, we have seen that the importance of family background, as the origin of the notion of servant-leadership, cannot be underestimated. This was reinforced by interaction with superiors, and grows into a disposition towards exercising servant-leadership in school life. Faith in Jesus Christ appears to have served as the foundation for the notion of servant-leadership for the principals we talked with and challenged them to play their part in proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel in their daily lives as principals.

PRINCIPALS AS SERVANT-LEADERS: PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF ROLE

In this chapter, we discuss high school principals' perceptions of their role as servant-leaders, the metaphors and definitions they assign to servant-leadership, and some practicalities of their leadership approaches. In addition, we share from our conversations about what principals believe their school communities expect of them as servant-leaders.

Impressions of Role as Principals in the Catholic High School

Without waiting to think, in describing their impressions about being principals, Angela, Denis, and Simon indicated that they loved it, felt honoured in the function, and viewed their service as a privilege, and a gift. Gerald, Terese, and John perceived their role as principals as an opportunity to express their faith. All viewed their position as a tremendous challenge, to make their schools happy, joyful, faith-filled, and academic communities where students and staff achieved their potentials and to assure parents that their children were being served according to Catholic educational objectives.

Table 2. Principals' impressions of their servant-leadership role

<i>Principals</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Angela	A tremendous honour, a tremendous gift, a tremendous challenge. In fact, I love it.
Denis	Well, I love it. . . . But the reason I wanted to become a principal, I think, was because I really wanted to make a difference in the lives of kids . . .
Gerald	For me it is important to be a principal in a Catholic school division, because I can talk about my faith. And talk about how Jesus taught, how Jesus acted, and because of that how we should be treating each other.
Simon	Privileged, honoured, overwhelmed at times. It is a major responsibility. It is one I do not take lightly. It is a position of leadership.
Terese	And so being a principal in a Catholic school, it is wonderful to have, to be able to express your faith, and to talk about it.
John	I think the Catholic system is a unique experience, because you are tied within the context of education to your faith. And it gives a whole different dimension in [your] relationships with staff, students, community. . . .

For all of these principals, the freedom to express their faith in their work place cannot be overlooked as it contributed to their general orientation to their responsibilities as leaders. Continuing this train of thought, John added that being permitted to express his faith at school gave him a different approach to working with staff, students, and community; it underscored the importance of the school community.

While they had a lot to say, the table, above, presents the essential mindsets of principals concerning their role. The similarity of views expressed indicates that while different locations may present different challenges, relationships and interactions with human beings are common. Glaser (2002) observed that our experiences also reflect the experiences of others, thus we need to keep ourselves “aware that our experience is but a particular expression of the common human condition” (p. 44).

Metaphors of Servant-Leadership Expressed by Principals

We asked principals: “What metaphor would you attribute to servant-leadership?” All seemed to hesitate before answering this question. This hesitancy may indicate that servant-leadership defies comparison, and that the leadership concept goes beyond the obvious. It is multi-dimensional and difficult to reduce to one single thing or category. Servant-leadership is better seen in action. The table to follow summarizes the responses that were given:

Table 3. Principals’ metaphors of servant-leadership

<i>Principals</i>	<i>Metaphors</i>
Angela	<i>The patience of a saint</i> Because you need it all the time, because sometimes you see the end, and you want to skip all the process.
Denis	For me servant-leadership is <i>just a way of life</i> , and you are able to do for others what you do for yourself.
Gerald	With servant-leadership, I think <i>compassion</i> , compassion for others. <i>Understanding</i> others and their job, and just <i>caring</i> for individuals around you.
Simon	Servant-leadership is like <i>a radar on a ship in a larger ocean</i> . You are trying to help guide a larger community of great existence, moving a smaller boat on the larger ocean. We take advantage of the larger movement. We create ripples through the larger community.
Terese	I think it would be <i>a mother and a child</i> . <i>A caring mother raising a child</i> .
John	I think <i>talk the talk and walk the talk</i> . I go back to the idea of “What would Jesus do?” “ <i>Practice what you preach</i> ,” I think is a key one.

Cadenhead and Fischer (2000) explained that:

Metaphor, in a broad sense, is more than a rhetorical device . . . it is part of our lives. Frequently we define reality in terms of metaphors, and then we act on

the basis of those metaphors. We draw inferences, set goals, make commitments, and execute plans at least partly in response to the metaphors we use – consciously and unconsciously – to structure our experience and solve problems that are part of our personal and professional lives. (p. 76)

Metaphors that best represented the principals' servant-leadership and their understanding of it were patience, compassion, caring mother, a way of life, practicing what one preaches, and creating ripples through the larger community. This variety of metaphors indicate that servant-leadership can be understood from different perspectives issuing from difference in personalities, but at its core the leadership model is based on care and concern for followers. The background stories of principals may have dictated their metaphors. For example, while Angela reflected the patience of her mother in raising her and her seven siblings, Gerald's metaphor of compassion suggested his experience of his father who changed from rigidity to compassion as he advanced during his years as a principal. Terese might have taken her metaphor of a caring mother from her mother's dedication to raising her and her siblings.

Denis probably viewed servant-leadership as a way of life, as a tribute to his mother's sacrificial and unselfish way of life that had contributed immensely in making him what he had become. You will recall that he was impressed with the sacrifices of his single-parent mother and the foresight that led her to move in order for her children to benefit from university education. Having served under some excellent principals, each of whom he had found to be credible and trustworthy he learned the practical leadership qualities such as care for constituents. This had influenced John's metaphor of practice what you preach, while Simon's metaphor of creating ripples through the larger community probably issued from his sporting background. Again, despite the differences in metaphors, the central meaning is that of care and concern for followers.

The principals' metaphors reveal altruism, care for others and role modeling, as outstanding denominators. They stressed the need for role modeling which called for them to be a moral voice in their schools, as recommended by (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). The morality of the school principal is important because unlike other leadership approaches that concentrate on productivity and cherish followers on the basis of their output, servant-leadership with its emphasis on the growth of followers demands the moral responsibility of the leader towards constituents. In the Catholic school environment where the focus is not only on academic formation of students as future responsible leaders, but also on their growth in faith, the morality of the principal cannot be overlooked. In addition, young teachers need a principal they can rely on, as a dependable moral example for their future. McEwan (2003) pointed out that, "... the most powerful force for building character in schools is derived from the lives of adults in that school and most particularly, from the life of the principal" (p. 134). In short, good intentions of the staff, students, and parents are greatly molded by the character and the behaviour of the principal. As in the case of metaphors, principals proposed synonym definitions of servant-leadership such as personal example, altruism, self-sacrifice, empowerment of followers, care for others, and making leaders out of followers.

The Meaning of Leadership in a Catholic High School Setting

We asked each principal to provide a definition of servant-leadership as a way of ascertaining their understanding of the leadership approach. The six definitions in the table (below) offer a snapshot of principals' understandings of servant-leadership. We don't think these definitions contradict the views expressed through metaphors. Instead, they reflect an understanding of servant-leadership as a leadership approach that is made effective through personal example, altruism, self-sacrifice, empowerment of others, care for the interest and growth of others, and making leaders out of followers. In fact, servant-leadership is better described as a way of life in which the leader seeks to serve rather than basking in his/her position as a personal accomplishment. Gerald and Simon explained that servant-leadership is all about moving away from one's self, from the ego-centric, to really providing service to others, and living one's faith through one's work within the school community. It is about the use of authority for the growth of others.

Analysis of the definitions that the principals provided indicates that, although people might view servant-leadership from slightly different perspectives, concern for others remains their common interest. Underlying these definitions is the idea of a perceptive and intuitive sensitivity of a leader, to see and express what remains hidden. Angela's definition elicits the question of *what is right and just?* The answer lies hidden in the definitions provided by the other principals, and which can only be unraveled through practice. John summarized all the definitions as living one's faith in the context of one's professionalism.

Table 4. Principals' definitions of servant-leadership

<i>Principals</i>	<i>Definitions</i>
Angela	The giving of one's self for what is right, for what is just.
Denis	It is doing to others as you would have them do unto you.
Gerald	Allowing individuals to grow by directing them to do activities and things that you would expect yourself to do. . . . I show by example what I expect my staff and students to do.
Simon	Leadership by example, by living, and encouraging others to be leaders themselves.
Terese	When a person in a position of authority, uses that position to empower others to be caring, loving, Christian people, who help others empower others to do good.
John	Living your faith within the context of your professionalism, savoring the characteristics and qualities, faith, and individuals within the community, and to celebrate those successes that have taken place.

In short, for these six Catholic high school principals, their day-to-day practice of servant-leadership would be incomplete if separated from their Faith.

Some Practicalities of Servant-Leadership

All six principals passionately articulated their understanding of leadership in a Catholic high school as the spreading of the Good News of Jesus Christ as the source of true freedom and hope for all. Furthermore, it is not enough to talk intellectually about the characteristics of leadership since students and the school community needed to see and feel these characteristics in everyday practice and be guided towards the importance of service in their communities.

Respectively, Denis, Angela, and Terese each articulated this as follows:

Well, it does mean, spreading the news of what Jesus taught us. ... We need to instill in kids today, even more so because of the message that is being taught outside our school system today, that it is not all about me. That we have service projects for kids to volunteer to help. And I think what I would be saying ... is that, if we are not teaching kids to serve others through our own actions of serving, then where are they going to learn this? Because they certainly are not going to get that from Future Shop [electronic devices and technology]. Where it is *buy now and pay later*, and it is *buy the bigger box*. ... So my comment ... will be, 'This is the only way to lead,' is by serving others and showing people through example that it isn't about me, because I think we live in a selfish society.

One of the things I would say, [is that] Jesus loved ... children and he fits all of us, everyone in the school system. And I always say he must like me a little bit, because I fit both categories. Where does He fit? He would be down there pulling in the nets, he would be down there serving the food, he would be down there cleaning the messes. But as the Apostle Paul would say, they saw in him 'nothing is too small not to do or to ignore, and no one is not as important as someone else.' And he led by doing it, it wasn't I will tell you what to do, it is I will show you what to do. And I think that is really important to the principal too, because we have too many people in our lives telling us what to do instead of walking it along with us.

For me, I think one of the key things is, my job is to be a servant-leader, and to set example for the people that I work with, whether it be for my colleagues, whether it be for my students, whether it be for parents, people in the community. My job is to set an example and to help in terms of faith development by the example that I set. So I can't expect other people to be respectful and to live a faith life if I do not model those as well. For me that is the important thing. I think that I am easy to talk to, that I am not a person who holds grudges. Or we could have heated discussions, and I do not get mad at them and take it out at them at another time or get even with them. I think people see me as somebody who is easy to talk to. Who has a strong sense of empathy, and someone who really cares about all the people in the school.

These administrators extolled exemplary leadership as the way to inspire and inculcate leadership qualities in followers. All six seemed to suggest the development of

encouraging, uplifting and hopeful relationships between principal and the whole school community. In such an atmosphere, occasional chastisements from the leader would be “readily” accepted.

Additionally, the principals suggested that demonstrating service to followers by serving them is a valuable way of helping them learn what it means to serve. Furthermore, each saw their school as a place for living out their Christian mandate of spreading the Good News. As well, they expressed that their own exemplary lives were priceless ways of teaching the people in their school communities what it means to live in healthy relationships with members of the community. Further, the principals indicated that caring for followers through empathy convinced them to imitate the good example. In summation, these leaders repeated the popular saying: *Actions speak louder than words.*

School Community Expectations of Servant-Leaders in Catholic High Schools

The reason for the existence of leaders is the followers (Bruce, 2006). In the school context, followers are students, staff, and parents, and the principal is more useful if he/she fulfills the expectations of the school community. Principals appreciated that their school communities viewed servant-leadership as an ongoing process, empowering and helping people to grow, building relationships, building communities, helping followers support one another, and showing compassion for and understanding of followers.

Community expectations of Catholic high school principals. The principals were aware of the expectations their school communities held for them. These expectations were that principals serve their school communities as enablers of people’s potentials, rather than punishers of wrongdoing. Additionally, their job required them to support those in their school community. Denis described this as follows:

Well, I think [parents] expect me to do the best job I can to help their kids grow. . . . Parents want to send their kids to a school where they know their kids are safe, and that they are being treated with respect, and that they are learning. . . . I think the staff sees me as the captain of the ship. I do not like the term boss. But they often refer to me as boss. And so I think they want somebody who . . . will support them . . . So I do not think kids see as any thing other than stereotypical as high school principal who wears tie and walks around and kicks kids out of school. That is too harsh. Because, there aren’t kids that we are kicking out of school. . . . The larger community, I think is still of the mentality that they want us to produce students capable of finding their place in the larger society. A lot of it is around work, and occupational training, critical thinking skills, they just want kids that are well versed and well prepared.

Principals articulated that students expect them to be impartial, empathetic, and to treat them with respect; that staff members appreciate a leader who is organized, efficient, fair, impartial, non-judgmental, empathetic, and supportive. Accordingly parents, expect some of the above but would prefer a principal who treats their

children with respect, promotes their learning, makes them grow, builds positive relationships, communicates well, speaks from the heart, can be trusted, and is a person in whose presence people feel comfortable expressing their ideas. Additional expectations mentioned included honesty, equity, and compassion. Our principals articulated that a kind of leadership that serves its own interests to the neglect of constituents needs would have no moral legitimacy. They identified, with ease, what they thought their school communities expected of them, which reflected their awareness and sensitivity to the needs of their communities.

Servant-leadership as an ongoing process. Principals agreed that servant-leadership, is a journey or a learning process. For example, the misconduct of a student in the present time does not necessarily determine what he/she becomes in the future. The patient guidance of a servant-leader enables students to grow out of undesirable habits, helping them to develop gradually to their full potential. Denis and Terese lamented that they are sometimes accused of being too soft on students because of misunderstandings about the import of servant-leadership as an ongoing process. However, as Denis indicated, it is an accusation he proudly accepted.

Principals indicated that servant-leadership requires an attitude that explores numerous ways of helping others achieve success, that the process is challenging and, at times, extremely painful. But the process sharpens one's patience, ultimately makes one a better person, and implies that the opinions of others are not ignored, but rather taken into consideration to arrive at solutions that are beneficial to the school community. To better understand these principals' ideas about servant-leadership as a process, their own words follow:

It is a process of how you reach the end. It is all the trials and tribulations and the work and the relationships, and the going back and starting again. It will get to the answer. It really will. Sometimes it takes too long, and if you are a person that likes to get things done, the process almost kills you. . . . We all know we are going to get to the end, but it is the process where everyone is involved and if there is anything you learn as an administrator, you have to learn the process. But it takes too long. . . . But it involves people, and when you involve people, it takes time. (Angela)

Servant-leadership is an ongoing process each and everyday. And my understanding of servant-leadership is really that you are never there for yourself. That everything you do within the building, is to move other people forward to understand themselves better, while empowering them to be leaders as well. (Simon)

Principals needed to cultivate the virtue of patience through which they gained a better understanding of themselves as persons. And, understanding themselves served them well in exercising leadership for the success of their school communities. Terese provided a further insight in that over the years she had come to the understanding that to succeed as a servant-leader it was more her reaction to people rather than people's reaction to her that mattered. John supported Terese's insight

and pointed out that the process of servant-leadership makes room for growth and opportunities to move forward, rather than providing occasions to blame others. Laying blame on others creates a situation where the leader concentrates on negatives rather than on positives that inspire and build up followers.

Empowering and helping the growth of people. Our principals pointed out that because servant-leadership departs from self-centeredness, it empowers followers to grow. Simon gave this example of empowerment before becoming a principal:

Well, if I think back to when I felt empowered, it was when I felt that my opinion was valued, that my work was valued, that individuals were comfortable with me talking and expressing how I felt or how I went about doing those things.

This experience suggests that leaders in schools cultivate respect for the opinions of others in ways that help them grow as leaders, and that disrespect for the opinions of followers may be tantamount to a refusal to develop leaders.

Simon, Denis, and Terese pointed out that in the school community, empowerment and growth means that the weakest in the community are not overlooked, and that students' voices and opinions are considered during the course of decision making. One way of empowering students is being present at their meetings, not to control but, rather, to give support. Giving support to students does not denote approval of all their suggestions, but it does provide an authentic opportunity to affirm discussion times and collaboration. Sporting events are useful for encouraging and empowering students, celebrating their successes, and being concerned about what interests them. Simon pointed out that referring to the school as "*our school*" and "*not my school*" makes a difference in people's psychology. Implied in these comments might be the admonition that the leader who considers his/her presence at activities of students as a waste of time is throwing out precious opportunities for empowering student.

Gerald articulated his view that a good way to help staff members grow into leaders is to involve them in committee work. Looking out for skills in staff members and assigning them to activities that help them develop and grow gives them the confidence necessary to develop their gifts and skills. He implied that to make leaders out of people, it helps to trust them with responsibilities. According to Terese, empowerment not only creates a good atmosphere in the school, but it also leads to the creation of strong future servant-leaders. Empowerment means encouraging people to try different things while encouraging them to take initiatives for their own growth. She cited the example of a department head in her school to explain her point:

For instance, I have a new department head this year. I do not think three years ago she would have even considered applying for department head. But she is a very strong person. She has good ideas. She works hard, and she was encouraged to try different things and do different things. And because she did feel that she had support, it allowed her to take the risk of becoming a department head, and she is very good.

For Simon, a great danger to the empowerment and growth of followers was a leader's inability to cultivate a healthy ego that rejoices with followers, even if they should outshine him/her. Leaders must be continually aware that the development of leadership qualities in students, teachers, and parents is not an affront to their authority. Simon and Angela remind school leaders that without a healthy ego and a robust self image, authority can be misused, by a refusal to give way for followers to shine. A leader who does not rejoice in the empowerment and growth of followers offers no hope and no room for improvement and growth.

Building relationships. Principals were vocal with their views about relationships. They saw relationships as the lifeblood of all their communities. As John explained, "[Relationships] create trust within our student body, with our staff members," and encourage people to be more willing to talk about issues or problems within the school. People in communities crave for relationships, and leaders who promote healthy relationships among their followers succeed more easily in getting positive responses and the rewards of cooperation in their administration than those who do not. According to Terese, servant-leadership is all about relationships, and healthy relationships make people happy and comfortable in the school. She added that part of the reward of such relationships is the willingness of people to contribute their gifts to help and participate in various school activities. Angela stressed that the care and respect the servant-leader exhibits towards followers makes all the difference, because relationships cannot be faked and trust in the insincere leader is quickly lost. She observed:

You know relationships are huge, and when you are out of relationships, your whole world spins, it just doesn't work. . . . You can just say all you want, and especially if you don't believe in servant-leadership, people can see through that in a heartbeat.

Commenting on the strengths and values of relationships, John said:

The strengths of relationships is utmost. Relationships are important to building collaboration. They are important to building trust, to building understanding, and they are foundational because . . . if you do not have relationships, there is not that level of trust, there is not that willingness to do, there is not that willingness to communicate, . . . so relationship becomes one of the foundational aspects to success within any kind of leadership role.

These commentators view relationships as a lubricating oil that keeps communities alive to pursue their goals and objectives. For these principals taking part in conversations with us, however, positive relationships did not imply a refusal to call people to account where necessary. According to Terese, it is in calling people to be responsible and accountable that they are helped to grow. In communities where healthy relationships exist, constituents easily appreciate and understand situations in which they are called to be responsible and accountable.

Principals explicitly acknowledged that relationships do not come about without efforts and commitment even though people seem to naturally yearn for them. Relationships require a great amount of work and total commitment. Simon thoughtfully observed:

[Relationships are] a tremendous amount of work. A top-down approach, where you tell everybody what to do, when to do it, how to do it, probably is easier, in that it requires no personal input from your point of view. It requires you not moving outside of yourself and your comfort zone. And top-down approach allows you, without developing relationships, to still control, to still direct, and you often do so through authority and through fear, let's face it. . . . We have to be dealing with the spirit that is within each and every one of us.

Our principals' remarks were well reflected in Simon's words and are indicative of the fact that relationships demand the giving of self and some amount of inconvenience and sacrifice. Relationships demand that authority is used well to help the follower develop confidence in him/herself. As well, relationships break down barriers among people, and dissipate the fear of the unknown about others, thus turning difference and diversity into sources of strength rather than division and apprehension. These six principals were of the view that schools deprived of healthy relationships stagnate and the students' success becomes elusive.

Building community. All administrators were of the opinion that, community building is a *sine qua non* for success of a servant-leader; but they did not hesitate to acknowledge that a lot of effort was needed for success in community building. This effort presents challenges such as misunderstanding of the good intentions of the leader, and the uncooperative attitude of apathetic people. However, such occasional challenges were said to make them better servant-leaders. They viewed detractors as indirectly helping to strengthen their resolve to build stronger school communities, and as openers of vistas to see things from different perspectives.

According to Simon, Gerald, and John, some of the ingredients of community building include the participation of the principal in events such as meals, social activities of staff and students, celebration of successes, moments of joy and pain, graduation ceremonies, and praying and celebrating liturgical activities. Other ingredients included visibility and availability of the leader to teachers, students, parents, and the school community. According to John, concrete efforts at community building initiated by the school chaplain include the introduction of *I love you day*; a day on which both students and staff are encouraged to be extra "nice" to each other. Simon and Terese not only stressed the importance of community but detailed other ways of building community:

You will not have success in the school without community. And you would not have success in school without kids feeling that they have community with each other. Without parents feeling that they are welcome. . . . And without people feeling that you are listening to them, and empathetic to their particular situation. So when Greenleaf talked about all of those characteristics of servant-leadership,

we know he did not mean [that we] take them apart. They are circular in so many ways. Sometimes you could say triangular and some might be more at basic than others. But they all interrelate. You can't pick them separately, and okay, community. I strongly believe that we need to support staff by giving them opportunities to come together. And I am willing to spend money to bring a meal in when it means we can socially be together as a staff. That leads to community. Breaking bread was the best example Jesus ever gave us.

[Community] is essential, because if you do not have community, none of it will work. We are lucky in this community. We have a really good parent community, so not just the kids and our teachers. And they very much support what we are doing in the school. They want us to get kids involved. When we have activities in school they are here. We encourage it. We have a good relationship with everybody, where we try to get members of the community to support each other. One of the things I love about my staff and the people here, when something happens, just like the example of a boy whose mother had died; a number of people who came in to provide support for this young man. And I thought that was amazing. That is what community is about.

Angela and John added that in the Catholic school context, the bedrock of community building is faith in Jesus Christ, and that with faith as the foundation, community building cuts across the different challenging life situations that confront people. Denis passionately expressed the construct as follows:

I think that is what being Catholic is: Building that community. That sense of belonging. That there is a greater purpose and it is not just about you. That, there is a larger society out there. ... Again, we live in a society that really promotes getting ahead, being number one, and often number one is a lonely place to be. Community is about doing for others. Being successful but doing for others, and so, yea, I think servant-leadership is doing that ... you serve others. When you look at any society where there are elders, they are not there for themselves. They are there to build a stronger community.

Denis viewed individuals as being more than just themselves; they are the building blocks of society, community, and the human race. Continuing this train of thought, Gerald observed that community building is visible everyday in classroom activities, liturgical celebrations, periods of retreat, sharing of food and drink, fundraisers for specific goals and many other extra-curricular activities. Community is also seen through the support that staff and students lend to colleagues in events of illness and death. Building community is about life itself, at its various stages in the school community.

Angela, Denis, Simon, and John noted that stronger community building happens with work; inputs are needed. These efforts include: providing appropriate information to the school community, listening to what the school community is saying in order to better serve them, looking at what the community provides in terms of programs, exploring how the Church may be more effectively linked to the

school community, examining the interests of stakeholders within the community, and learning about the fund raising activities of the community. In effect, community building is not possible without the establishing networks of Others.

Building community entails seeing beyond one's self, acknowledging other people, being sensitive to other people in the community, cultivating an awareness of happenings in one's environment, establishing connections with other people for the pursuance of goals for the success of the school community. Denis summarized this in his observation that community building, in a sense, is an *emotional bank account* where members rely on one another for the support they need to make their existence, and that of others, meaningful.

Our principals understood perseverance as the brainchild of hope. They noted that detractors of community building should not consume the servant-leader's energies, and if allowed to do so, there will be a loss of focus. Servant-leaders should persevere in the positive things that benefit the school community.

Support for one another. All six principals argued that community building in the school becomes more meaningful in light of support from different constituents. About mutual support in the school context, Angela said:

Because it is the right thing to do. And you are teaching kids the important things of life. Yes, you can have all the money, you can have all the toys, you can have the "whatever position." But it doesn't mean anything if you can't turn around and offer help or support the kid beside you, and staff member beside you. . . . We are forgetting about the poor in spirit, the poor in need, the poor. You know, all of the beatitudes, they are right in front of us.

Angela's comment calls us to not neglecting but rather to take notice by lending support to the weak in their immediate environments. She draws attention to new ways of looking at the beatitudes so that school communities can become better and happier places of learning. Complacency and self-sufficiency detract from the strong among us, supporting the weak among us.

Angela's comment raises practical questions: Are stronger students encouraged to look out for the weak? And are senior students expected to take care of their more junior school-mates in the school? Terese happily noted that in her school, support for one another was exhibited among students when they, without being prompted, stood up for one another, especially in situations of injustice towards the most vulnerable.

Simon reflected on mutual care and support and asked questions that could be summarized as follows: What can be done to support the staff? How can the school community be better supported by the principal and staff? Are parents' needs for the care for their children being fulfilled by the principal and staff? Are parents being listened to and supported in ways that are beneficial to their children's learning? What can the principal and staff do that will bring hope to all in the school community? Is power given to parents through school community councils (or available structures) to make them feel they are welcome into the school community and to voice their

opinions? And, are students being supported not only academically but socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, so as to lead to their holistic development?

Denis and Simon understood mutual support as *stewardship* and argued that this involves interacting with people, helping them, and leaving them better off than they were. For Gerald, stewardship of each other, is being creative in day-to-day relationships and wanting the best for all in the school community. Upholding entrenched views, to the neglect of innovativeness is detrimental to new ways of support for one another and to the growth of the school community.

John, Simon, and Angela indicated that liturgical and charitable activities bring students together and, as such, these are part of stewardship from which students learn to support one another. Terese recalled:

One of the things we really promote in this community, ... is that, we really get kids involved in liturgies, Masses, activities, charitable drives. We do our Christian service: The kids do volunteer work in the community and they get marks for it. But the intention and important part for them in our community is to do things in the community to help those in our community who are struggling, or are needy, or need assistance and help. That is very important.

Terese suggested that through supporting others, students learn to care not only for those closest to them in the school, but also those beyond the borders of their schools. Worshipping together establishes a spiritual bond and galvanizes student support for one another and for their community. According to John, the leader serving as a role model in the various life situations such as social gatherings, church activities, and many others in which community members are involved is also educational.

Compassion for people. Our principals seemed to have been inspired by an idea similar to Thompson's (2005) that "Compassion is an important measure of spiritual authenticity, and it's essential to spiritual leadership for whole-system transformation in education" (p. 47). As if they had rehearsed their responses together, principals acknowledged the importance of compassion as an additional distinguishing mark of the servant-leader. They acknowledged that through experience over the years, they have learned to cherish compassion as they exercised leadership. Gerald noted that, young teachers do not seem to appreciate the value of compassion at the beginning of their career. Smiling, he related his experience with young teachers who relished rigidity and the application of principles and rules in their dealings with students, but over the years, gradually changed from severity to compassion and flexibility. He observed:

I think my understanding over the years has been that I try to be a little bit more compassionate, instead of rigid. Because in terms of servant-leadership, we have our rules, and we have our regulations, but we also have to care for the students and care for our staff. So because of that I think, I give a little bit more than I used to in terms of my flexibility. ... So you are compassionate for the children, you are compassionate for the parents, and you have to weigh that against the overall

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well being of everyone. So as you think about it, you want to do the best for those individuals too. The lost sheep and everything else, and yet you are weighing out the consequences for the entire group. When a person is young, especially I see it in young teachers, if they do not have children. If they have not been through those experiences, the rules are firm and they are not bending whereas here, as you are getting older as you have seen really good kids getting into trouble, you do not just want to send them away, you want to help them get out of that trouble.

Gerald cited his own father's change from rigidity to flexibility and compassion as he advanced in years in his leadership career as a principal. This suggested to us that experience is a factor in the development of compassion in a servant-leader. Gerald seemed to suggest that the goal of the servant-leader is not to 'lay ambush' for the faults and mistakes of their students or teachers, but to understand their weaknesses and help them develop and grow. John concurred, and as if reflecting on his past experiences thoughtfully provided the following reflection:

[Servant-leadership] has given me an increased understanding of people. ... I think it gives me a sense of trying to respect all people, work for all people, and ensure that my dealings with people are going to be fair, upfront, ethical, and technical, and honest, I guess in terms of the approach. I think when you are dealing with students in particular, what it does is, it gives me an opportunity to maintain more of a levelheaded, to be able to be passionate and compassionate, and be empathetic with the situation that has happened and to work with that student to try and overcome the different things, different problems within their lives. I think if you take a look at an individual that you are working with, there have been a number of family situations that are going on in this individual's life that helped to complicate that life. So you try to be fair in terms of how you are going to work with this student. So you talk with the teachers to let them know the plight of this particular individual, to create a sense of empathy for that individual so that they themselves can then give some benefits to this individual to help them succeed. It gives them an opportunity to increase the adaptations that might be needed for the student because of the problems that he or she may be having or experiencing.

This comment suggest that it is by being in relationship with people that the leader develops the necessary qualities needed to help followers reach their potentials. Angela pointed out that a misunderstanding of compassion could lead to the erroneous conclusion that the servant-leader allows students, parents, and the school community to dictate the direction of the school, as if the servant-leader was a puppet condemned to react to situations with no ability to give directions. Laughing as she spoke, Angela said:

Servant-leadership does not mean you are easy-going or always holding hands and singing kumbaya, everything will be good. No, sometimes you have to make hard decisions. And you do it with love and respect always at the base.

Because if it is done in anger, you can't do that. Servant-leadership does not mean you are a milk toast. It is not that you do not do things to hurt people, you try and do the best you can . . . but always done with the right base. And I guess we always come back. What is the real reason we are doing this?

For these principals, servant-leadership in the school context was not a *laissez-faire* leadership style that seeks to please everybody, but rather that the impulse of compassion made the servant-leader seek to understand situations before acting so as to see how he/she can best help the students, teachers and parents. Angela, Denis, and Gerald cited the biblical story of Jesus and the adulterous woman in John 8:1-11 as an example of compassion in which Jesus did not just end up showing compassion, but he asked the accused woman to take responsibility for her action and grow through that. Denis and Simon observed that though the interest of students was paramount this did not mean doing things to please them whether they are wrong or not. Terese explained that there are lines that students, teachers, and parents do not have to cross, but these lines need to be drawn in the sand. People must be respectfully made to take responsibility for their actions and made to see hope beyond the seeming gloom.

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON EXPECTATIONS FOR SERVANT-LEADERS IN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

According to Burkhardt and Spears (2002), awareness helps in the comprehension of issues and enables a leader to approach situations from a more integrated and holistic position. Principals know the expectations their school communities held for them. They are convinced of the sense of Braye's (2002) statement that when awareness provides truth, different actions lead to the development and that growth of communities and its members will follow. They were not only aware of the expectations their school communities, but they also put those expectations into practice. Their awareness of their school communities' expectations stemmed from the good relationships and open communication.

General Expectations Held by Parents, Staff, and Students

Principals indicated that in general, parents, staff, and students expected them to be enablers of people's potentials rather than punishers of wrongdoing. They were required to support the members of their school communities for the success of students. Simon pointed out:

Expectations of you will vary from individual to individual. Students are looking for an administrator who is fair and impartial, that is empathetic. Someone who will treat them respectfully and in a manner in which their dignity is kept intact. . . . I hope people see me as a support, with the ability to empower people so that with the abilities they have . . . together with the ability others have . . . [we] can help to support each other's weaknesses.

Principals agreed that despite the occasional failures of parents, students, and staff, they expected to have a principal who supported them with the ultimate aim of building a successful school community for the best interests of the students. The principals agreed that while their school communities were aware that imperfections would always remain a human factor in leadership, the general expectation held for them was that they exhibit leadership that brings hope to people. Thompson (2005) underlined the need for educational leaders to be sources and sustainers of hope in their various school communities, in congruence with the observation of the Vatican II document *Gaudium et spes* (1965) that the future lies in the hands of those who can give their followers and tomorrow's generations reasons to live and hope.

To reinforce earlier points, John noted that students expected him, as principal, to be caring, impartial, and empathetic, and to treat them with respect. Terese, Simon, and Gerald pointed out that staff members expected a leader who is organized, efficient, fair, impartial, non-judgmental, empathetic, and supportive, while parents preferred the principal as one who treats their children with respect, promotes their learning, makes them grow, builds positive relationships, communicates well, speaks from the heart, and can be trusted. In the presence of such leaders, people felt comfortable. Other expectations included honesty and equity. For the principals, leadership that exists to serve its egotistic interest has no moral authenticity nor does it have moral authority.

The principals indicated that parents, students, and staff expected to have a leader they could confide in. School community members seem to know exactly what they expect of their principal. The principal's awareness and appreciation of those expectations and how he/she collaborates with community members to fulfill them will determine their leadership success.

Servant-Leadership as a Journey

Lad and Luechauer (1998) observed that, "to take a process orientation on your journey toward servant-leadership is to recognize that 90 percent of the joy stems from the work, not the outcome or results attained" (p. 61). Principals indicated that parents and staff expected them to perceive servant-leadership as a journey, and an ongoing process, because students were in their formative years, and young staff members needed guidance to help them grow. Thus, patience is required, but at the same time this calls for dedication to work, with the understanding that the success to be garnered lie more in the process than in what the leader hopes to attain (Lad & Luechauer).

Denis and Terese pointed out that because misunderstandings of servant-leadership as an on-going process, they were often accused of being too soft, as they gave more opportunities to students to reform than others thought appropriate. Denis accepted this "misjudgment" and felt that not everyone understood servant-leadership. Because servant-leadership is a process, principals believed that more possibilities were available for dealing with situations where respecting the opinions of others and being patience was of the essence. According to Terese, viewing servant-leadership as a process meant that the leader might benefit from

its outcomes. As the years had passed, she understood that her reaction to people mattered and not people's reaction to her. John and Gerald also acknowledged having benefited from their exercise of servant-leadership by their increased understanding of people. In general, principals perceived servant-leadership as a journey of self discovery, personal growth, and appreciation of constituents and their situations. Principals' acknowledgement of having gained personally from their practice of servant-leadership harmonizes with Ruschman's (2002) contention that the servant-leader has "nothing to lose and everything to gain" (p. 139). The servant-leader is challenged to understand and enable people's potentials for development and growth.

Nurturing Dreams into Visions: Leaving a Legacy of Empowerment

Acephalous societies are generally fraught with disorder and confusion, either because potential leaders have not been empowered to lead, or individuals have not been nurtured to cherish leadership. Principals understand that for their school communities to continue to succeed, people need to be empowered to grow into future leaders. DeSpain (2000) explained that the legitimacy of the servant-leader lies in the fact that he/she is first empowered by those being led so that he/she can then "define reality for all, nurture dreams into visions of new reality, and then redistribute the power and authority he/she has received from those led" (p. 68). Empowerment arises as servant-leadership moves away from self-centeredness to serve the interests of followers. According to Simon, ways of empowering constituents include giving them leadership opportunities, and respecting their opinions so as to give them confidence.

While principals appreciated the examples of excellent administrators, negative authoritarian leaders were an added impetus for John, Gerald, Simon, and Terese to stay clear of the top-down style of leadership they considered as stifling initiatives and growth of followers. John and Simon indicated that students were empowered by a principal's presence at their extra-curricular activities and students' representative council meetings. For Denis, other ways of empowering students included allowing and guiding them to make decisions regarding different field activities, outside the school. The rationale for this action was to avoid obliging students to live by compliance and, instead, to challenge them to learn responsibility as part of the growth process. Showkeir (2002) observed "compliance does not create passion. Compliance does not make individuals wiser. Compliance does not encourage choosing accountability" (p. 158). According to Denis, if students are allowed to cherish the responsible use of freedom, they would be learning a valuable lesson that would serve as leverage for them to create meaning and purpose for the rest of their lives.

In Gerald's view, involving staff members on committees was a good way to empower them. As well, empowerment included the encouragement of staff and students to take initiatives that were beneficial to the school community. To empower

members of the school community, it is important that the leader cultivate a healthy ego and a robust self-image so as not to perceive budding leaders as a challenge to his/her authority. Kahl's (2004) observation is pertinent here, he observed, "the job of the leader is to grow leaders at all levels . . . The only true measure of success for a leader is the creation of a legacy that survives his absence" (p. 108). But, as Munroe (2009) pointed out, the leader must not attempt to clone followers or make everyone else in their image.

Angela and Denis gave leadership roles to staff members to share best practices in teaching, and allowed their assistant principals to preside not only over minor ceremonies, but also over major ones. The frequent reciprocal consultations and interactions between Angela and Denis, and their assistant principals were evidence of mentorship. Restine (1997) underscored the importance of mentorship. Concurring, Calabrese and Tucker-Ladd (1991) argued that a mentoring relationship between the principal and assistant principal builds a synergistic activity where the assistant principal is informally nurtured into administration.

Building Relationships, Community and a Culture of Support for Mission

Kahl (2004) observed, "In the end, the world revolves around relationships between people . . ." (p. 26). Principals perceived relationships as crucial for the growth of their school communities. Thus, Denis said, "relationships are very important, contacting people makes a lot of difference." To Terese, servant-leadership was all about relationships because that was the way to nurture trust as a requisite for a happy school community. Principals' thought that where the school leader rated relationships as secondary to his/her power, fear might override human initiative and human spirits atrophy into quiescence, with hope remaining an unattainable dream. When asked why she greeted students as she walked through the corridors, Angela said "just a simple good morning could be healing for them for the day if they have had a bad beginning of day." Angela explained that greetings might be seen as simple but very important for establishing relationships.

Relationships were not only limited to formal conversations but informal discussions helped relationships solidify trust and open up avenues for stronger relationships. Approachability was a strength that explained the ease and confidence with which staff, parents, and students related with several of the principals. However, ease of accessibility to school community members did not imply the need to be liked or to be a friend to everybody. But approachability served as a reliable avenue for information flow between leader and constituents without which mistrust became a possibility. In effect, approachability involves humility which, according to Thompson (2005), entails the leader making himself/herself available to followers enough to increase his/her awareness since even in our so-called areas of expertise, we do not have all the answers. According to Angela, for healthy relationships to exist between leader and constituents, it was important to keep in mind that "leadership is no more the boss telling everybody what they should do." Principals stressed

the need for respect for followers as an essential ingredient for stronger relationships. This resonates with Autry's (2004) reflection that, "... when I did it well today, it's always been relationships, even if it was just convening a good meeting filled with ideas and energy" (p. 54).

Principals viewed community building as a *sine qua non* for success in servant-leadership. They had a clear understanding of Greenleaf's (1977) observation that an organization lacking its own sense of internal cohesion could not be oriented to serve, therefore, the first challenge is to seek community from within. Angela, Gerald, Terese, and John underscored the fact that a lot of effort was needed for community building because of a possible misunderstanding of the leader's intention, or the uncooperative attitude of detractors. The principal's participation at meals with members of his/her school community, social activities of staff and students, celebration of successes and moments of joy and pain, graduation ceremonies, praying together and celebrating liturgical activities including Masses, were suggested vehicles for community building. Other suggestions for community building included: support for students, staff, and parents during illness and death, and availability of the principal to teachers, students, parents, and the school community at large. According to John, all the activities identified as ways of building community demanded the principal's visibility. Stressing this need for the leader's visibility, Neuschel (2005) stated, "the impact of leadership is a necessary ingredient and personal presence among your people is often the most powerful way to reinforce this" (p. 98). People are interested in relating and feeling the presence of the person they are to look up to, particularly a leader of the school.

Angela and Denis viewed their constant reference to either their school vision or the mission statement as a rallying point for community building, and as a reminder that in a school community, there was the need to be guided by a common objective. Praying before the start of school, before staff meetings, and on Monday mornings were also signs of community building. Prayers were not only said for people present, but also for the needs of all members of the school community. Prayer sessions and the content of prayers indicated that faith in Jesus Christ was a cherished value in the Catholic school community. In general, principals' views about community-building were consistent with Beazley and Beggs' (2002) remark that "Servant-leadership is inclusive rather than exclusive, devoted to community building rather than to isolation" (p. 59). In sum, our principals' perceptions of community-building suggested that the varied backgrounds of the members of their school communities was not a barrier to community-building because building community is the answer to understanding and appreciating one another for the success of each individual, despite and benefited by the differences.

Principals stressed that community building is unsustainable without support for one another. For Angela, this support for one another implied opening one's eyes to the needs of the weak in the immediate environment. She called for a new way of examining the beatitudes, as the way to dispel complacency and self sufficiency, as these destroy community building. Support for one another in light of the beatitudes

is an invitation for the strong to look out for the weak in the school community, where the strong protect the weak while viewing the weak as essential members of the school community.

According to Denis and Simon, support for one another implied the principal's support for staff and students in ways that meet their interests. Support for students is not only academic success, but also the acquisition of social skills, emotional balance in relationships, spiritual maturity, and physical development leading to their holistic development. Support further means listening to parents, and cooperating with them to enhance the learning and other needs of their children to bring them hope. Neuschel (2005) proffered advice to leaders who wish to elicit the support of their constituents. He wrote, "Leaders get support because they give support to others. . . . By believing in people, you increase the possibility that others will believe in you. So it is with support" (p. 39).

Stewardship forms part of mutual support, and it demands interacting with people, helping them, and leaving them better than they were. Gerald suggested a deeper understanding of stewardship as innovativeness and creativity towards the environment and the promotion of renewed relationships with one another, thus calling on school community members to treat the environment and each other with respect. Additional avenues for support for one another in the Catholic school community included involvement in liturgical and charitable activities as ways of galvanizing students' efforts and helping them learn to look and think beyond themselves and have a consideration for the wider human society.

Concrete examples of support for students were Angela's magnanimity in driving a student to and from school because the student's parents were unable to afford bus passes for her, and the support she gave to another student who had become pregnant. Referring to this young student, Angela said, "We need to be sensitive enough to help seemingly hopeless cases like this one. We need to be hope for them." Denis' care and concern for a student he considered a loner, and his constant visits to the classrooms of the special needs students, are further examples of supporting students in the school community.

Compassion as Spiritual Authenticity

Renesch (2002) pointed out that a compassionate understanding of followers helps the leader to eliminate the need to attack, to defend, or to engage in destructive politics at work. Our principals seemed to have been inspired by Renesch-like thinking. They stressed the need for compassion in leadership and as an expectation their school communities held for them. It was no wonder that Gerald's metaphor for servant-leadership was *compassion*. Simon saw the link between compassion and spiritual authenticity as important elements of the growth of the school community when he pointed out, "The exact formula for success is not here. It is work in progress. By compassion, caring and faith-filled activities our community grows."

Gerald stressed the need for compassion by relating his experience with neophyte teachers. According to him, some new teachers espoused rigidity at the beginning of their teaching careers, but gradually incorporated compassion in their dealings with students as they gained experience in relationships. Principals had learned from past mistakes of rigidity and the blunders of other leaders. Interestingly, although all believed compassion was necessary, it was the two female principals who provided a caveat to be wary of the possible abuse of one's compassion by negligent followers. Angela and Terese cautioned that compassion does not mean allowing followers to irresponsibly dictate the state of affairs in the school community; as there need to be limits set for order to prevail.

For Catholic high school principals for whom Jesus is the foundation of their leadership, it is worth remembering Thompson's (2005) words that "Compassion is an important measure of spiritual authenticity, and it's essential to spiritual leadership [in] . . . education" (p. 47).

The Reciprocal Value of Service

Our principals were unanimous about the need for service in servant-leadership. For example, Denis and Simon, respectively, observed the obvious: "Service helps you develop servant-leadership. And if you weren't a servant-leader then you wouldn't probably serve others;" and "servant-leadership is all about moving away from yourself. Moving away from the ego-centric. To really be idea of service for others." DeSpain (2000 captured the principals' ideas about the need for service when he said:

The person who thinks himself or herself a leader and expects to behave in a manner as the "boss" of yesteryear is likely to find little demand for his or her services. Further, our society is in far greater need of a leader who is willing to serve, . . . than a leader who wishes to boss. (p. 11)

The reason for their principalship was service to the members of their school communities, for without service, there was no reason for their leadership.

McCollum's (1998) story about Frankl's experience in the Nazi concentration camps explains the reflections of the principals about the need for service. He recounted that those confined apparently adopted one of two methods. While some put their energy into surviving, others concentrated on serving other prisoners. According to Frankl, "it was the latter group that survived while the former perished" (p. 330). While Frankl's example is not an exact fit in the school context, it does serve to explain their views about service. In short, service and the reciprocal advantages for the leader who serves faithfully.

Angela and Denis demonstrated that, in serving their school communities, no job was too insignificant to engage their attention. For example, they helped with the decorations, placed to welcome visitors. For Denis, apart from many other examples of good relationships and collaboration, it was also through simple acts of picking up garbage as he toured the school.

Community-Inspired Vision

Principals stressed the need for vision as an important expectation of their school communities of them and echoed Daniels and Daniels (2007) that “The purpose of a vision . . . is to provide the context people need to give value to the daily tasks they must complete” (p. 145). It was the general view that vision is the engine for growth and movement forward in the school community, but the leader’s vision can only succeed if it is supported and encouraged by those around him/her.

While it is the leader’s task to develop a vision (Williams, 2002), it does not necessarily mean the vision has to come directly from him/her. It is however the leader’s responsibility to facilitate the vision and give credit to followers who help crystallize that vision. This situation is only possible where the leader has learned to empower his/her followers. Kahl’s (2004) observation is pertinent here:

[The leader] can accomplish great success if he doesn’t care who gets the credit. . . . Many leaders certainly bring an ego to various aspects of their lives; it is an inevitable weakness of humanity to get caught up in the trophies, trappings, and the need to proclaim our success to others; but the most effective leader sets these egotistical tendencies aside. (p. 109)

It is important that the leader not replace the community’s vision with an inordinate desire for his/her fame or credit. It is important that a task be accomplished such that the interest of the community are best served. The success of a shared vision depends very much on the followers; where the credit for the vision is also shared. Simon explained, “If there is success in the school, it is not administration that creates it. It is rather the front line teachers that create the success of the school.” Senge (1990) provided an explanation of why members of the school community participate in a shared vision. He said:

A shared vision is not an idea. . . . It is rather a force in people’s hearts, a force of impressive power. . . . It is palpable. People begin to see it as it exists. Few if any forces are as powerful as a shared vision. (p. 206)

In short, a shared vision propels people to action, because they can feel and understand it as relevant to their aspirations. Expressing his conviction about the need for a vision to be a shared one, John said, “I think you need to ensure that your vision is set within your school and within what you do within that school.” Mulligan (2003) seemed to provide the answer when he said, “. . . leadership is the capacity to influence the behaviour of others to work together for a common project and to be passionate about a shared vision” (p. 113). The identified qualities to achieve one’s vision in the school community were listening, empathy, persuasion, stewardship, community building, commitment to growth of people, collaboration, mutual support, forgiveness, compassion, tenacity, courage, innovativeness, and wisdom. At the base of all these qualities, faith in Jesus Christ was identified. This was likely so because faith serves as the source of strength when one feels overwhelmed with challenges (Williams, 2002).

Credibility through Consistency and Authenticity

Posner and Kouzes (1996) argued that, “Personal credibility is the foundation on which leaders stand . . . if you don’t believe in the messenger, you won’t believe the message” (p. 5). John summarized other principals’ ideas about credibility: “talk the talk and walk the talk.” In other words, “people believe in actions more than in words, in practices more than in pronouncements” (Posner & Kouzes, p. 7). Neuschel’s (2005) idea on credibility that, “If we want to have followers who follow freely, and willingly, they must believe that the leader has interest in and affection for them” (p. 96) was echoed by the six principals. Credibility can be talked about, wished for, and desired, but it cannot be achieved if the leader does not exhibit certain characteristics. Some of these characteristics include listening, empathy, awareness, commitment to growth of people, community building, support and care for constituents, fostering good relationships with followers, admitting mistakes, humility, visibility, prayerfulness, good communication, honesty, truthfulness, kindness, forgiveness, compassion, consistency, collaboration, fairness, respect for others, sharing successes, expression of appreciation for good efforts, and openness. In effect, these leaders seemed to be saying that good intentions are fine but not enough; credibility is only felt and experienced through concrete actions exhibited through the above mentioned characteristics. For example an honest and consistent leader who collaborates and respects followers paves the way for community building where healthy relationships serve as fuel for hope and success.

Sustained Trust

An important realization is that position does not necessarily engender trust. People expect to have a leader they can trust. Angela observed, . . . “you can’t assume just because you are the principal, people will trust you, you can’t.” In other words, the leader’s actions must conform or atune to his/her words. Lester and Brower (2003) argued, “If trust is a psychological state held within the trustor . . . , it may not call the trustee into action until the trustee perceives the trust” (p. 17). In effect, trust was a necessary condition for members of the school community to open up to the principals and collaborate with them. Posner and Kouzes (1996) added their voice to the need for trust when they said, “A trusting relationship between leaders and constituents is essential to getting extraordinary things done” (p. 6). Caring and showing kindness were seen as necessary ingredients for gaining trust. Trust could be earned through listening, empathy, commitment to the growth of people, confidentiality, visibility, support and respect for followers, kindness, good relationships, collaboration, compassion, gentleness, and role modeling. John pointed out that trust is the element needed for a new principal to be accepted in his/her new school environment in order to build an effective leadership team. As indicated, principals agreed with Lowe’s view (1998) that trust is a journey and not a destination, and it can be gained through consistency. Denis observed “it takes a while to build that trust,” and

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trust is earned if followers see that the leader's concern is not just about him/herself, but about service to the school community. Trust is not a one way communication as John suggested; it is the leader's responsibility to trust constituents first as trust engenders trust. Houston and Sokolow (2006) pointed out the need for leaders to be the first to trust followers when they wrote:

Trust is to people as water is to plants – everyone needs just the right amount to thrive. As a leader, you are in a position to dispense a lot of trust – or not. One of the by-products of dispensing trust is that it is truly empowering, which is one of the reasons it is such a fundamental principle of enlightened leadership. (p. 130)

Trust can be compared to an enabling invitation, because it serves as the fuel that gives motive force and progress to relationships in communities. According to Houston and Sokolow the reason the leader must be the first to trust is that most people are capable of responding positively. Trust, according to DePree (2002), is the grace that enables followers to be creative. There may however be exceptions because some people may not respond adequately to trust, but it is important that the leader not generalize. The choice to trust will always remain both the leader's and their followers.

In this chapter, we've brought to description a range of role perceptions and expectations. We've examined the impressions of role and the language used by principals (particularly a sampling of metaphors and definitions). We have considered, from principals' viewpoints, what they feel are the expectations of others for them in their role and the crucial relationship dynamics that constitute the life-blood of effectual leading and living in community (i.e., building people and community, demonstrating authentic compassion, nurturing dreams and sustaining trust). More detailed accounts of what this looks like in the daily lives of school leaders follows in Chapter 6 and Section Three.

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP AS EXPERIENCED IN DAILY LIVES OF PRINCIPALS

We were especially interested to know how the six principals viewed their experiences of the servant-leadership role in their daily professional lives.

Servant-Leadership Manifest

From our conversations we found that servant-leadership was manifest in the daily professional lives in at least three main ways: the multiple ways of dealing with situations, the trust of students, staff, and parents, and the ways of collaborative leadership.

Multiple ways of dealing with situations. Simon, Gerald, and John indicated that the servant-leadership style provided them with many possibilities for dealing with the unpredictable situations that arose from their interactions with students, staff, and parents. They felt that for them servant leadership implied using different ways of helping students, staff members, or parents. In explaining the *modus operandi* of his ways, Gerald said, “We will not have to give up on somebody. They will have to give up on themselves.” The onus is always put on the person of focus to respond positively or not. Evidence for success included: an intractable student’s changing for the better and successfully graduating from school, and the positive change in attitude of teachers who had initially experienced problems in their relationships with students. Servant-leadership offered no blue prints, only the way of viewing a situation and a way of helping individuals to respond in a fashion that tilted things in a good direction. This way of looking at people underlines the hope servant-leadership gives as a life buoy that is freely thrown to the person and then the person has the freedom to be attracted to it and take hold, or not.

Trust of students, staff, and parents. In the previous chapter we foreshadowed the idea of trust and its place in servant leadership. Here we pursue this connection further. Angela, Denis, and Terese happily noted that in their practice, the traditional perception of the principal as boss who expelled students from school for misconduct had become a thing of the past. Furthermore, cultures in which the principal was the last person to be made aware of a student’s misbehaviour or inappropriate conduct had also changed. Students now understand that the principal’s first objective in the school was not to punish people for wrongdoing, but to promote student’s interests and welfare. Denis explained:

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I remember a girl coming in and saying that she wanted to get off of drugs. That is pretty powerful when a kid will come in to an administrator and say, *I need help*. And as an administrator, I could help a lot more than I could as a classroom teacher. So my role gives me the power [to help] in a positive sense.

This interaction between Denis and a student depended on the trust and honesty servant-leadership engendered between leaders and others in the school community.

The practice also promotes a spirit of openness in relationships between the principal, students, and staff, further unlocking possibilities for growth. Terese and Angela, respectively, put it this way:

[At the beginning of every academic year] ... teachers write a little bit about what their plans are for the year. It is a very informal kind of thing recounting things that have gone on in their lives. I have just been reading them this last week or so. Amazing that my staff as so open and honest with me! They tell me stuff that they would have never told me four years ago, five years ago when I started out here. There is an openness and honesty. And people come to me and tell me stuff that are happening in their lives, that can impact for good or for bad what is going on in their jobs here. And I guess to me that is one of the rewards.

You can't assume just because you are the principal, people will trust you. And it usually takes people a little bit, a while Our past experiences with our leaders as principals have been very formal, . . . I would never come to a principal in the old days to tell them what was going on in my life. . . . Now, it seems to be a little bit more open, . . . now many of our principals just can't work that way anymore.

These comments exemplify the admirable trust between these principals and their teachers and may be attributable to the principal servant-leadership role in their schools. However, Simon and John pointed out that, being new to their schools, they were not yet enjoying the level of trust they relished in their previous schools, but were confident that with their practice of servant-leadership they would eventually win the trust of teachers in their schools. It is well known that trust needs to be earned; requiring time and patience. Authority, they said, is no guarantee for the enjoyment of trust from followers. Rather, gaining trust depends on the care the leader demonstrates towards people. Additionally, a measuring criterion for trust of the leader is the willingness of followers to be open to talking about their private and personal joys and difficulties with their leader.

For Terese and Gerald, the fact that some parents confided about negative behavioural tendencies they'd observed in their children demonstrated their trust level. This confidence of parents was attributed to the influence of principal's servant-leadership role in their school communities.

Collaborative leadership. According to principals, the changing context of the school landscape (Renihan, 2002) demands a collaborative leadership style

that promotes mutual respect and support. They believed that their adoption of collaborative leadership had had a positive impact on their schools. Angela explained:

We are going through great change this year with the building of Siloam high school. . . . So a huge, huge change that way. And so that helps you, allowing staff to come together and say what are we going to do to make this place the best it can be? This year we had 25 people-teachers, secretaries, teacher assistants sit on a committee to review what we are going to do at St. Jerome. And they have come out with phenomenal ideas that are all based on better things for kids, and better things for teachers. We have come up with a new mission vision, we have thought about it.

Angela indirectly proffers advice to leaders that collaboration is useful for tapping the rich potentials of others. The respect she accorded to the ideas of the various committees in her school led to a stronger school community and enhanced the staff engagement in the affairs and activities of the school.

Angela, Simon, Denis, and Gerald felt that servant-leadership, on occasions, can become burdensome because of the long and occasionally circuitous process of arriving at decisions. Angela called the long procedure of arriving at decisions “process” and cautioned that, skipping the *process* defeats all that collaboration and community building represent. Terese and Gerald intimated that *process* enhanced the openness of staff and students towards them. Gerald observed:

Well, I think one of the leadership styles, I can mention is just the top-down, the disciplinarian. The one where basically you tell everyone what should happen. That is not a good leadership style, because very seldom do you get people on board. With the servant-leadership style, you allow people to grow and you can't be afraid to have other people with certain strengths do things better than you. At least that is how I look at it. With the disciplinarian or top-down leadership style, you have to be the boss; you have to be in charge of everything. And I think with servant-leadership, you have to allow people to grow, develop and to take on the leadership roles.

This comment suggests that over-controlling leadership may breed reluctant followers who are unwilling to contribute to the leadership of their communities; whereas collaborative leadership creates an atmosphere for the growth of confident future leaders. Principals agreed that the servant-leader is prone to occasional mistakes; but that humility propels him/her into honestly acknowledging these to their followers. Their ability to tender apologies to staff and students when appropriate showed that principals who practice this did not pretend to be perfect. Angela addressed this issue of apology:

We work through it, and try and find a way of reaching them. And sometimes it is in our busyness that we do not stop and think. No, I am going about this the wrong way. And so sometimes the reflection after the student has walked out, or a staff member has walked out, you go (holds the head). I blew that.

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What am I going to do to make that connection better? And sometimes it is just coming back. I have pulled a kid back in or a staff member back in and said ‘I apologize let’s start all over again.’ I have done that a few times. . . . I have called them in and said let’s start again, and I go through the ‘Hello my name is Mrs. Angel. Or hello my name is Angela. I am glad to meet you. Can you tell me about yourself and we start again?’ And for many people, that has helped.

An analysis of Angels’ approach raises a contentious issue. Should a leader apologize? While expressed in a variety of ways and with personalized manner, the principals we talked with said they believed in the leader’s need to apologize where necessary. They perceived this behaviour to be a sign of humility and strength. Recounting their experiences, they indicated their belief that the ability (or perhaps we could say “grace”) to apologize to students or staff when they had treated them unfairly, had helped restore or create an atmosphere of credibility, trust, and mutual respect in the school community.

Denis said that setting a good example is a powerful way of eliciting collaboration with students and that, if the leader needs help, he/she must be able to demonstrate that he/she is ready to help others too. He observed:

It is easy to ask for help when your staff knows you are willing to help them. And I think that is what community is. When you look at any sense of community, it is the willingness to get involved, it is the willingness to stand up for your neighbour, and it is the willingness to pray for people. It is all about being there for somebody else, and I think, as a servant-leader, you are seen as being there all the time for other people. With that emotional bank account, it is so easy to ask for help, when they recognize that nine times out of ten you are going to be there to help them. So if I go into the commons, the cafeteria and I ask for four kids to help me come and unload something, well, if they have seen me helping people unload stuff and coming into classrooms and talk to kids, and help staff, kids wouldn’t say “NO.” Kids will go help, staff will jump up and come and help, and because that is the atmosphere we are setting. I have worked for administrators who did not follow that model, that were very dictatorial, and people just did not want to get involved. It is like, let them do it. If you are a helpful person you will be surrounded with people who will want to help you.

The leader’s encouragement, appreciation, support, personal contacts with people, and trust, enhance collaboration in the school community. At all costs, avoiding public reprimands and confrontations will help an individual look forward rather than concentrating on past mistakes. This elicits collaboration from people. Simon expressed this idea as follows:

The best approach we have is encouragement, appreciation, notes of support, notes of thanks. . . . avoiding only reprimanding when things have gone wrong.

Personal conversations; not public confrontation. The biggest is developing trust. When people trust you, and you are, who you preach, then personal conversations with teachers and with students have a greater effect on those individuals.

Principals' advised that where blame seems to be the inevitable antidote for correcting mistakes, fear and timidity gradually become the insidious norm. Denis, Terese, and John, like Simon, believed that no one in the school community is too insignificant to converse with, because good conversation boosts the image of students, staff members, and parents.

In the previous chapter we introduced the link between "visioning" and servant leadership. Angela indicated that having a clear vision is important in eliciting collaboration, but the vision needs to be supported. She observed, "It is important to have a vision, but that vision must be supported and encouraged by those around you." Thus, collaboration implies the inputs of others and mutual support within the school community, and it calls for *listening*, without which collaboration is impossible. All agreed that listening is difficult to cultivate and requires a lot of patience.

Reflecting on the need for mutual support and innovativeness as some of the essential recipes for the success of a leader's vision, Gerald explained that while it is the leader's task is to inspire vision; the vision needs acceptance by the community because "it is the community's vision of the school." John concurred:

I think you need to ensure that your vision is set within your school and within what you do within that school. You need to focus on that vision through your goals. By establishing your goals, you, hopefully, meet the needs of individuals and groups within your community.

This comment underscores the fact that a vision that bears no relevance to its context serves no purpose, and that a vision that fulfills the needs of the community implies *community building*. Our principals' comments on vision raise the question: *vision from whom and for what purpose?* We hope that our readers will see the connections across these three chapters in the second section of the book. Here again, community building comes into play.

In their practice of servant-leadership, through caring, gentleness, empathy, compassion, and service, principals felt that they had maintained their school communities. Positive comments from students, staff members, and parents about their leadership style, their encouragement of team work, approachability, ability to establish positive relationships, credibility, trust, and words of appreciation from parents of formerly obdurate students, were evidence of their servant-leadership role.

Catholic High School Principals Experience of their Role as Servant-Leaders

The general feeling of principals was satisfaction with their role as servant-leaders and having more positive than negative experiences. We were interested in the reinforcing impulses or metacognitions of principals with respect to their practice as servant leaders. Angela expressed her satisfaction as follows:

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Everyday. And again, when I see a teacher I have worked with succeed, or try something new. When they come in and say ‘Oh I want you to see what I did in school today, what I did with my kids. What do you think of this?’ I have been able to say phenomenal! Fantastic! Or when a kid comes in who had a really rotten year, and the next year you see, my goodness the same kid again! The kid blossoms, because we all grow, it is never giving in, never giving up on a kid or person. And knowing that they are going to get better, they will get better, they will evolve; they will become stronger.

John expressed his experience at some length:

Very simple things, to begin with. Getting a thank you from a student, or from a staff member. Or having a former student come back and say ‘thank you.’ You provided me with a great deal of opportunity. You set a tone, you set an example for me. You have helped me accomplish this. Having a parent come to you and say, you know what? Or ‘I am so appreciative of the fact that you worked with my son or daughter and got him/her involved in such and such a program. It has been such a benefit to them. And it has provided them with a great experience. It has provided them with a large or super educational experience down the road. It has kind of been the foundation for their success in their educational endeavours.’ Seeing success within your school, in terms of the data that you collect. Seeing kids who might be failing a class or 2 or 3 may now be only failing one or not failing at all or seeing a smile on a face as you greet in the morning. You have some fun and a discussion with them in the classroom or in the hall way. It is working with teachers and seeing some kind of “Aha moments” come from them that help them to work within the context of their curriculum or to help with their particular child who might be struggling with something. It is working well together as a leadership team within the school.

The positive undertone of hope in these comments is overwhelming, although hope belongs to both the *obedient* and the *prodigal child* it is often the prodigal child that needs hope that most, just like Jesus abandoning the 99 sheep to go in search of the stray one (Lk.15:1-7). We suggest a further implication is that servant-hood in leadership is the way to unleash the power of hope in a school community.

Additional evidence of the provision of hope comes during periods of bereavement, and when students see their school as a safe place, and additionally, when there is a change in attitude of teachers from insensitive rigidity to empathy and understanding for students. Principals described such situations as follows:

I guess an example I would have is an example of a young boy whose mother died unexpectedly, and ... his dad came and told him. And I came in and the boy was really upset, he was crying. This is not fair, this is not fair, and all the people who came in to talk to this boy and offer him support and say a prayer with him, to give him a hug, to talk to him, and let him know that he had a

lot of support and that people cared about him and were going to look out for him. To me that kind of giving is the kind of thing that comes out of practicing servant-leadership. (Terese)

... I think teaching at St. Mark where we had a kid who lived in a car, for I think ten days, lived in a car, but never missed school. He run away from home, we didn't know this is the time. He was living in a car, but he kept coming to school because we were a safe place for him. (Denis)

You know, there is a teacher who had been very autocratic in his classes, exceptionally hard on kids at times. I have really encouraged him to look at the good things kids do. To be positive with kids, instead of seeking out what they do wrong. Talk to kids about what they are doing right, and encourage positive kinds of attitudes. In the last two years, there have been far fewer problems in his classroom. He now rarely sends students down. I have not had a parent complain in two years about him. [In the past] if I'd totalled up the complaints I got about this teacher it would have been more than all the other teachers put together. So to me that is a huge thing. It is helping somebody to look at things from a more positive light. And to realize that if you look for the good in people, that is what you get. (Terese)

These three examples point to principals' unassuming recognition of the effects of their role as servant-leaders. What can be more fulfilling than for a leader to know that members of his/her community support each other not only in good times but in difficult periods? It is a sign of success if a student sees his/her school as a safe place to be? And a principal rejoices to see a change in the attitude of a teacher who now enjoys working in his/her school community. In short, these are examples of the hope we see attributed to servant-leadership.

Principals attest to having experienced growth through their practice of servant-leadership. Our discussions with them raised questions: (a) How can a leader give hope to people without understanding and acknowledging that they are not *finished products*? (b) How can a leader give hope to people without appreciating diversity in the way they view situations? These questions were in John's words:

I think it has given me an understanding that when you are working with people, people are not perfect. People are not necessarily the same type of character. They do not have the same type of characteristics, qualities that you may have. But there is a diverse aspect of leadership. I think there is a diverse aspect within community. And you need to understand that diversity so that you can work with those individuals to get the best out of them for the community.

As servant-leaders, the principals had acquired increases in patience and a better understanding of people. Principals indicated that their conceptions and ideals of servant-leadership had helped them develop a spiritual discipline of prayer. For example, Terese and John expressed their Catholic faith commitment through involvement in their church communities as lectors at liturgical celebrations, members of

parish boards, and participation in parish activities. Principals also told us about experiences of challenges, disappointments, and the burdens of disappointment they carried with those who were unwilling to accept their servant-leadership.

The general feeling of principals was that of satisfaction in their role as servant-leaders. Their experiences can be considered in both positive and negative light.

Positive Experiences

Words of gratitude from staff members, students, and parents were heartwarming to principals. Even though reward was not the reason for principals' assumption of servant-leadership roles, positive comments re-enforced them in their service of their school communities. Batten (1998) intimated, "gratitude puts it all together. ... It provides us with ... [the] reciprocity that further nourishes and increases the amount of faith and hope" (p. 51) in us.

The willingness and generosity of the school community members to console and support their bereaved members were seen as positive. The readiness of staff members to take up leadership challenges was also appreciated. John and Terese acknowledged that the positive experiences associated with their servant-leadership role were not only about the change for good which they saw in members of their school communities, they themselves benefited from their practice of the leadership model. Terese noted:

I think that ... that really helped me gain an understanding of the importance of allowing God to control your life. And I think that put a perspective in my head that allowed me to gain a better understanding of what is meant by servant-leadership. That we control what we can control, but we need to let go what we need to let go of, and that we need to be able to understand what other people are feeling, and help them understand what we are trying to get across to them.

Terese implied that servant-leadership leads to a discovery of the self and a reliance on the power of faith in Jesus Christ for wisdom for better service to her school community. For John, his practice of servant-leadership helped increase his participation in church activities. John and Terese's experiences indicate that service to the People of God, based on the strength of faith, is simultaneously the source of a better understanding of one's faith and service. If servant-leadership was valuable in the building of their faith commitment, it was also useful in their personal development and increase in the virtue of equanimity. Denis observed, "I think servant-leadership is ... how to react to situations. The calmness, the quiet ... [and] that comes from being a servant to the people."

Principals were happy about the development of altruistic tendencies in the students and staff of their schools. This unselfish demeanour was evident in their joyous involvement in the distribution of Christmas hampers and enthusiastic engagement in various philanthropic activities, including the program of investing Christian service hours. In the words of Angela the generous disposition towards others "epitomizes servant-leadership." Principals were heartened by the fact that both the needy and the

affluent in their schools come together to show concern for others. The willingness of stronger students to stand up for the weak when their fellow students are maltreated by their peers was, for Terese, a sign that the practice of servant-leadership in her school community was yielding fruits. The laudable action of the stronger students reflect Greenleaf's (1977) observation that the forces of good and evil are propagated by the thoughts, behaviours, and attitudes of individuals. What our values for our future civilization become will be greatly shaped by the ideas of [servant-leaders] that are born of inspiration. In sum, as leaders inspire followers to take on caring attitudes, they learn to stand up for their colleagues even in the absence of their leaders.

Negative Experiences

Of course, servant-leadership is not a panacea for all problems. Personal ego sometimes serves to challenge idealized aspirations by creating inner tension that hinders the exercise of self-sacrificing servant-leadership. The interruption of the self in the exercise of servant-leadership challenges even the most honest and well-meaning servant-leader. Servant-leadership provides no guarantee of freedom from the gravitational pull of even blatant self-interest. The occasional disappointment brought about by the failure of people to take up the challenge of empowerment was frustrating to Denis, Simon, and Angela. While it is necessary to respect the opinions of people, it is not every follower that feels comfortable playing active leadership roles. Some may be at ease in playing supportive roles rather than in being at the forefront. In the face of unwilling followers, Neuschel's (2005) reminder to servant-leaders is worth considering. He wrote, "the ultimate test of the servant-leader is to work constructively with the half-people who are part of all organizations" (p. 99). In this regard, Kahl (2004) said, being a [servant-leader] is not about arriving quickly at a destination, "It is about hanging in there when times get tough" (p. 61). The old saying that calm seas do not make great captains seems applicable here. Braye (2002) observed characteristics that afford means for individuals to become effective servant-leaders: "... love-toward self, others, and all that one touches" (p. 295).

Principals were unanimous in indicating that servant-leadership is time-intensive. John and Gerald noted that a desire to serve one's school community without taking due care of one's self can lead to adverse repercussions. For example, there is a tendency to neglect one's own family and concentrate on effectiveness in administration without balance. The inclination to overlook the need for physical exercise as a result of the demands of overwhelming administrative work was also noted.

CHALLENGES, TENSIONS, AND COSTS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

According to Mortensen (2008), "it does not matter who you are; you will be tested" (p. 269). Principals identified their own inclinations as a challenge to operationalize authentic servant leadership. To explain, Simon indicated that he occasionally had difficulty moving away from the pull of his own ego because, "it is easier to consider yourself first. ... It is easier to fall back into the ego-centric mode. ... self first, not

last.” He found servant-leadership becoming more frustrating when it was difficult to work within the mandate of servant-leadership because of his propensity to be self-serving.

The failure of people to take up the challenge of empowerment was worrying to several of the principals. As well there was some misunderstanding of the meaning of servant-leadership on the part of some constituents. For Denis, exhibiting compassion could be wrongly judged as weakness and indecision. And such wrong opinions sometimes, unfortunately, became descriptive of the unsuspecting leader’s leadership role. Gerald said that difficulties sometimes arise when non-Catholic students try to go back on their undertaking to be respectful of Catholic teachings and Faith, prerequisite for admission to the school. There were occasions when patience did not yield the desired results, and a student needed to be guided to relocate to another school. This was a rather gentle and diplomatic way of framing these difficult situations. For Simon, such situations made it difficult to sleep at night because of a nagging sense as to whether the best decision had been taken. Angela indicated that on a number of occasions, she has had to deal with dilemmas. She observed:

... huge demands with kids, who are struggling. What do we do with them? Do we give up on them? Do we send them away? Do we try and help? Staff dilemmas and people who do not believe in what we are doing.

On his part, Gerald pointed out circumstances where he bore the anger of parents to protect a teacher who was being wrongly judged by members of the school community. John added another challenge:

I think one of the things that I have come across is, when I first became a principal, a servant-leader, you step into a situation where you have a very strong staff that is entrenched in the way they deliver education. And that delivery of education may not necessarily be in line with what servant-leadership is: meeting the needs of all kids within the school. And I think that is a challenge in itself that if you are trying to instill the ideal or vision within the staff it takes time.

It became clear that challenges arise from teachers who take immutable positions regarding their ways of viewing and doing things. Administrative superiors can also present a problem. Terese pointed out that she had only infrequently yielded to pressure from administrative superiors, perhaps because her gentle servant-leadership approach had been exploited. The five other principals thought that even though this example was a possibility, it was rare, because their administrative superiors espoused the servant-leadership model themselves, and generally seemed to agree with the way leadership was exercised.

As to how personal convictions were balanced with those of the school system, the following comments were elicited:

I would hope my convictions are not that different from the school system? I really feel that way because we go through our expectations not just as a teacher, but also as a Catholic system. I think there is a little bit more to it than

just being a teacher. There is more to it because it is based on our belief, our faith convictions that call us to support one another. To be honest it is hard, it is really, but I always have to remember, what is the focus here? It is the kid. The kids. (Angela)

In many ways the demands of the school system parallel servant-leadership. So it is not that big a struggle. The expectation of our senior administration is that we will be servant-leaders, and so the question might be better: how do you balance servant-leadership with the realities of our school system. I think you can still make decisions using the model of servant-leadership. At the end of the day you still have to make a decision whether to do something. . . . Whether it is sending a student away, which we do not do very often. Whether it is talking to the teacher from a supervisory point of view, which we do not do very often. So I guess part of it is, on the whole, the way we do things is not in conflict with servant-leadership. (Denis)

Well, we are fortunate as administrators, to work in the Catholic school system. And when I say that I mean it is a system where servant-leadership has been discussed and promoted. You know I would not be honest with you if I said that that approach has always been taken. . . . So my personal conviction has always been to work with people, and I mean it is very rewarding. And I feel I am privileged to work within a system where I truly believe that that the same adage is spoken, and that the same adage is encouraged within the entire system. (Simon)

Principals seemed to agree that there was a focus and support for their leadership. The objective of the focus was not a secret in the Catholic school system. And even though that objective was not easy to attain, concentrating on the purpose helped them in the fulfillment of their mandate as Catholic high school principals. The general impression was that principals' convictions generally reflected the school system's expectations of them as servant-leaders. If there were occasional disagreements with their administrative superiors, these were the exceptions. In general, they agreed that in adopting the servant-leadership style, even though arrival at decisions would sometimes move at snail's pace, it was the better and more fulfilling leadership approach; one that worked best in their schools.

A desire to serve a school community to the best of one's ability can lead to neglect of one's family. Gerald and John felt that leaders need to balance their duties to their school communities with providing quality time to their families. Gerald explained as follows:

I believe one of the costs is that . . . sometimes [you] can be a burden on your family and put strains on your family situation whereas you are always giving to others. And sometimes, as a servant-leader, you forget that you don't just give in the school situation, you have to give at home. And you need to give to other family members, and give in other locations. Your school job can be all consuming. You cannot do everything. So you have to pick and choose. And

as I say to everyone, ‘if your family falls apart, then you are not good at work.’ So you have to take care of your faith, you take care of your family, and work hard at what is going on at school. But that can be so consuming that you forget about the other important things in your life.

Gerald’s comment echoes the biblical admonition from Timothy 3:4-5 that the *leader* needs to manage his/her family well in order to be able to serve the people of God.

John emphasized the servant-leader’s need to pay attention to his/her own health, and suggested ways of doing this: “... [it] can be a number of different things. ... It could be participating in exercises, fitness plans, yoga, meditation. ... It could be athletic events, whatever you want.” John’s observation indicates that the school leader who considers him/herself a servant-leader has also the responsibility not only to model hard work and care for people, but also to show the good example of maintaining good health. In part, this is because the frail health of the servant-leader implies decreased service to the community.

Servant-leadership is not an easy choice from leadership approaches. The servant-leadership option can be fraught with frustrations, hostility, and periods of passivity (Lad & Luechauer, 1998; Autry, 2001; Fryer, 2001). For Lad and Luechauer, “The journey toward becoming a leader who seeks to serve rather than be served is worthy, commendable, and, unfortunately filled with many personal, organizational, and environmental barriers, paradoxes, and downsides” (p. 61). The barriers, paradoxes, and downsides can lead to abandonment of the servant-leadership ideal when the leader lacking faith fails to see beyond the immediate challenges (Wheatley, 2004).

According to Lad and Luechauer (1998) barriers that may offer resistance to the practice of servant-leadership are:

- Followers might initially consider servant-leadership to be another *management fad*. Such skepticism arises from the inherent mistrust generated by the times when leaders have not remained faithful to the psychological contracts made with employees who seriously yearn for real change (Reeves, 2002);
- Leaders and followers may not see servant-leadership as a pressing need, so that leaders remain trapped in a whirlwind of other events and needs that demand urgent attention; and
- Leaders and organizations spend much time and energy on recommending servant-leadership and its many advantages but excuse themselves from practicing it because they see it as not being practicable in their particular organization. Besides, followers may be caught in system relationships that have developed and seem impossible to break (Reeves).

Walker and Sackney (2007) added egoism as a barrier to healthy school leadership. For Lad and Luechauer and Autry (2001), such barriers may actually provide opportunities in disguise as they encourage the leader to assess his/her and the organization’s stance with regard to servant-leadership. According to Lad and Luechauer, “Barriers are good news for those who are willing to see the blessing in the storm clouds” (p. 63).

SERVANT-LEADERSHIP AS EXPERIENCED IN DAILY LIVES

Servant-leadership presents two paradoxes. The first emanates from the fact that servant-leadership takes varying and ever changing forms. The leader must be comfortable with such variation in the process and realize the commandment that 'you are not the only servant in the organization' (Lad & Luechauer, 1998). Such a realization helps the leader to appreciate the contribution of others to the organization. Without the acknowledgement of other servant-leaders in the organization, servant-leadership can be self defeating. The second paradox flows from the mistaken notion that servant-leadership implies the absence of rules, hierarchy, or structure, rather than understanding the changes required in the role that rules, hierarchy, and structure perform (Blanchard, 1998).

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

It seems appropriate, at this point, to discuss a few of the strategies that these six principals had adopted for success in their roles as servant-leaders. This type of leadership seeks the growth of followers and there is a need for useful strategies to galvanize the energies of all into building a strong community.

Our principals emphasized that tenacity of purpose is paramount if the servant-leader is to achieve success. Also, the leader needs to demonstrate that he/she cares and cherishes purposeful collaboration. Appreciating the legitimate partnership of home, Church and school comes to the fore here. Showing respect for constituents helps to build their trust and energizes them to work harder. Both the male and female principals identified similar strategies, for success. The only difference was that while the females seemed to concentrate on effacing themselves to help followers; the males dwelt on concrete steps they had adopted to succeed as servant-leaders. The following excerpts present these views:

Just keep doing it. . . . and to remind them [students] that I see myself as a parent figure. (Denis)

I do not think I am the center of the universe. I do not think it is about me. It is okay to ask for help, it is not a sign of weakness. If you ask for help you need to give it back. I do not expect everything to be given to me, I do not, I think I have to earn it. (Angela)

Tenacity of purpose is necessary if the servant-leader wants to succeed. Concentrating on discouragement is comparable to planning to fail. The leader must be humble enough to ask for help from people as he/she cannot do the job alone. The leader should not hesitate to express appreciation to people. This is a good recipe for building trust. John indicated that recognizing the success of followers goes a long way to elicit further contributions from them for a better and strong school community:

You want to acknowledge the successes from simple things like a thank you, well done, to a letter or note citation of recognition of thanks to an award or special recognition. There are a number of different things. But I think that

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also helps to focus that it is not about you. It is about serving those individuals and recognizing that success, because that success, if recognized can also lead to continuous success to getting what you need to do and where you need to get to. (John)

Terese, speaking in general terms, and with reference to listening and empathy said:

I think it is just the way I deal with people. It is just learning to listen to people, to hear what they have to say, to hear their story because sometimes they are upset about something, and you do not even see it as something they should be upset about. So learning to listen to what they have to say, and trying to understand what it is about the situation that makes them unhappy. And understanding that you cannot control the way people feel, and even though the intent is not to make a person upset, they still are upset. And so acknowledging that they are upset, and that it is okay that they are upset. And so for me, developing the sense of empathy and the ability to listen is probably one of the things I have had to work on most as an administrator. It is just being quiet and listening. I always try to solve everybody's problem. But that is not my job, and I should not be doing that. So I have learned to be quiet and listen, because in the story telling most people solve it themselves and it is a better way.

Listening is an art that needs to be learned, because it is through listening well to followers' stories that they can be better helped. Apart from the emphasis placed on the importance of listening and empathy, an underlying suggestion is that, the leader should not single-handedly arrogate the solution to people's problems to him/herself. As Terese and Gerald observed to us, as people tell their own stories, they quite often arrive at solving their own problems.

As to strategies needed for success in servant-leadership, principals identified tenacity, respect for members of their school communities, cherishing collaboration, caring for followers, avoidance of needless reprimands in the event of failure, and developing trust in followers. Angela indicated that achieving success in servant-leadership also involved respecting staff members to such an extent that the leader avoids embarrassing them in front of students or parents.

Like all approaches to leadership, servant-leadership also has its detractors. We have already noted that Denis suggested that the way of dealing with irresponsible dissenters from the school community's vision is, "Just keep doing it." For Angela, "It is okay to ask for help, it is not a sign of weakness." And for Simon, "The best approach is, . . . encouragement, appreciation, notes of support, notes of thanks. . . . Avoiding only reprimanding when things have gone wrong, personal conversation, not public confrontation." There will always be dissenters in school communities; however, in the face of dissenters, Kahl (2004), borrowing Margaret Mead's words suggested, "Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has" (p. 61). The servant-leader needs to keep in mind that not yielding to uncooperative members of the school community is the way to success.

According to Angela, in order to give people opportunities to present themselves in a better light, especially in the event a person is angry, say in the case of a student, the best solution is to gently walk away and offer them another chance when they have calmed down. The understanding here is that as an adult, and servant-leader, the principal must know how to give opportunities for followers to learn and grow.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ON EXPRESSIONS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP
IN WORK OF SCHOOL LEADERS

Most principals' experiences of their servant-leadership role are reflected in the expectations their school communities have for them. Servant-leadership is for the service of followers (Autry, 2004). This was manifested in two major ways: First, in the different possibilities offered for constituents to develop; and, second, in the collaboration of staff, students, and parents, as demonstrated through their willingness to take up leadership roles for the good of their school communities.

Offer of Different Possibilities for Constituents to Develop

Gerald's observed that, "We will not give up on somebody. They have to give up on themselves." Concurring with Gerald, Angela said, to help the child to grow, "[demands that the leader] never giving in, never giving up on a kid or a person, and knowing that they are going to get better, they will evolve and become stronger." The principals indicated that they offered opportunities to constituents to take responsibility for their own actions because an important aspect of servant-leadership is to help the follower learn to be responsible, and to provide hope for followers. Forgiveness was seen as an example of looking for multiple opportunities to serve. Forgiveness means hope for the constituent as he/she is allowed to start all over with a future full of possibilities and hope.

Seeking to understand individuals was another way to help followers grow. According to Angela, Terese, Simon, and John, the willingness to understand people helps the leader to deal with followers in ways that best serve their interests. Gerald indicated that offering different opportunities for followers to develop and grow implied allowing hard working staff members who had opportunities to pursue other interests elsewhere to do so if that would enhance their growth. For Denis, this might involve helping under-performing staff members and students who seem not to fit in the normal school system to relocate to other schools if that would lead to their eventual growth.

Servant-leadership does not offer a blueprint for success in dealing with varying situations, but faith in Jesus Christ was a source of inspiration in facing dilemmas for the principals we talked with. Apart from common faith in Jesus Christ being a great support in their dealings with the different situations, Beazley and Begg's (2002) observation is relevant here. They pointed out that although the concept of servant-leadership is simple, "... its execution is not. Its expression is always based on individualized experience based on the person's unique set of talents and skills" (p. 56).

We were deeply touched by the attitude of one of the students at the school where Denis served and who was being relocating to an alternate school. The student gladly accepted to relocate because of the background work Denis and his assistant principals had undertaken to help the student understand why she was being asked to move to that school. Before leaving for the alternate school, the student expressed optimism about returning to the sending school soon, exhibiting the kind of hope the servant-leader in the school context inspires in followers.

Collaboration as Vehicle for Servant-Leadership

Like Autry (2002), these principals were of the view that today, the era of the single decision maker is anachronistic. Simon pointed out that his experiences of the outcomes with autocratic leaders had generally been ephemeral and oppressive. In their own practice, each had come to appreciate collaborative leadership as valuable in eliciting mutual respect and support for one another in the school community. Their thoughts on collaboration suggested that they agreed with DePree (2002) that "... organizations stand a better chance of reaching their potential when the gifts of everyone are brought to bear on reality than when an organization limits itself to the gifts of a few people at the top" (p. 92).

Collaboration involves respecting the opinions of others, leading to stronger school communities because followers feel empowered. Angela, Simon, Denis, and Gerald felt that, although collaboration could at times become burdensome due to the longer time demands in arriving at decisions, it was their preferred method because it was a reliable way to the empowerment of followers. They acknowledged that because of the intensity of its time demands, collaboration involved hard work. As Walls (2004) observed:

Collaboration is not handing out paintbrushes so others can paint your fence. It is not an example of "many hands make light work," nor is it an example of "too many cooks spoil the broth." It is hard work. It is very hard work. It is worthwhile work. It is worthwhile because it makes good things happen. (p. 131)

The general view was that ways of sustaining collaboration included the leader's humility, setting good example, willingness to serve, staying clear of public reprimands in the event of mistakes, engaging in conversation with members of the school community regardless of status, words of encouragement from the leader, approachability of the leader, ability to establish positive relationships, and the leader's ability to tender apology when the occasion demanded it.

By delivering a talk together with four of her staff members, at a professional development day with other staff members, Angela clearly showed the wisdom of collaboration. First, collaboration has the advantage of making burdens light. Second, it goes beyond merely respecting people's opinions. It involves giving credit to people for their ideas and contributions. Third, collaboration is a good avenue for teaching constituents that everybody in the community needs to contribute to

the leadership of the community (Greenleaf, 1977). In effect, as Thompson (2005) observed, collaboration connotes a reminder that the quest for power, prestige, or material rewards is not the focus of servant-leadership because this approach to leadership offers comparatively little in terms of prestige, power, or material rewards. Rather, the focus is on building a common vision, sharing information, acknowledgement of interdependence, learning from past mistakes, encouraging innovative input from every team member, and questioning existing assumptions and mental models. Collaboration in effect, creates a sense of community where support for one another and continuous learning can take place. According to Denis, “It is the willingness to stand up for your neighbor, it is the willingness to pray for people. It is about being there for somebody else. . . .”

Principals’ ideas about collaboration seemed to echo Greenleaf’s (1997), earlier cited, challenge to servant-leaders: “Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants. . . . Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived” (p. 27)? If we were to understand collaboration as these principals do, we would say it is the process through which followers are made to feel they are cherished and that they have valuable contributions to make towards the growth of their communities. Leaders do not have monopoly of all the excellent ideas.

SECTION 3

A CLOSER LOOK AT SERVANT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

In this section, we present the stories of two Catholic high school principals by describing just one of the ten days we spent with each of these servant-leadership. We knew that Angela and Denis would have much to teach us about servant-leadership through their lives as school administrators. We were pleased that each agreed to let us spend a couple of weeks “shadowing” them in their school settings. Over the course of these four weeks (total observations period), we learned and observed more than could be told. So in this section we simply describe one “cherry-picked” day from each of the weeks we spent with them. For the most part, these were typical days (if such ever exist) and representative of what we had observed for the longer period. The eighth chapter affords us an opportunity to stand back from the observations and consider the characteristics of their servant-leadership. We consider their embodiment of 10 characteristics of servant-leadership, expressed in their work-a-day lives. Our hope is that the abstract ideations of servant-leadership might be practically “explained” by the behaviour and reflections of these two principals. As you will see, they were each more than willing and able to help us with this effort to put flesh on the spirit of servant-leadership. Their behaviour, attitudes, and insights are an invitation to other principals join the conversation concerning what it means to be an authentic servant leader in the context of the Catholic high school principalship. We invite you to join us, as “flies on the school walls,” to observe the work settings, behaviours, and hear the insight of these two leaders.

WALK IN MY SHOES: DAY IN THE LIFE OF TWO EXEMPLARS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

You have already met Angela (Principal of St. Jerome High School) and Denis (Principal of St. Mark High School). To help the non-principal reader to better appreciate the context of the Catholic school principalship, we've decided to take a few pages to describe the two high schools and then, from our two weeks with each Angela and Denis, we profile a single day in their school life. Both principals exemplified servant-leadership behaviour fairly evenly during the 10 days they were each observed, but we chose one day from the 10 to be richest in terms of descriptions and conversation. We thought we'd provide our sense of the major servant-leadership themes that complement and elaborate on the themes discussed earlier in this book through our conversations with all six Catholic high school principals, including Angela and Denis. We will first describe the basic features of St. Jerome High School (Angela) and then to take you through her day with some occasional comments. Then we will do the same with St. Mark High School and our day of observations with Denis.¹

ST. JEROME HIGH SCHOOL (PRINCIPAL ANGELA)

This grade nine to twelve school is housed in a rather non-descript building dating from the 1960s to serve the needs of the Catholic community on the south side of Dog City. In comparison to other parts of the city, the south side is generally considered to be economically disadvantaged. This student disadvantage is reflected in the commonplace problems associated low socio-economic settings. The building is situated in the middle of a residential area composed of low cost housing for low-income earners. Occasional incidences of violence sometimes plague the south side of Dog City, causing anxiety as, reportedly, some people are afraid to come to the school at night for activities. The two-storey building has a basement and three different stair cases and one elevator to access the second floor. The fact of these various ways to go up and down in the school building makes supervision difficult. Most staff and students we talked with expressed a strong attachment to their school. A number of student and staff fondly described the school *as home*. Despite its age, and the annual spring flooding of the basement, the building is well kept by the school's hardworking caretakers.

¹ As earlier indicated, we chose to use pseudonyms for a personnel and schools. We have also altered some of the geographic data to "hide" identity of school and its members but all else is an accurate portrayal.

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Originally established as a help to parents in the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development of their children, the school's currently stated goal is the creation and sustenance of a school community enlivened by the Gospel. This goal is reflected, in part, by a large number of crucifixes on the walls of the school corridors and classrooms.

This French and English bilingual, high school is dedicated to providing its students with the opportunity of gaining fluency in both official languages of Canada. An additional language taught at St. Jerome is Cree. Instructional programs include woodworking, cooking, and computer classes. The school is also celebrated for its alternate programs for students with special needs, and its volunteer work with principals of the Special Olympics program. In St. Jerome, 35% of the student population come from over ten different cultural and language backgrounds, thus providing a real mix of a *family* with diversity of races. The school has 70 teachers, 30 support staff, and more than 700 students.

Two main entrances on the eastern side, forming the main doorway of the building sandwich the offices of the principal and the secretarial staff. On entering the building through the right side entrance, straight ahead, and on the adjacent wall, showcases display trophies of past and present sporting and academic achievements of the school on school, city, and provincial levels. On the wall to the right, as one faces the showcases, is a crucifix, flanked by beautiful portraits of a former and the present Bishop of the Dog City diocese. Hanged on the left wall of the main entrance, is a portrait of Pope Benedict XVI. Further along the left wall, are pictures of six former principals of St. Jerome. The two main entrances lead onto a walkway running north to south in the main building.

On entering through the left main entrance, one sees trophies displayed in showcases on the adjacent wall similar to the trophies exhibited as one enters through the right main entrance. The conspicuous difference, however, is a sculpture of Jesus the Good Shepherd hanging on the wall. Behind the left wall, as one faces the trophies, are the offices of students' services coordinator, counsellors, integrated services coordinator, and home liaison worker.

A door way opening through the right wall as one goes through the left main entrance leads to the offices of the financial secretary, assistant principals, accounts clerk, attendance clerk, school nurse, police liaison, and the social worker. From the main hallway running north to south, is the door to the principal's office. Apparently it is well known to students and staff that when that door was open, and there is nobody with the principal, anyone is welcome to enter. The secretaries welcome and direct students, staff, parents, and visitors to the principal. On the bulletin board on one wall of the principal's office are words which seem to set the tone for the principles that guide this particular principal in her administration of the school. Some of those words are: *accept differences, be kind, express thanks, harm no one, jettison anger, open your mind, plan mightily, master something, reciprocate, love truly.*

The school has two multi-purpose gymnasias (large and small attached to each other). These spaces serve as places for large school gatherings, and inviting venues for students to meet, chat, and socialize. The students' library, much frequented by

students, is situated on the northern part of the first floor and has over 30 computers arranged along the northern, western, and southern walls, with another row of computers running through the middle. On the walls of the library are beautiful paintings of various sceneries of the Province.

The school chapel, indicating a presence of prayer life in the school, and located upstairs, is a well-decorated room with inviting seats. Classrooms are mainly located on the second floor with the doorways of the classrooms mostly made conspicuous by the occasional discontinuity in the beautifully painted rows of lockers running along the walls facing each other in the corridors upstairs. A staff room, unable to seat all staff at the same time, is located on the second floor. Here, the staff eat lunch, socialize, and discuss matters of interest. It also serves as a gathering place for staff to meet and pray on Monday mornings before the start of school.

The school's website, points out three major strengths St. Jerome school, a friendly Christian atmosphere created by staff and students, acceptance of students and staff no matter what their ethnicity or socio-economic background is, and willingness of staff to accommodate all individuals with diverse needs within the school. Areas that are openly identified as needing attention included: meeting the diverse needs of students' poverty, students with at risk behavioural issues, declining enrolment, and the location of the other school amidst the violence within the community.

Community building was promoted by: sporting programs similar to those of city high schools including golf, drama in the fall, a dance group, an Aboriginal drum group highlighting a particular theme per month through food, dance, and song. World Travel Clubs – Ukraine, France, Japan, and Italy, open gym open at noon hours, open English as Second Language (ESL) room at noon hours, self esteem groups – male and female, martial arts club, Youth Action Circle, Urban unity – Break dance/ Hip Hop Group, Breakfast and Lunch programs.

JUST A SCHOOL DAY IN THE LIFE OF ANGELA

Angela arrived at school at 8.10 am and with her pleasant infectious smile, greeted students in the corridors as she proceeded to her office. Students responded with broad smiles as she passed by. She entered her office and made ready for morning prayers with the staff in the staff room. Staff attendance at morning prayers was not mandatory. On entering the staff room, she exchanged greetings and pleasantries with the 15 staff members present, asked how they were doing, and as if in a chorus, the answer was, "good." Angela's contagious and ebullient demeanour seemed to infect the staff members assembled for prayers. Angela started the prayers by inviting staff members to present their prayer intentions. These focused on students and their families, friends, and absentee staff members. At the end, Angela wished everybody success at their day's work. Staff members joyfully responded with a similar wish for her. This prayer session corroborated our interview data about the importance of prayer in the Catholic school community. Furthermore, prayer seemed to be the inevitable sign of community building and for mutual support. The sense of community exhibited through praying was not only for those physically present,

but also for those in the school community who needed support. Prayer seemed to demonstrate that the school community is always bigger than the people physically present in the school building.

At 8.30 a.m., before returning to her office, Angela characteristically made a quick tour of the school, first on the second floor and then on the first. As she toured the school, she exchanged greetings with both students and staff, stopping every now and then to chat with them. She seemed to connect with both staff and students. Observing her, it was clear she is gifted with a spontaneous attitude of welcoming with her ever ready, *infectious* smile, to which they readily responded. The general movement of teachers and students into their classrooms instantaneously came to a halt as prayer was being said over the intercom. The content of the prayer included a call for peace in the world, success and joy at school for teachers and students, unity among students, staff, and parents for a healthy St. Jerome *family*. After the chaplain's prayer, ten students from different language backgrounds, mentioned peace in their language over the intercom. This gesture was to signify the variety of the student and staff population which in no way inhibited the oneness and common objective of all in the school. Angela explained that this was meant to inform students that the job of seeking peace in the world and in the school community was not the responsibility of a selected few, but the call was universal, regardless of language or creed.

In her office, she switched on the computer to check for e-mails, and as the computer was loading, she checked her voicemail messages. There were many that required a reply. She answered the voicemail first, and also incoming telephone calls from parents who needed immediate responses. Angela exhibited great respect towards parents as she replied to the telephone messages. Asked why she responded as she did to callers, she said, "You achieve nothing by being harsh and disrespectful." In between the unpredictable telephone calls, she answered her e-mails. There never seemed to be enough time to answer the e-mails as she was interrupted several times by teachers or secretarial staff with questions on school matters. After listening attentively to staff members, she asked their opinions on issues, and together with them, came up with resolutions. To those who expressed their sense of gratitude, she said (to paraphrase, roughly), "You know I have always respected your initiatives and opinions, go and do your best, and that should surely be okay." After a teacher had left her office at the end of a discussion, Angela exclaimed, "Oh, they think I have all the answers. I always ask them to take initiatives, failures may come, but that is how they can learn." From my observation, Angela undoubtedly displayed a great sense of persuasion and foresight. She exhibited foresight through advice and caution that staff members keep options open for future action. As she always said: "You cannot tell what the future holds, that is why it is always better to keep your options open."

At 10.20 a.m., Angela invited a secretary into her office as one of the e-mail required information of staff time and teaching quotas to be sent to the Catholic school board office. According to Angela, she respected the expertise of that secretary. The secretary and Angela worked together on Angela's computer, with Angela leaving her office chair for the secretary to get better access to the computer. She

herself sat on another chair beside the secretary as they both worked together. Other staff members came in once in a while to ask one or the other questions to which Angela gave quick answers with her usual smile. In the event of questions that needed longer discussions, Angela booked a formal appointment, noting it in her diary. Some staff and students on their way to see Angela, and upon seeing her busy retraced their steps, intending to come back when she would be less busy. However, in her busyness, Angela always had time for fun which was energizing to both staff and students. While they were working together, the secretary fondly referred to Angela as 'honey' reflecting the cordial relationship that existed between the staff and Angela. Angela's childhood relationships with her siblings could be the reason for the ease with which she related with people. In response to my question as to why the secretary called her 'honey,' Angela replied, "relationships make all the difference." And explaining why she allowed the secretary to take her chair, she hesitated, and pensively said:

It does not mean because I am principal I know everything, if she has better knowledge of it than me, then she can sit in that chair and we work together to make this school a place of success. When it comes to help, we can grab her to help.

When the solution to the report was found, and the secretary was on her way out of the office, Angela exclaimed, "We are learning!" Observing Angela dedicatedly working together with the secretary gives the impression that working in collaboration, we can serve the school better. The important thing was the success of the school community and not her position.

Angela showed that she was ready to learn from other members of the school community. After completing the work with the secretary, a department head came to her to ask a question about allocating teaching subjects to teachers. Since this topic demanded a long discussion, Angela noted it in her diary, and scheduled a formal appointment with the department head. Angela asked the department head to come back at the appointed time and date with suggestions from other staff members. Just as she had done with other staff members who came in to see her, Angela expressed her appreciation for the good work the department head was doing and added, "I trust you can do it." She looked content and left the office looking very happy. Angela never seemed to lack words of encouragement for the staff member who came to see her.

At 11.00 a.m., just as Angela was preparing to make a second tour of the school, a teacher came into her office. The topic for discussion was about his wife's health problems, personal family difficulties, and other quandaries he was confronting at home. Angela's smile seemed to work when the staff member who looked, and was quite, disturbed in his mood and appearance, replied to Angela's smile with a reluctant dry smile. As usual, Angela showed she was an empathetic listener by her occasional comments as the teacher communicated his concerns. The teacher who had come to see Angela ended by saying, "I have not mentioned the problem to anybody

other than you.” Angela granted him compassion leave to take care of himself and his family, but she required that he find an appropriate replacement before embarking on the leave.

After the teacher’s departure, an officer from the social services department came to see Angela concerning a St. Jerome student’s attendance issues and general comportment. Angela looked through her computer and indicated that as far as she could see from the records, the student had a 100% attendance rate and nothing adverse had so far been brought to her attention about that student. Angela gave great credit to the St. Jerome Students’ Services for the wonderful work they do for students. The person from provincial office of social services left content with the impressive attendance of the student. Immediately, as the social services officer left, two grade 12 students entered Angela’s office, and before she could say anything, they greeted her first. She began a conversation with them by asking them what careers they were interested in. There was an exchange of jokes between them. Watching and listening to Angela communicate with students suggested to us a motherly interaction between mother and children, the fondness of a maternal affection.

Later, a parent and a former staff member of St. Jerome came to see Angela. The parent had come to express gratitude to Angela for the great positive strides in his daughter’s general comportment. He gave credit to Angela for the motherly care his daughter reported to have received from her. It seemed to have worked the ‘magic’ in his daughter’s life. Unwilling to take the credit for this positive comment, Angela rather humbly commended all the staff members at St. Jerome for the part they played in bringing about the positive change in that student. The former staff member had come to express gratitude to Angela for her support while she was a staff member. As Angela left the office to pick a paper from a printer, I asked the two visitors their impressions of Angela. Almost simultaneously, they answered, “She is phenomenal!”

At 11.40 a.m., Angela returned to her computer to reply to messages. Within a few minutes, a former head secretary of the school who had recently retired walked into the office. Angela left her seat, and gave the visitor a hug, and immediately offered her a wrist-band with an inscription of the vision of the school for the current academic year. After discussing several matters, the visitor spoke about her newly diagnosed health problem. Angela asked her not to hesitate to call on the St. Jerome school community if there was anything they could do to help her. She spoke a few words of encouragement to the former secretary who looked visibly touched and expressed her sense of gratitude. After she left, Angela remarked, “I respect her highly, she has contributed immensely to making this school what it is today.”

Just before the noon break, a teacher came to see Angela. Before listening to the teacher’s concerns, she excused herself to get a paper from her printer. Asked what she thought of Angela, the teacher replied, “Angela is a grower of leaders.” Back in the office, both engaged in conversation for a while, and then left for lunch in the staff room. But on her way there, Angela passed through the gym and the library to see what students were doing.

Back at her desk at 12:30 p.m., a phone call from a parent enquired about the school bussing system. Angela began with, "How can I be of service to you?" The parent, at the other end of the phone, felt entertained and burst out laughing. The conversation revealed that Angela used to drive this parent's child from her home to school and back. And in the event she was unable to do it, she requested a staff member to do this occasionally. That student's parents could not afford the bus pass for their child, so Angela helped out.

No sooner had Angela settled down to read her mails than two assistant principals came to discuss the school re-culturation process. This concerned the new strategies and adjustments to deal with the new situation in St. Jerome as a result of a drop in about 35% of the student population during the current school year due to demographic shifts in Dog City. Angela shared ideas with the assistant principals while advising them to listen to the suggestions of staff and students rather than imposing their opinions on them. With regard to the involvement of the students in the re-culturation process, she suggested; "Let the students feel they are part of the process. . . . Let them do what interests them, as long as it contributes to the general goal of the school." She suggested that the assistant principals always remember that students' success is key to the re-culturation process. As the assistant principals left the office, and we patiently waited for Angela's next encounter, she commented that they would be great principals one day.

At 2.15 p.m., a teacher came into Angela's office, and through their discussions, it became clear that Angela was not only interested in the work output of the teachers in the school, but also respected their opinions. She was equally interested in them as persons and what would become of them in the future. Consequently, at the end of each academic year, she asked each teacher to reply in writing to the following questions, among many others:

- Where do you want to be next year?
- What area or subject would you like to teach or work in next year?
- What would you like to do for extra-curricular activities next year?
- What would you change if you could?

Angela would proceed to read each staff member's answers to the questions. She would then make time to meet them one-on-one, to discuss how best each could be helped to achieve their goals.

Angela gave a requested tour of the school to a visitor at 2:35 p.m. Through her explanations of the various programs and events of the school, she exhibited a great awareness of all the happenings in and around the school. She expressed her pride and admiration at the great initiatives of some of the teachers in making their classes interesting for the students. She commented, "In the school, to succeed, we need to get creatively innovative." In course of the tour, she passed through the classroom of the special needs students and explained to the visitor that special needs students form an integral part of the St. Jerome school community. She came back to the office as school was closing at 3.05pm. On her way to her office, she met two of the

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school janitors and, in her usual manner, she jovially greeted them and continued to her office. Observing Angela's day as a leader, my impression was that she was gifted with dexterity at effectively dealing with scheduled and unscheduled appointments. Many of the students on their way to the school bus bade her good bye before leaving. As students and some of the teachers made their way out of the school for the day, Angela settled down to work at her computer. Before leaving we asked her when she normally left the school. She said, "It depends on what has been happening in the school on any given day." Sometimes she worked in her office until 5.00 pm or beyond. Observing Angela this day in school, we were profoundly touched by her inexhaustible energy, and her ability to encourage staff, students, and parents. It was evident that, Angela has a remarkable and formidable disposition combined with humility, service, transparency, and flexibility that enabled her to be an attractive and popular leader.

ST. MARK HIGH SCHOOL (PRINCIPAL DENIS)

St. Mark is a two-storey building with five staircases and one elevator linking the main floor to the second floor. Founded in the early 1980s, it serves grade nine to twelve students. It is located in the South-west of Dog City, and it serves five relatively wealthy neighbourhoods. Over recent years, the school has continued to contend with decreasing enrolment because of the gradual aging of the region, and a lack of development space for expansion of this part of Dog City. Most students come from middle class to "well-off" families. St. Mark was established to assist parents in the development of their children in spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social growth, and to create and sustain a school community inspired by the Gospel. As well, St Mark aims at relating all of creation to the Good News of salvation in order that the knowledge students acquire of the world around them, and about life and people is enlightened by their Catholic Faith. As a Catholic school, St. Mark seeks to inculcate students with Gospel values of justice, freedom, and charity. To emphasize the Christian character and community spirit of the school, there is a school prayer that reminds students and staff that the school exists to promote love, and by so doing, establish a bond with home, school, and church. St Mark is a designated French bilingual high school committed to assist students become fluent in both official languages of Canada. The school has 47 teachers, 14 teaching assistants, 18 support staff, and close to 700 students. Academic programs to meet the needs of all students, regardless of ability, are offered. All students study Christian ethics, which is compulsory at each grade level.

The main entrance to the school is designed to represent open arms welcoming each and every one to St. Mark. On entering the school through the main doorway, one notices showcases that display major events, upcoming or past happenings in the school, and around the world. For example, the showcases display things about Advent and Christmas during the advent season, or exhibit successes chalked up by the school in various activities including sports. Past the showcases is a large fountain area. Above the fountain area is a meeting space with tables and chairs,

and directly behind the meeting area is the large commons area: the most favourite gathering place for students. The commons area is a wide-open space in the building, serving multiple purpose. There were two lecture theatres and a drama room with collapsible walls that could fold open to the students' commons area. The roof of the commons has 16 skylights bathing the school in natural light. The commons is also used as a cafeteria for students and a place for socializing.

The administrative offices are to the right, as one enters through the main entrance of the school. The principal's office, which is always open to everyone, has large windows facing both the outside of the building and the hallway. Along the western wall, and on the floor of the principal's office are a rock, a pot of gold, a towel, and a servant-leadership bowl, which explained, represent the concept of viewing leadership in St. Mark as being based on the leadership style of Jesus. The rock represents Peter, the rock foundation of leadership in the Bible, the servant-leadership bowl and towel signifying the washing of the feet of followers, and the pot of gold symbolizing the treasure in St. Mark hidden in the students and staff that needs nurturing for full growth. As explained to us, these symbols signify the objective of the person occupying the principal's office: service in light of the Gospel.

The assistant principals' offices are further inside the main office that has four desk areas for four administrative assistants. On the wall adjacent to the main office is a portrait of the clergyman in whose honour the school was built. Other portraits include past prime ministers of Canada and the Queen, showing the importance of the past and its relevance for the present. There is also a peace pole, with peace translated into ten different languages from around the world, depicting the tolerance for diversity. At St. Mark the student population is represented by the 30% of the students coming from non-Caucasian backgrounds. Included in this figure are 10% each of aboriginal and students who take English as a second or additional language. Near the peace pole is the school emblem with a picture of the Cross signifying that St. Mark is a school community founded on Gospel values.

Classrooms are located on both levels of the school. The classrooms and the library (with over 20 computers) on the second floor have large windows allowing people to look down into the commons area situated in the middle of the horse-shoe shaped school building. The school has one gymnasium, a multipurpose room (for classes and for wrestling practice) and a workout room equipped with treadmills, weights and workout benches. The staff room is located on the first floor. It is unable to seat the entire staff at one a time, but staff gathers there at various times to eat, chat, and socialize. The school was designed without a chapel, as students are encouraged to make use of a nearby parish church in the event they feel the need to pray, and provided the parish church is not in use for other purposes.

Community building activities include athletic, social and recreational activities, which are designed to encourage participation and to give everyone a chance to belong and to build a strong school spirit. Some of the social activities students participate in include: the school choir, coffee house, dance, debating club, drama productions, costume and makeup club, social justice group, video club, and year book club.

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Freed from the safety concerns of St. Jerome, St Mark's community prides itself in its increasing students' academic achievement attributable to improved student attendance rates. In addition to its relatively safe location, St. Mark benefits from a cooperation program with Dog City Police Service which provides community policing and serves as a resource to the whole school community. Inter alia, the goals of this cooperation program include developing positive attitudes and relationships between students, youth, and police, helping create a safe environment, and the police serving as positive role models to students, and to help students integrate school life with public services.

JUST A SCHOOL DAY IN THE LIFE OF DENIS

We pick up on Denis' day at a 9:15 AM staff meeting. Students were talking gleefully in the corridors on the way to the classrooms. Two students walked towards Denis' office and were disappointed he was not there. They told us they had come to say hello to him before going to their classrooms. As they walked towards the students' common area, they saw another student whose facial expression reflected sadness. They engaged him in a conversation in an attempt to cheer him up, but failing, changed their direction towards the students' common area, went up the northwest staircase, making their way to their classrooms.

There was prayer over the intercom at 9.30 am, led by the school chaplain. Students and staff stood still during the prayer as there was a petition for world peace. The prayer exhorted all students to be kind to one another, and eschew bullying each other, especially the weak among them, so as to make the school a safe and happy place for all. Denis, explained that he sometimes took turns in leading prayers over the intercom, in order to teach students the importance of prayer. As teachers made their way to the classrooms, one of them remarked, "The meeting was exciting, we are being challenged to think a lot about the good of our students as well as the continual development of our school community."

Denis entered his office and prepared himself for a meeting downtown organized by a charitable non-profit organization of which he was a member. This organization concerned itself with youth at risk, mostly Aboriginal children who, according to Denis, were quite often left to flounder. Denis explained that the organization serves as a voice for disadvantaged children. Before leaving, Denis informed the two assistant principals of his temporary absence from the school.

At 10.45 a.m., Denis returned from the meeting, entered his office. Before sitting in his chair, he accessed messages left on his voicemail, and immediately started answering the messages that needed a reply. After replying to the voicemail messages, he settled at his computer to reply to the e-mails. In between replying to his e-mails, Denis explained what the staff meeting held before 9.30 that morning was about. Discussions at the meeting were a part of the school system's continuous improvement framework and focused on the development of long term students' and staff faith formation, improved social and personal values and skills for well being and citizenship for students, improved participation and outcomes for First

Nations and Métis students in school programs, improved student learning outcomes in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Questions the meeting sought to answer were:

- Are teachers sorting students or helping all students to succeed?
- Do students reach their potential?
- Do teachers keep data in order to better help students?
- Do teachers agree they should make students want to be in school?
- Do teachers and students participate in various school activities, and have a sense of community and belonging?
- Do students have improved social skills? Are they helped to develop positive relationships with each other and with the larger school community?
- Do teachers know what can be done differently for the success of students? and
- Do teachers know that “learning for all means success for all?”

In answer to our question about the reason for these objectives and questions, Denis argued that the questions served to define what stewardship is all about. Stewardship implies having concern for students’ success, while at the same time ensuring that teachers give the right inputs to make students’ success possible. Students, according to Denis, are encouraged to be in school if teachers create the necessary environment for them in their classrooms. Denis further explained that leadership is not just about taking care of the strong, but the weak as well, because that is what community is about. School communities can become stronger if students are helped to develop social skills in healthy relationships. A strong school community is one that knows how to care for its weak members to make them feel they belong. Leadership involves serving the needs of followers, and that is the reason students must be helped to reach their potential. According to Denis, to help students succeed involves catering to their different needs because each student is unique and therefore we cannot have one-size-fit-all as a means of solving their problems. Denis also believes that leadership is about being fair. That is the reason he takes special interest in seeing to it that teachers keep helpful data about students. Denis firmly believes that as a school leader, community building is important, and, that is possible if teachers and students are encouraged to get involved in the community building activities of the school.

In course of observing Denis and listening to his discussions with teachers, it was clear that he had a great passion for protecting and doing his best to see to it that students succeed. Asked whether this observation about him was true, Denis agreed, and said that he has been accused of overprotecting students, but that was an accusation he takes proudly, because students need that special care in order to mature into responsible citizens. In his view, what students truly are today not what they will become four or ten years down the road after they have graduated from school.

At 11.00 a.m., Denis left his office for a department heads’ meeting in one of the meeting rooms on the second floor. The meeting, chaired by Denis, started with a prayer led by one of the department heads. The department heads of St. Mark whose opinions Denis highly respected, served as an advisory council to him. One of the

department heads volunteered to be the secretary for the day. The secretary role for this committee was rotated to give a chance to everyone to be very involved in the affairs of the committee, both during and after meetings. The meeting proceeded in an open and friendly atmosphere. Department heads shared ideas, and clearly demonstrated respect for the opinions of each other by giving everybody the chance to talk and express ideas exhaustively. Denis mostly listened and gave inputs where necessary. He showed himself to be an excellent collaborator as he accepted suggestions while presenting proposals other staff members had expressed to him prior to the meeting. As the discussions went on, Denis kept stressing the importance of innovativeness and creativeness in the various subject areas to make learning interesting for the students. The meeting with the dual theme of instructional leadership, and students' success at all levels, lasted 35 minutes. At the end of the meeting, Denis expressed his confidence in the wonderful work the department heads were doing for the academic development and success of students. The department heads responded with gratitude for the support he has continued to give them in their effort, not only to making the school a great place of learning, but also an environment of good relationships among staff, students, and parents.

At 11.40 a.m., before returning to his office from the meeting, Denis made a quick tour of the second floor, and freely greeted the teachers and students as he passed by. Back in his office, he answered a voicemail message left by a superintendent to whom some parents had made the complaint that they were not getting through to the school with their phone calls. Denis immediately called on the administrative secretaries to discuss the problem. During the discussion, it became clear that the fault was from the cyber system, and not from the school. According to Denis, sometimes there are accusations similar to the present one which from all indications, seem credible. Those are the accusations for which a lot of patience is needed in order to build trust. Some parents, in an impatient state, will verbally attack whoever is receiving their call, and normally it is the principal. Denis indicated that in such instances absolute patience is needed in order to satisfy angry parents with explanations. As Denis was busy talking with the secretaries, a student entered his office to get a paper clip. As observers, spontaneous reaction to the student questioned, "Why do you come to the principal's office rather than getting the paper clip elsewhere?" She sharply replied that, "Denis is always glad to help us, that is why I came to his office."

At lunch hour, Denis went to the staff room for lunch with the staff members present in the room. During lunch, discussions between Denis and teachers were cordial and touched on students' welfare, football, and sporting activities. Most of the students who stayed in the school to eat their packed lunch gathered in the students' commons where they talked and shared jokes. Other students seemed to be busy getting ready for the next class after a quick lunch.

At 12.30 p.m., Denis got back to his office and sat down to answer e-mails and to do some paper work. As Denis worked, staff members and students periodically interrupted for a casual visit or serious discussion. Denis seemed never too busy to answer questions from students or staff members.

At about 1.30 p.m., Denis made another tour of the school, again greeting teachers and students in the classrooms. As he entered the industrial arts room, students worked indefatigably with their tools as if to show their principal how hard they were working. Amidst the noise of their machinery, they waved at Denis, as if to say, "We are enjoying ourselves here." The response from the teachers and students, as Denis went from classroom to classroom was an impressive cordiality between the students, teachers, and their principal. It was evident that they were pleased with the visit of their servant-leader principal. As Denis walked towards the classroom of the special needs students, he picked up garbage in the corridors and threw it in the garbage container, before entering their classroom. The students exhibited a fondness for him as most of them wanted to speak to him all at once. Denis approached two of the special needs students who were rather reserved and asked how they were doing. They replied with a broad smile. Denis, later on, explained that as much as he was able, he made frequent visits to the special needs students to assure them of his support and care.

From the special needs students, he entered the classroom of the students of English as a Second Language (ESL). In the presence of the teacher of the ESL students, Denis showered praises on her as very hard working and innovative. This was as a result of the quick level of progress of the ESL students. The students were happy to see Denis, and proud to demonstrate their progress at learning English. Denis congratulated them, and they responded showing that they were happy and grateful for his visit.

Denis was back in his office at 1:50 p.m., and, a teacher came in to offer suggestions about the staff meeting that had taken place in the morning. Apparently, Denis had told them at the staff meeting to keep pondering over the morning's discussions to encourage them to come up with suggestions that would be collated and later discussed. Denis listened carefully, and noted her suggestions in his diary. Soon after that discussion, another teacher came in to talk about some of the school programs and related this conversation to the success of students. In the course of their discussions, Denis mentioned that in his mind, students' success was a very broad concept. He indicated that he believed that getting students to be in school was part of success. Achieving 95% attendance average was an indication of success. But a crucial question, according to Denis was where do students go after they finish school? Are students helped enough to face the challenges of the future? He continued, "The impact of Catholic school education does not fully happen until kids begin having their own kids. To talk about hope for kids is to talk about hope and resurrection."

This discussion revealed that Denis was interested in pastoral care for students. More formally, pastoral care is a teacher mentorship program that aims at helping students in their day-to-day school life. Additionally, in the case of events such as death in a family, students receive the care and support they need from the teacher who is their assigned mentor. According to Denis, the pastoral care of students implies two basic questions: First, in the event students encounter problems of any kind, is there an adult in the school community to help them through those problems? Second, how are students helped to live positively in the school and in the future?

As Denis settled to work at his computer and send out replies to e-mails, he noticed a retired staff member approaching the school's main entrance. The woman had served the school for many years. Denis promptly left the office, and enthusiastically hugged her while congratulating her on the success of her transition to retirement and her valuable service to the St. Mark school community. The former staff member expressed gratitude to Denis for the wonderful working relationships she had working with him. Back in his office, Denis was engaged in signing bills and doing some more paper work. Phone calls interrupted the paper work from time to time, but he responded respectfully and patiently. When asked why he took his time to patiently talk on the phone, he commented, "The way you talk to a parent or anybody from outside the school, either presents a good or bad image of the school to that person, and that is why it is important to communicate well, and patiently."

The paper work done, he went to the chaplain's office to discuss a suggestion made by a staff member that students be encouraged to hold hands during a once-a-month prayer with students lining the hallways in a symbolic community circle. Denis listened attentively to the chaplain's concerns, discomfort, and disapproval of the suggestion, and requested the chaplain try the suggestion.

At this time, the husband of one of the teachers entered the chaplain's office, and after some teasing and sharing of jokes, Denis made positive comments about how hard working his wife was as a teacher on staff. The man obviously looked pleased about the praises showered on his wife. On his way back to the office, Denis chatted briefly with a teacher about some geese that had been sighted in great numbers in some farmlands known to both of them. Continuing towards his office, he greeted students who graciously replied to the greeting. One of the students later on remarked, "Denis is gentle and kind, we feel comfortable in his presence."

At 2.35 p.m., we questioned Denis about why he left his door open when he was busy working. Denis replied, "I leave my door open so that people can see I am open to receive them." After working for a while, Denis made another tour of the school. In course of the tour, he saw a student seated near his office. He approached her, and asked whether she needed help. The student brightened up and indicated that she did not need anything, in particular; she was just fine sitting down quietly. Denis asked her not to hesitate to call him if she needed help. During the tour, Denis again called in at the classroom of the special needs students. Denis said, "They have to be given the assurance that somebody is always looking out for them, and available to them."

Back in his office, a parent phoned, and in an aggressive tone complained about his inability to get his calls through to the school. Denis explained the problem to the satisfaction of the parent, and patiently assured him that all was being done to rectify the situation. The students' school day ended at 3.05 p.m., and as students left the building some were heard wishing Denis good-bye as he waved back.

The impression of Denis after the day's observation is that appearances can be deceptive. This is because, in his imposing giant-like physical build, there is a gentle, kind hearted, considerate father of children and staff. One would think an angry word would never pass Denis' lips. Upon making him aware of this impression, he replied, "I can be pretty straightforward when it becomes necessary, otherwise, I would not

be doing this school community any good.” On the whole, our exposure to Denis observed a man of integrity whose amiable character and loving kindness to students and staff distinguished him as a servicing person to his school community.

MAJOR SERVANT-LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS EXHIBITED
BY THE TWO PRINCIPALS

As we have said, the student populations in the two schools reflected the local area. Poverty issues were of a greater concern to the St. Jerome school than the St. Mark School which was based in a more stable and affluent community; though they had their share of the problems amongst teenage students. Both school communities had similar goals and objectives based on the Gospel. To achieve these, the school leadership placed a premium on community building according to the leadership style of Jesus Christ, as they had come to understand these.

Observing Angela and Denis revealed very different personalities. They both exhibited servant-leadership characteristics that indicated they cared for members of their school communities and were passionate about community building. Both manifest a strong sense of collaboration, and respect for members of their school communities. This is a probable explanation for the trust they seemed to enjoy from their followers. In addition, it was clear from formal and informal meetings and their interactions with members of their communities that both were committed to helping people grow. Furthermore, in their exercise of leadership, both seemed to suggest that it was not about power or position, but rather leadership was about service to the community. Denis and Angela seemed to be silently, yet resoundingly, sending one clear message: “my approach to leadership is about relationships and being a source of hope.”

Here, now, is a synopsis of the themes identified during the entire observation period with these leaders, including the two days we have just detailed.

OBSERVED THEMES OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

In light of our observations of school life of Angela and Denis, major themes were identified: (a) service to the school community, (b) relationships, (c) care for students, staff, and parents, (d) prayer life, (e) collaboration and empowerment of students and staff, (f) growth of people, and (g) community building.

Service to the School Community

According to Greenleaf (1977), the deliberate choice of the servant-leader is to serve others. Over the four weeks (two with each) a recurring theme of commitment to serving their school communities was seen. Angela and Denis worked hard to keep their school communities fulfilling their schools’ objectives. Both reflected the spirit of hard work and sacrifice of their own mothers, who they said imprinted them with who they had become as adults and educations. Both principals worked diligently at their computers, replying to their mail, sending out replies and information by e-mail.

According to Angela, she received an average of 50 e-mails per day, more than two thirds of which were school-related. Denis received between 50 to 70 e-mails daily with a little more than half related to his community involvement activities and administrative duties. In response to a question about her religious commitment to the work, Angela said, "It is not about me, it is about the students, somebody had to work hard to make me what I am, I need to give that back in service to this school community." We'd like to harken back to some observations made earlier.

Observing Angela working in collaboration with one of the school secretaries at her computer, while leaving her chair for the secretary to get better access to the computer and Denis exhibited service to his school community by the interaction between him and his staff members are examples of their approach to service. Denis either invited a staff member to his office for discussions or went to the staff member's classroom. He explained that serving the school community is more important than the location of the discussion.

On three different days, Denis was observed picking up garbage in the impeccably clean corridors as he made a tour of the school. Denis viewed his action of picking up garbage in the corridors of setting an example for students that no job was unimportant to engage his (or their) attention. Denis was probably thinking of the power of good examples and role modelling. Denis was willing to exhibit service in the little things; he was equally capable of showing the same in bigger things. Picking up garbage in the corridors was a sign to students that it wasn't just the caretaker's job but, as a community, everybody should show concern. Each person is responsible to help keep the school clean.

We observed Denis and Angela helping with decorations of their schools in readiness for visitors and parents. For Denis, the decorations were meant to welcome parents to the school for the ceremony of the principal's honour roll. Angela was preparing to welcome students from neighbouring schools for a talk on biotechnology and environmental protection by the first female Canadian astronaut. Both principals demonstrated that cooperation with others makes service easier.

Prior to staff and committee meetings, Denis and Angela helped in the arrangement of chairs and tables. Observing them at meetings, and their openness to suggestions and discussions, both Angela and Denis' were concerned about the success of their school communities, as long as the opinions expressed helped the general purpose. In a single day, both made several whole school tours, keeping themselves aware of what was happening throughout the school facility at different times. During these informal tours, they spontaneously engaged both students and teachers in conversations as if to say, "I am always prepared to listen to you." The spontaneity with which they related with staff and students seemed to indicate that, for them, servant-leadership was not an attitude you put on when convenient and rejected when not convenient. In a phrase, both were "present to their community."

At a professional development seminar Angela served muffins and goodies to teachers during the coffee break. When asked why she did not request one of her teachers to do this, she replied, "That is the reason for leadership; *service*." Both Angela

and Denis seemed to understand Autry's (2001) statement on the reason for service, reminiscent of Denis' observation that the more one served, the better one became at service.

The 'open door policy,' that both principals had, implied that people were always welcome into their offices and that a listening ear always awaited them. They explained that the reason for the 'open door policy' was to encourage students, staff, and parents to make their problems known before they got worse, their priority was not about their position, person, or the control of people, but about facilitation and service. Though service was the reason for their leadership, it would not have been possible without establishing healthy relationships with people.

Relationships as Foundation for Happier Community

Three quotations from Denis are exemplary of how both principals viewed relationships as important. Denis observed, "relationships are very important, contacting people makes a lot of difference," "it is important that we teach kids how to build strong relationships and ethics of living," and, "I do not care what you do in your class, what is your relationship with my daughter in your school or class?" He and Angela agreed that without relationships, the world would be a lonely place and meaningless. Both exhibited good relationships with their students, and staff. It was remarkable to hear them greeting students and staff as they walked in the corridors of their schools. Angela was always the first to greet a teacher or student before being greeted. Providing an explanation for being the first to greet, Angela said, it was because for some students, "just a simple good morning could be healing for them for the day if they have had a bad beginning of day." To both Angela and Denis, relationships serve as a reminder that one is not alone, there are others around who need to be acknowledged and cared for.

Students were happy to say 'hi' to either principal as they passed by their offices. A student who came to Denis' office to ask for a paper clip was asked why she came to his office, she replied that "[her principal] is always glad to help." The ease with which students approached Denis to say hello or ask questions suggested that his big and robust looking stature was not intimidating to them. A simple example of the good relationships was when a student asked him at lunch hour, "[Denis], what are you doing for lunch?" He replied with an entertaining joke that caused the student to burst out laughing. A student, when asked about what she thought of Denis, unhesitatingly said, "[Denis] is approachable. He is a father to us here in this school." Evidently, Angela and Denis combined formal and informal interactions well. They contended that a leader's task is not only related to formal relationships, but also informal relationships. These are equally important because formal relationships can only be skin-deep. Their relationships with students and staff were characterized by humility in their ways of communication and acceptance of both staff and students.

Staff responded well to both Angela and Denis during and outside staff meetings. Angela observed, "Leadership is no more the boss telling everybody what

they should do, it is about relationships.” On one occasion, as Angela entered the staff room for morning prayer, a staff member, after exchanging greetings with her, directly said to her, “My favourite principal,” which brought a pleasant bright smile to Angela’s face. The existence of a healthy relationships between these principals and their staff was evidenced by the trust some had as evidenced by their discussing their personal and private matters. A teacher in St. Jerome, after a discussion said to Angela, “I have not mentioned this problem to anybody other than you.”

As both principals walked the corridors of their schools, and went from classroom to classroom, there was an aura of good feeling and cordial relationship with the students and staff. They seemed to have either a joke or a kind word for one or the other student, or staff member. Although unspoken, both principals seemed to say that *someone watched over me and cared for me when I was growing up, I in turn will watch over and care for you*. The good relationships extended to the secretarial staff, and reflected through the affectionate reference to Angela by one of them as ‘honey.’ Angela and Denis manifested inspiring relationships with their assistant principals by the respect they accorded them during their various interactions. Both expressed confidence in the leadership qualities of their assistant principals. An assistant principal expressed great satisfaction working with Angela, even though he acknowledged that he did not always agree with Angela on everything. In Angela’s presence, he teased; “Angela has got her own alphabet, for example ADZFTG.” By mixing up the proper order of the alphabet in his reference to Angela’s style of doing things, he was implying that, Angela gets things done not necessarily by following conventions, but through both formal and informal means. They both burst out laughing at that comment.

Servant-leadership did not imply absence of problems. Asked about difficulties, Denis said, “I have had to ask one or two teachers to leave this school in the last academic year or so, because they were not beneficial to this place, but I had to help them find new places where they could better fit in.” In a similar vein, Angela said, “You probably are lucky to be here at a time when I do not need to tell anybody to smarten up, but as I told you, I always do it respectfully.” Both agreed that people cannot be coerced into relationships, thus, they do the best they can at relationships, leaving constituents either to respond or not. Gleaned from observations we could conclude that servant-leadership is about being of service to constituents, providing them with hope, and helping them to grow, however, it would be wrong to think that it is all about being soft or being “nice” to people. Situations may require the application of tough love. The remarkable element of servant-leadership is respect for the person.

Care and Support for Students, Staff and Parents

Denis and Angela manifest admirable ways of supporting and caring for students, staff, and parents in ways that corroborated our interviews with other principals. Their work and commitment seemed to say that, *I am a principal today because of*

the care and support of my former principals; therefore, I work to give this same care back to this school community. Through a telephone conversation between Angela and a parent, it was obvious that she used to drive a student to and from school, because the parents of that student were unable to afford the bus pass for their child. On days when Angela was unable to make it for one or the other reason, she requested a teacher on staff to drive the student on their behalf. Angela explained the reason she drove the student: "I needed to do that so that she could have education, we need to look out for everybody." By driving the student to and from school, Angela demonstrated that servant-leadership, geared towards achieving success, involved looking after the needy in the school community as well.

You will recall us telling you about Angela demonstrating her care for a fifteen year-old student who had become pregnant. She was personally concerned and asked the school counsellors to do all they could to help the girl through her pregnancy. Before everything else, the first step was to re-assure the girl of the support of the St. Jerome school community to help her cope with the situation that she might be embarrassed about. The girl, being a recent immigrant to Canada, had little command of the English language, and was from a low-income home. Angela's care and support for students was further demonstrated when a 19 year old pregnant mother of two children who had been out of school for four years came seeking admission at St. Jerome. The reason for her choice of St. Jerome was the caring environment and the proximity of St. Jerome to the pre-school that her two children attended. Angela patiently, and with great interest, listened to her story. She agreed to admit her and directed her to the administrative secretary in charge of students' enrolment. After her departure, Angela thoughtfully commented, "We need to be sensitive enough to be able to help seemingly hopeless cases like this one." Angela observed that it takes vigilance and empathy to care for cases such as this 19 year old mother of two.

In a different school environment, Denis similarly demonstrated his care for his students via the devoted concern he showed toward a student walking alone through the corridors during break time. According to Denis, he took extra care and sufficient time to look out for this particular student because "he is a loner, and just needed that extra care." As well, Denis showed his concern for students when, upon seeing a student who looked sick sitting in the corridor adjacent to his office, asked what he could do to help her. The student immediately brightened up and her somber mood faded away. She thanked Denis, and indicated that she was fine. Denis explained that as a leader, extra steps are needed to reach out to individual students on most days, because without doing that some students will be missed and uncared for. The care Denis received as a child from his single mother and older brother seemed to play out by the concern he showed for students individually.

The impression of students about Denis yielded the response: "Denis is a father to us, and we know that." The student pointed out that Denis always encouraged them to be the best they could be. As well, he did not allow bullying or disrespect among students. Denis' care and support for students were also demonstrated through his visit to the Farm school located on the North Eastern side of Dog City, about

45 minutes away from St. Mark. The Farm school was a self-directed place of schooling for students who have been relocated as a result of their inability to fit in the normal school system. Another place Denis mentioned was a Catholic alternate high school where an assistant principal from St. Mark took a student for admission. Accordingly, the Farm school and Alternate school were places equipped with facilities for catering to the needs of students having problems adapting to the normal school system.

With regard to staff, Denis and Angela were equally caring and supportive. “I just want you to know how much I appreciate that,” said one of the secretarial staff to Denis for granting her compassion leave to visit and care for a sick family member. According to Denis, “Little acts of kindness and understanding of staff members’ difficulties and problems help increase their output.” One of the assistant principals who discussed his mother’s health problems with Denis received words of sympathy. Denis promised to be a support as much as he was able, and encouraged the assistant principal not to hesitate to ask for some days off in order to see his mother if that became necessary.

Angela, like Denis, cared for and supported the staff through her willingness to grant some days off to staff members who needed it. Angela readily granted a few days’ compassionate leave to a teacher whose mother was getting ready to undergo surgery. As she said, if they dedicate their time and energies serving the school community so well, they must be helped in ways that enable them to better serve the community. Before staff members leave on compassion leave, Angela always makes sure they find someone to stand in for them while they are away.

In addition to encouraging teachers to take initiative, Denis and Angela pointed out that they were open to welcoming innovative ideas regarding teaching in new and interesting ways that would make school attractive for students. According to Angela, she would always remain grateful to her former principals who did not frown upon her good initiatives and innovative ways of teaching. Inspired by her former principals, she had been led to keep encouraging teachers on her staff to be ready to share novel ways of teaching with their colleagues. Both her and Denis agreed that new ways of teaching had a two way benefit; they benefited teachers as well as students. First, teachers improved their teaching skills through sharing their teaching talents, and second, new ways opened the minds of students.

Prayer Life in the School Community

The African saying that *the crab does not beget a bird* comes in handy at this point. Angela’s and Denis’ backgrounds, coming from fervent Catholic families, may have been influential in the way the two principals showed concern for prayer in their schools. The concern for prayer raises a key question: Is prayer a *sine qua non* for servant-leadership? The importance of prayer in the life of a servant-leader may be a debatable topic; but in the Catholic school community, prayer is an integral part of the life of a Catholic school community (*Lumen gentium*, 1964). Daily prayer over the intercom, before the beginning of classes, and at the beginning of staff meetings

provide school life with one of its forms. On occasions, prayer and reflections over the internet served as a means of instruction and community building, as the carefully chosen words of prayer were credited with inspiring both students and staff to action. According to Denis, on a few occasions, staff members had expressed appreciation to him regarding the words of meditation which he had sometimes articulated over the intercom.

Both Angela and Denis often promised to pray for staff members who were undergoing various problems and difficulties, thus indicating their care and support for them and the spirit of community building. On more than two occasions, Angela and Denis were heard telling staff members: "I will pray for you" or "Let us pray over it." In the Catholic school context, resorting to prayer or promising one's prayerful support implies: *I empathize, I understand, I care, I am with you not only now, but until a solution is found.* In St. Jerome, the staff gathered for voluntary prayer on Monday mornings at the beginning of the week. Attendance at such prayer times was not obligatory. During staff prayer time, all present were offered the opportunity to mention names or intentions they wished to be prayed for. Staff members took turns mentioning prayer intentions, and these were prayed for as a community. Angela led one of the two prayer sessions during the two weeks observation period.

Responsibilities at staff prayer sessions were rotated with no single person dominating the sessions. Even though, unspoken, prayer life seemed to help build community in both schools. Communal prayer brought them together, and provided them with ways of sharing their concerns. The importance attached to prayer, and the conscious effort made to promote a life of prayer, as observed in both St. Jerome and St. Mark schools, support the view of six principals, interviewed, data that faith expressed dependence, through prayer, in Jesus Christ is the basis of their servant-leadership.

Other instances of prayer life appeared in the form of retreats organized for the grade nine students at the start of their school year. At St. Jerome, the grade nine students were bussed to a nearby parish for their full-day retreat which ended with a prayer session directed by one of the priest chaplains of the school. At St. Mark, a half-day retreat was organized in a nearby elementary school. At both retreats, the major emphasis was in the importance of each student helping to build a healthy school community, and of supporting and respecting one another. Closing the retreat of St. Mark grade nine students, Denis reminded students to view their new school as a Christian environment where, as a school community, support for one another was paramount.

Collaboration and Empowerment of Followers

The credibility both principals enjoyed in their school communities seemed to have partly stemmed from their promotion of collaboration as an essential ingredient in servant-leadership. Servant-leadership without collaboration is comparable to benevolence without a consideration of the interest of the constituent. In course of observing Angela, she was asked: What indicates that you are a collaborator? Angela

explained, “The vision of St. Jerome for the academic year was not my unilateral decision. It was arrived at through the input of all the staff, secretaries, caretakers, teachers, teacher assistants, and the suggestions of students.” This is how Angela demonstrated her ability to collaborate. A school district asked to share ideas at a professional development day, with a focus on her and her staff’s efforts to re-culture of St. Jerome. She worked through the talk with her two assistant principals and other staff members. The re-culturation process was embarked upon as a result of the loss of a little bit over 35% of the St. Jerome students’ population to a new school in Dog City. There was a need to develop new ways of adjusting to the new reality. The processes of adjusting to the new reality were termed re-culturation by the St. Jerome staff. Angela and her teachers were called upon to share their thoughts with other teachers on their success in dealing and living through the new changes. Together with the staff, they agreed to divide the talk into five parts. Angela and one of the assistant principals delivered their share of the talk, with three other staff members playing their part. The talk was successfully delivered as a group effort, and was greatly appreciated by the teachers from other schools. During the talk, Angela clearly stated that their presentation was a group endeavour. She admitted that the success of the talk would not have been possible without the wonderful ideas and collaboration of her staff. Angela further explained that getting everybody on board, as demonstrated during the preparation for the talk, was one of the ways to building a stronger school community where everybody shared ownership of events and happenings in the school. The healthy collaboration between Angela and her staff brings to mind the saying: *divided we fall, united we stand*. Interpreted in leadership terms, one of the servant-leader’s greatest tasks is expressing in a timely fashion the respect held for the contributions of others in community building.

In deference of one of the secretarial staff whose expertise Angela highly respected, she said more than once, “When it comes to help, we grab her to help.” Perhaps re-enacting the influence of her siblings on her, by being helped to look beyond herself, Angela firmly believed that success in leadership involved the acknowledgement and the ability to tap the gifts of constituents for the good of the school community. Denis similarly demonstrated his love for collaboration during discussions with staff members. His gift at the art of listening was obvious to all. He shared his own suggestions while asking for and listening to the opinions of staff members at staff meetings. This commended him as a passionate collaborator. Furthermore, his willingness to ask for evaluation from staff members either in writing or in face-to-face discussions was additional supportive evidence of his love for collaboration. As well, Denis manifested his preference for collaboration when he engaged the school chaplain in a discussion of the suggestions some teachers had put forward with regard to the once-a-month community prayer where students held hands. Denis listened carefully to the concerns of the chaplain and suggested that they give the proposal a try. Denis was elated when the trial was a resounding success on the very first day of its implementation. This was a successful mediation of collaboration that happened to work out. Commenting on that success on another day, Denis said, “We should

not always be afraid to try new things. Dictatorship is quick and reduces discussion time, but it does create discontent. Collaboration, even though longer, brings about solutions that last.”

Both Angela and Denis believe that collaboration is indispensable if followers are to grow and develop as leaders. Collaboration offered their constituents the opportunity to share and discuss ideas, and in the process boost their confidence for leadership. Both expressed their pride in the Catholic school system as a system that had given them the privilege of their education. In recognition of this opportunity, they felt it as part of their responsibility to help groom leaders to keep the system alive when they would relinquish their own leadership positions one day.

Growth of People

This next section conveys a selection of the ways by which Angela and Denis promoted the growth of people. Angela and Denis believe in the importance of every individual's input as one of the ways to help followers grow. They reflected this conviction through the respect they accorded the opinions of staff and students in their school communities. Further, Angela and Denis' interest in the growth of people, especially their staff and students, was demonstrated in the positive comments they made about their staff. For example, as a teacher left Angela's office, he remarked "You cannot talk or relate with Angela and continue to see only impossibilities, for Angela, there is almost always a way out." The positive effects of such affirmative comments on the staff member making the remarks cannot be underestimated. Furthermore, the persuasive power of those words in nurturing the growth of leadership qualities in constituents can be nothing less than positive.

On several occasions, Angela and Denis commented on the good work of some of their staff and assistant principals and that this performance showed much promise of excellent future leaders. Denis demonstrated the genuineness of his comments when, during the ceremony of the principal's honor roll at St. Mark, an assistant principal led the ceremony with Denis helping to distribute certificates to deserving recipients. As the reader will recall, Angela showed the same trust in her assistant principals by asking one of them to lead the occasion of welcoming visitors to St. Jerome and this person also presided over the activities and the presentation made by a famous female Canadian astronaut. During our observations, we noted that staff members reported committee activities to Angela and Denis. For Angela, allowing others to lead, not only at minor events, but also on major occasions (as in the case above) were opportunities for their growth and development.

In addition, Angela and Denis manifested their commitment to the growth of their staff by asking them personal questions and requesting responses in writing. After receiving the written responses, they made time to talk individually with each staff member, and to direct and support them towards meeting their goals.

Positive and encouraging words to students were additional evidence of the commitment of Angela and Denis to the growth of their students. To a student

who had won a prestigious scholarship, Angela said, “I knew you could do it. There is nothing impossible if you set your mind to it.” As we read this comment here – it may seem cliché but it wasn’t received this way at all. Both Angela and Denis showed their support for extra-curricular activities of students as these brought out the social skills of students and helped them in their self-actualization. They respected the views and suggestions of students’ representative councils and encouraged them to develop decision-making skills that they would find valuable in the future.

Community Building

According to Angela, her efforts at community building were based on trust. She reflected trust through her encouragement of staff and students in the following words, “I trust you can do it.” Angela assured the staff of her trust when they were charged with the responsibility of a committee or when they were new at teaching a subject. Students experiencing difficulties in a subject area were equally encouraged with the words “I trust you can do it.” Angela believed community building was possible where there was a trust relationship between leader and followers, because, with the existence of trust, people feel comfortable and are attracted to relate more easily with one another. She pointed out that trust was reciprocal. However, it could only be established through a period of working together. It is a kind of a give-and-take experience.

Angela’s commitment to community building was reflected in her repetitive saying, to staff and students, that St. Jerome belonged to them all, and that their input was essential. She often repeated the school vision to students, staff, and visitors. The vision of the school community as a family with every individual being acknowledged as important, and having a role to play in making the family stronger contained the resounding idea for community building.

A test of strong community ties occurs when members leave the community and nostalgia draws them to return. Two students who left St. Jerome the previous year for another school came back for readmission. When asked the reason for returning to St. Jerome, they admitted that they found it to be a home where everyone looked out for each other. They said, “We are back because this is home where everybody looks out for the other.” Angela heartily welcomed them back and assured them that St. Jerome was their home where they will always be made welcome. She concluded by telling them, “I will look for you.” She told them those words to assure them that she would be available to them, and again emphasizing that servant-leadership did not only imply formal relationships, informal relationships counted as well.

St. Mark, unlike St. Jerome, did not have a yearly school vision, but operated from its mission statement, “Our goal is to create and sustain a school community enlivened by the Gospel.” Denis often repeated this mission statement to staff. His

passion for community building in St. Mark culminated in his asking staff members to evaluate the school. Some questionnaires used were:

- Is the mission statement of the school clear?
- Does the school provide a safe and orderly environment?
- Does the school provide a climate of high expectation?
- Does the school have a positive home and school relations?

The evaluation assigned the school a score of over 90% for its community building activities. One such activity is the distribution of Christmas hampers to needy families to inculcate in students concern for those less fortunate than themselves.

For the most part, this chapter has described a day in the life of each of the two principals and then we sorted through the 20 days of observations of these two principals to present a few themes that persisted through the observation period. We felt a second level of analysis (in chapter eight) might further illuminate the servant-leadership work of these two principals.

AN EVEN CLOSER LOOK AT THE TWO PRINCIPALS & THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

At the end of the four weeks' observation, we wondered whether or not the two principals differed in their exercise of servant-leadership apart from their difference in gender. Both principals espoused 'open-door' policies that meant that people were always welcome to their offices for discussions without necessarily booking formal appointments. Angela and Denis indicated that the open-door policy was useful for dealing with situations, and left no room for procrastination. As well, it was a reliable approach that ensured the free flow of information that engendered healthy communication between principal and constituents.

Both principals exhibited similarities in their manner of showing respect towards students, staff, and parents. For example, they both chose their words carefully when communicating with parents on the phone, and almost always ended up by thanking them for calling to express their concerns. Angela and Denis always had either a word of encouragement, or asked students how they were doing. Angela's words of encouragement to a student who had won a prestigious scholarship were noted and Denis' show of concern for a student he considered a loner, and another student who looked sick attest to their respect for their students pulled our attention. Furthermore, both principals showed their respect for students by allowing the grade 12 students to speak to their grade nine peers at their full-day and half-day retreats because the older students had valuable ideas to share with their younger colleagues as their contribution to the growth of their school communities. The relationships and mentorship both principals and their assistant principals was observed. The constant consultations that took place between principals and their assistant principals, and the leadership roles they were allowed to play were signs of mentorship and collaboration. Angela was always full of praise for her assistant principals and she believed they would be excellent principals in the future.

Both principals displayed similarity as good listeners and empathizers. As good listeners, they exhibited patience by allowing staff members, students, and parents to express themselves and asking for their opinions. The question, "*so what do you think?*" was common. Angela, the more exuberant of the two, sometimes interrupted the speaker with humour or a helpful comment while Denis, in his calm and gentle manner, waited until the speaker had finished his/her story before saying what he thought was helpful.

Both respondents exercised leadership in ways that showed that they were committed to collaboration and community building. Their involvement of staff in various discussions that centered on students' achievement, innovative teaching practices,

and their interactions with both staff and students indicated their dedication to collaboration and community building. Ways of promoting community building and collaboration included their presence in the staff room, participation in chats with staff members, asking staff members about students' progress, and requesting reports from committees for general staff discussion. The ease with which students approached both principals to greet them and vice versa as they toured their schools was an additional sign of community building where members showed mutual concern for one another. Prayer life punctuated the life of both schools. The spontaneity with which both principals promised to pray for people whose situations they thought needed prayers attest to their belief in Jesus Christ as the substance of their leadership. Both exhibited a sense of stewardship by the several tours they made of their schools each day. Through these tours, they made themselves visible to staff and students while creating the opportunity to talk one-on-one with them on the corridors and outside their offices.

However, Denis and Angela were different in their personalities. Angela was enthusiastic, exuberant, and full of energy and would occasionally be heard laughing joyfully in her office. Denis was rather gentle and calm. Both were excellent communicators and neither lacked humour as they interacted with staff and students. They differed in the way they welcomed people to their offices. Angela often left her chair and desk to meet visitors while Denis welcomed them with a broad smile while standing at his desk. Angela seemed to 'infect' students, and staff members with joy and liveliness. In his gentle demeanour, Denis on the other hand, seemed to welcome people in ways that assured them that he was there to care for everybody in the school community. When a staff member asked him "Have you got time for me?" Denis readily answered, "I have got time for you." Denis never seemed to stop talking about the need for mutual support as a useful engine for success for *ALL* students at St. Mark. He was happy to point out that Aboriginal students had a 95% success rate. Denis believed healthy relationships are the beginning of the achievement of success for all students.

As observations were mainly dictated by the activities taking place in each school during the observation period, Angela was especially committed to the growth of people. She exhibited this through her encouragement of staff members to take on various leadership roles such as chairperson of committees, encouragement of teachers to share best teaching practices, her sharing of a talk on the re-culturation of St. Jerome with her staff members, and allowing staff members to take turns in leading morning prayers in the staff room. Regarding her encouragement of staff to take initiatives and share best teaching practices with each other, she said in one of her talks to the staff, "I love listening to, I have tried this and it worked."

Denis, on the other hand, was a relationship-oriented servant-leader. He showed this through his interactions with the school chaplain. He demonstrated his high regard for relationships by respecting the chaplain's reservations about the suggestion put forth by a teacher that once in a month, students line the hallways holding hands in prayer in a symbolic community circle. According to Denis, he had the right to dictate what should be done, but as a servant-leader, he needed to respect the

chaplain's opinions to increase trust and good relationships between them. He felt that he had to persuade the chaplain to give the suggestion a trial. His frequent visits to the classrooms, and the response of both teachers and students to his words of encouragement were indications of the good relationships that existed between principal and the members of his school. We recall a parent's comment to Denis that she believed it was because of his good relationship with her son that had served as the genesis of great improvement in his academic work. Denis' own words and actions signify his love and belief in relationships. Denis occasionally bought lunch for his staff so that they could be together thereby, solidifying their relationships with one another.

Reflecting on experiences through the observation period, we conclude that despite differences in personality, the greatest demand of servant-leadership on school principals is service, care, and humility. Without these qualities, servant-leadership remains only a theory with no practical utility. These qualities help bring out the best in the servant-leader and his/her community, and legitimize the reason for leadership.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

After two weeks of observing Angela, we showed her a copy of a conceptual framework, depicting the ten servant-leadership characteristics and dimensions. Angela took a careful look at the conceptual framework, as if trying to memorize the servant-leadership characteristics. She asked for an explanation of the framework. After the explanation, we observed to her that she had exhibited many of these same characteristics and dimensions over period of our "shadowing" her. Angela looked with surprise, and exclaimed, *So you mean I exhibited all these characteristics? If I exhibit all these characteristics and dimensions in St. Jerome, then that is encouraging! I must be doing something good in this school.* Angela seemed to live out, on a day-to-day basis, the Biblical story of the last judgment in Matthew 25:31-46 where the people that showed kindness to their neighbours were not even aware of their good acts. This experience with Angela concurs with Spears' (2004) belief that the ten qualities of servant-leadership occur naturally within servant-leaders but can still be further developed and improved through learning and practice. We would now like to review and expound these characteristics of servant leadership to frame our understanding of the notion. Spears considered each of these to be essential in day-to-day practice.

Listening

Greenleaf's (1991) essay described the necessity of listening for understanding (Spears, 1998). The traditional heroic picture of leaders is that they possess the most important information and knowledge without need for listening to others (Murphy, 2000). Whatever a leader's level of scholarship, to discover, clarify, or refine his/her calling, he/she needs to start by listening (Spears, 1998). Spears defined listening as the ability "... to listen receptively to what is being said (and not said) ... coupled

with regular periods of reflection” (p. 4). Good listening involves an active effort to comprehend the world from another’s perspective (Covey, 1989). A true natural servant automatically responds to any problem by listening first (Greenleaf, 1977). Greenleaf reminded leaders that listening is not simply hearing with the ability to repeat, but to seek for meaning through verbal and nonverbal communication and observation skills. Listening is a critical way by which leaders demonstrate respect and appreciation for followers (Nix, 1997).

True listening builds strength in other people, and is about *doing* (learning listening skills) and *being* – bringing one’s full presence to the encounter (Frick, 2004). According to Spears (2004), “leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills” (p. 13) which are indispensable for the servant-leader, and need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others. Roethlisberger (1941/2005) confirmed the power inherent in listening. He said that often, “... people did not really want anything done about the things of which they were complaining. What they want was an opportunity to talk about their troubles to a sympathetic listener” (p. 163).

Sympathetic listening is an attitude “... rooted in a genuine interest in the viewpoints and perspectives of those served” (Spears, 2002, p. 229). According to Greenleaf (1977), it can be cultivated if the servant-leader is guided by St. Francis’ serenity prayer (as cited in Dollen, 1990): “O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek ... to be understood as to understand” (p. 60). In fact, Baggett (1997) pointed out that, “Great communicators are great listeners” (p. 111). A strong commitment to nonjudgmental listening is as crucial as the ability to speak persuasively and effectively. Greenleaf wrote that, “Long ago, I discovered that the depth to which someone will share what is going on in their lives, personal or professional, indicated the degree of trust they have in the listener” (p. 96). For Greenleaf, listening receptively to employees builds a high level of trust and autonomy within an organization.

According to Cashman (1999), for servant-leaders to be effective listeners to others, they need to practice listening to themselves in order to properly and authentically listen to others. Authentic listening requires listening only not to the words but also to the emotions, fears, and underlying concerns of oneself and of others. A servant-leader will authentically listen to others through a variety of communication skills that may include dialogue, coaching, reflective thinking, and/or enquiry (Greenleaf, 1991). To solve problems, and diagnose issues, a true servant-leader will first listen. According to Sofield and Kuhn (1995), “listening gives the leader access to people and their needs, hopes, weaknesses, and strengths. It reveals the state of the community” (p. 37). Listening benefits followers and when combined with regular periods of reflection also leads to the growth of the servant-leader (Spears, 2004).

Empathy

Spears (2004) pointed out that empathy is “... the capacity for participation in another’s feelings or ideas” (p. 137), and to accept and recognize people for their special and unique spirits. Empathy does not imply agreement, but the ability to understand

the other person (Fryar, 2001). Like listening, the ability to empathize builds trust among followers (Greenleaf, 1991) and requires receptive listening. An empathetic leader attracts people to him/her because people do not care about how much the leader knows until they know how much he/she cares (Maxwell, 1993). Studies have confirmed that when people believe that their leaders understand their concerns, they do their best to execute decisions, even those they disagree with, as "... grumbling and resistance tend to fade away" (Fryar, p. 57). Individuals naturally have personal problems and appreciate the leader who empathizes with their situation. For Sullivan (2004), "the servant-leader ... accepts people as they are and empathizes with them" (p. 72), however, he/she rejects substandard efforts, while being tolerant of mistakes and less-than-perfect performance.

Sullivan's (2004) explanation of the notion of servant-leadership does not imply a *laissez-faire* leadership style that over-empathizes with followers. According to Blanchard (1998), servant-leaders hold followers responsible for their actions while viewing mistakes as opportunities for growth and a departure from the status quo that unravels the talents individuals have for the good of the community. A good test of servant-leadership is the ability to tolerate the imperfections of followers, since anyone can lead perfect people (Greenleaf, 1995). Fryar (2001) agreed and argued further that the servant-leader with an empathetic spirit has a heightened awareness of the need for constituents to grow and mature gradually, and this leads to providing them with better service. In the Gospel of John 8:1-11, the adulterous woman was not condemned but was given the opportunity to do better. Schools are organizations of people with emotions that cannot be overlooked (Sharpe, 1995), so that staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders need to be related to as people, and empathized with.

Healing

Spears (2004) considered healing as one of the strengths of the servant-leader, because "many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to 'help make whole' those with whom they come in contact" (p. 13). Greenleaf (1991) explained that in life, people are constantly searching to make their lives more complete, more "whole." Although wholeness cannot be achieved completely, a servant-leader strives to achieve wholeness with those he/she serves. Leaders with healing qualities can tolerate and help followers in the journey of growth towards perfection. St. Benedict advising abbots about judgment of their followers, counseled that when they "... must pass judgment on a situation ... , the healing balm of compassion should be applied with hope that mercy will bring about its medicinal and salutary effect" (as cited in Polan, 2004, p. 93).

Sturnick (1998) observed that "... healing insight helps us to confront issues – exacerbated by personal and institutional transitions – of obsessive perfectionism and abhorrence of failure" (p. 191). Where students are still young and in their formative years, a principal's healing qualities are crucial in helping them through imperfections and failures.

Healing entails allowing followers to vent their frustrations and disappointments, especially, during resolution processes (Covey, 2002). According to Spears (1995), such processes employed in times of problem solving require the servant-leader's use of "grief work," that means working through the resentment and fear process with people. Parents, students, and staff occasionally face disappointing moments and conflicts that need careful resolution so as to keep their morale high. The way a leader resolves conflicts and minimizes stress enhances a community's ability to trust and build teamwork (Harvey & Drolet, 1994). Seeking to understand followers without prejudice is an important means of conflict resolution.

Bolman and Deal (2001) maintained that healing the soul is important if we are to arrive at the inner peace we aspire for. They argued that:

What's really missing is souls and spirit. Some people experience this gap as a haunting sense that somewhere along the line they got off track. They're working harder than ever, but they're not sure why, and they've lost touch with what's really important in life. For others, life feels like a forced march. They can never get off the treadmill, even though they don't know where they're going. . . . All these experiences are clues, symptoms of spiritual malaise – a hollow, existential vacuum that can be filled only by a greater attention to souls, spirit, and faith. (pp. 5–6)

In order to cure the spiritual malaise of followers, the servant-leader who has developed an admirable appreciation for the emotional spirit of others has a role when something traumatic happens in the life of constituents (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007). Such a leader helps the healing process, and is approached in the event of emotional crisis.

Awareness

Greenleaf (1991) defined awareness as "... opening wide the doors of perception to enable one get more of what is available of sensory experience and other signals from the environment than people usually take in" (p. 18). Awareness allows a leader to obtain an intuitive insight into the future of constituents. Freud's (1965) image of consciousness as an iceberg where nine-tenths of what we know lies below the waterline in the realm of the subconscious had a special appeal for Greenleaf (1977) who claimed that, we need to bring our hidden valuable resources above the waterline into conscious awareness so they can be useful. According to Frick (2004), "heightened awareness is not the same as intuition but is important for the intuitive leap" (p. 145) that directs the servant-leader to gain the confidence of his/her followers. General awareness and especially self awareness strengthen the servant-leader, and serve as assets in understanding of issues that involve ethics and values, and provide a more integrated, holistic approach to most situations (Spears, 2004). Awareness is not devoid of difficult challenges. Greenleaf (1995) observed:

Awareness is not a giver of solace – it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity. (p. 20)

According to Greenleaf, awareness helps the leader to acknowledge challenges and problems and to seek possible solutions through a sympathetic disposition that makes followers feel valued.

Within the school context, the most important role of a servant-leader is to serve the values and ideals that will shape a school community, because of a deep awareness of the students' and community needs. Leaders may observe their surroundings but miss opportunities by not looking deeply or widely enough to perceive the situation as a whole. They may troubleshoot problems, but fail in their complete resolution because of inadequate investigation. However, those with too broad a perception may have difficulty managing a situation, especially when they need to view themselves as part of it (Greenleaf, 1991). Awareness builds and clarifies value because it equips the leader to face the hassle of life with calmness when faced with stress and uncertainty (Greenleaf, 1995). In short, awareness creates a spirit of persuasion in the servant-leader, without use of coercion in administration.

Persuasion

Spears and Lawrence (2004) pointed out that by persuasion, "... the servant-leader seeks to convince others rather than to coerce compliance" (p. 14). Greenleaf (1991) used the term *persuasion* to differentiate leadership that relies on positional authority and coercion from leadership that operates through influence, example, and moral power. He believed that, "leadership by persuasion has the virtue of change by convincement rather than coercion" (p. 22). Greenleaf (1980) identified three modes of wielding power: coercion, manipulation, and persuasion. The first two of these are means to lead people to a predetermined direction. In contrast, the third is:

The critical skill of servant-leadership. Such a leader is one who ventures and takes the risks of going out ahead to show the way and whom others follow, voluntarily, because they are persuaded that the leader's path is the right one – for them, probably better than they could devise for themselves. (p. 44)

Persuasion unites people, creates opportunities for followers (Spears, 1995), and fosters development of mature consciences (*Congregation*, 1988). Servant-leaders lead by example and not by controlling others. They share their wisdom and seek to encourage understanding because persuasion is ethical use of power (Lopez, 1995). Servant-leaders use consensus building within groups and eschew coercion which is only effective as long as the power behind it lasts (Crom, 1998).

Steers and Black (1994) noted, "transformational or charismatic leaders inspire their followers to pursue the leader's clear vision for the company" (p. 420). Persuasion is a wise use of power as it can build autonomy and influence others by promoting credibility and building trust. Murrow (as cited in Kouzes & Posner, 1987) said, "to be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible, we must be truthful" (p. 15).

Conceptualization

Spears (1998) explained conceptualization as the capacity to dream great dreams, and to look at a problem (or organization) by conceptualizing it. This requires thinking further than day-to-day realities. This implies that the servant-leader, while living in the present must be able to distill and learn from past mistakes and also be capable of leading his/her followers on the right path (Greenleaf, 1995).

Greenleaf (1980) cited teachers as excellent examples of servant-leaders since they are great believers in the ability to conceptualize, and believe that what they teach affects their students' future success. He saw teachers as constantly serving the needs of students and giving hope to those without hope, so that they might work to make the world a better place.

Foresight

Foresight is the ability to look into the future, and is closely related to conceptualization (Greenleaf, 1991). Bolman and Deal's (1995) dramatic description of foresight is: "Without roots, plants perish. Without history, the present makes no sense, without a historical base a vision is rootless and doomed" (p. 145). Foresight permits the servant-leader to comprehend the lessons of the past, the realities of the present and the probable consequences of a decision (Spears & Lawrence, 2004). For Greenleaf (2002), "foresight is the 'lead' that the leader has. Once leaders lose this lead and events start to force their hand, they are leaders in name only" (p. 54). When leaders fail to foresee the future for the people and the organization, they 'seal our fate' as a society. In fact, change is only possible through foresight.

When misunderstanding exists regarding change, the leader with foresight must remember that painless change is an oxymoron (Reeves, 2002). Reeves pointed out that, "effective leaders know that their task is not to render a difficult task simple, but rather to render successful accomplishment of a difficult task more rewarding than avoidance." Foresight deserves careful consideration in the life of the leader as leaders need vision in order to keep their organizations on course.

Stewardship

Block (1993) defined stewardship as "... the willingness to be accountable for the well-being of the larger organization by operating in service, rather than in control of those around us. Stated simply, it is accountability without control or compliance" (p. 6). This implies choosing service to our customers, our work colleagues, our community, and the world at large, as well as broad vision of the world and of our responsibility to make it a better place for all.

As the reader will recall, Greenleaf (1977) posed the following questions: "Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants" (p. 13)? For Spears (1998), stewardship "... assumed first and foremost a commitment to serving the

needs of others. [Stewardship] also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion rather than control” (p. 5). Block (1993) advocated for a paradigm shift in leadership toward stewardship based on service. Stewardship of this kind involves honesty and accountability; it is not an entitlement (DePree, 1997). Degraaf, Tilley, and Neal (2004) argued that in today’s world, stewardship is often associated with environmental or financial responsibility, but it can be much more if we are willing to be accountable for something larger than just ourselves.

Leaders and followers are generally stewards or agents of the organizations they lead and are thus required to use their unique talents, skills, abilities, and gifts for the general good (Gaston, 1987). Greenleaf (1977) suggested that for servant-leaders to be effective, they need to look within themselves and effect changes that make them more effective. Stewardship means the growth and development of followers and also of the leader (Blanchard, 2002) as an asset to community building.

Building Community

Mcmanus’ (2006) observations on community building are excellent for Catholic high school principals who derive their values of leadership largely from religious beliefs. Mcmanus observed, “when we belong to God, we belong to each other. . . . without genuine belonging, without the power of authentic community, no one should believe that we have come to know God” (p. 16). According to Autry (2001), human beings have an innate desire to make their workplaces habitable for the human spirit, thereby making work itself meaningful in people’s lives. For Bolman and Deal (1995), “effective leadership is a relationship rooted in community. Successful servant-leaders embody their group’s most precious values and beliefs. Their ability to lead emerges from the strength and sustenance of those around them” (p. 56).

In building community, a servant-leader accepts and recognizes the uniqueness of the spirit, assumes good intentions, but does not condone inappropriate behaviours and/or mediocre performance (Spears, 2002). Bolman and Deal (2001) pointed out that leadership is a relationship rooted in community due to the leader’s embodiment of the group’s most precious values and beliefs. Hence, the servant-leader creates opportunities and alternatives from which constituents may choose and thus build up their autonomy for success (Greenleaf, 1977).

Success in leadership is similar to success in life and may be measured by how well people work and play together (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Working and playing together fills in for much that has been lost in recent human history because of the shift from local communities to large institutions as primary shaper of human lives (Spears, 2004). According to Spears, “this awareness causes the servant-leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution” (p.16). In this way, a sense of community and team spirit is created which builds and maintains the social support we need to flourish as communities (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). To this end, a servant-leader believes that a community is greater than the sum of its individual parts (Covey, 2004). Greenleaf advised,

“... to build a community, genuine care must be exercised because human service that requires love cannot be satisfactorily dispensed by specialized institutions that exist apart from community” (p. 38). With regard to schools, Sergiovanni (1994) stated, “community building must become the heart of any school improvement effort” (p. xi). The building of community in Catholic schools as an essential role of their participation in the community life of the Church was stressed by the Vatican II document *Gravissimum educationis* (1965) in which Catholic schools are viewed not merely as institutions but as essentially communities of people.

Any conflict during building a community must be considered to be healthy and be welcomed. When conflict arises, leaders have to learn to thrive on the tensions between their own calling and the voice of the people, because conflict situations are critical moments where leaders can learn to practice empathy (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Even during conflict, the servant-leader is to foster mutual respect and build a team where strength is made productive and weakness made irrelevant (Covey, 1991). Greenleaf (1977) taught that what is needed to build community is for enough servant-leaders to show the way.

Commitment to the Growth of People

Spears (2004) argued, “servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As a result, the servant-leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within the institution” (p. 15). However, according to Autry (2001), “regardless of structure, of environment, or of leadership style, our organizations remain fundamentally human organizations, which means they will reflect both the strengths and the frailties of the human condition” (p. 100). Similarly, for Covey (1991), “to affirm a person’s worth or potential, you have to look at him with an eye of faith and treat him in terms of his potential, not his behaviour” (p. 59). For Covey, believing in the unseen potential creates a climate for growth and opportunity, which depends on the servant-leader’s ability, emotional, psychological, and spiritual stamina to face the perplexing challenges of the human condition.

Spears (1998) counseled that, despite the weaknesses of followers, servant-leaders “... hold the vision of other people’s goodness for them until they discover it. This should sound familiar. We always knew that great teachers were those who saw more in us than we saw in our young selves” (p. 357). The secret to building people, Greenleaf (1995) maintained, is “... to be able to weld a team of such people by lifting them up to grow taller than they would otherwise be” (p. 21). Bethel (1995) believed followers are encouraged by:

The pleasure of an honest compliment, the excitement of taking a risk, the feelings of self-fulfillment, self esteem, and true team spirit, the electrifying sense of being part of something greater than themselves. Most of all, they want someone to be aware of what they are accomplishing, to really notice and really care. (p. 145)

The soul needs affiliation and connection with others that cannot be met by monetary benefits, but can be met by acknowledgement (Levin & Regime, 2000). While they may need encouragement, people appreciate positive affirmation, appreciation, acknowledgment, and praise that recognizes them for who they are and what they do (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

An important task for a dedicated educator is to bring hope and a future to children. Greenleaf (1977) challenged others to "... raise the spirit of young people, help them build their confidence that they can successfully contend with the condition, work with them to find the direction they need to go and the competencies they need to acquire, and send them on their way" (p. 172). He added that everyone working with youth, people in the community, or employees, "... add something that is voluntary, something that raises the human spirit. Try it and see if you are not rewarded. See if the urge to venture further does not overtake you" (p. 172).

Our next section, and its two chapters, provides several conceptual frameworks to make some synthetic sense of the many descriptive dimensions, qualities and insights that mark the Catholic high school principal who ministers as a servant leader.

SECTION 4

WAYS OF FRAMING SERVANT LEADERSHIP

In the fourth and final section of this book we move rather abruptly from the grounded, observed, rich and embodied reflections on servant-leadership as expressed in the lives of six, and especially two, principals, to higher thoughts and conceptualizations. Here, we consider the dimensions of servant-leadership as often found in the literature under headings of vision, credibility, trust and service, together with the commonly considered inhibitors of servant-leadership in practice and the various strategies that are typically offered to enhance one's servant-leadership quotient. Next we offer several conceptualizations of servant leadership that has been informed by our interviews, observations and analyses from time spent with the six exemplary servant-leadership who minister as Catholic high school principals. Sometimes idealized conceptual frameworks can assist us to move our own thinking and practices forward and to raise the bar of self expectations. This section, then provides our concluding synthesis on the subject of servant-leadership, together with a set of questions that aspiring or practicing Catholic school leaders, whether staff, administrators, teachers, or lead teachers might find useful (See Appendix A).

While it may seem a bold assertion, we believe servant-leadership is for everyone. Anyone who wishes to serve the higher purpose of God has access to the attitudes, practices and disciplines entailed servant-leadership. Students, at all levels, need to be more frequently encouraged to be servant-leadership. We suggest that wise parents, parishioners, human services professionals, and all the partners in educational enterprise ought to be expected to be practitioners of servant-leader ideals. We are all too aware in our own lives that we are thoroughly human. This means "wonderfully made" but imperfect and prone to follow the devices and desires of our own hearts in ways that do not befit the servant-leadership profile we have portrayed here. However, we acknowledge that we (all of us) have been made in the *imago dei* (the image of God) and His redemptive grace in our lives makes all the difference.

While not the subject of this book, one of the authors of this book clearly recalls the conversation of many years ago with a chief superintendent of education. The superintendent was new to the position (less than a year) and had inherited a set of statements that committed the school system to servant leadership, with focus on central office staff and school-based administrators. He wondered what this would look like – if consistently and authentically practiced, and how we might measure the servant leadership quotient of their system. The rest of the conversation is the subject of another set of stories but his concluding comment has remained with us. He commented that, in his view, they would be servant leadership-like to the extent that the aggregate attitudes and actions of formal leaders began to approximate Christ-likeness.

SECTION 4

He then commented that he was pleased to remind himself that God's mercies and grace was promised for each and every morning and renew is daily. Those who knew this superintendent will tell you of the prominent picture in his office which artistically depicted the words from Micah 6:8: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God."

The readers will see our view that servant-leadership is situated. Its practice does, to some extent, benefit from the clarity of self-identity of the leader and their willingness to draw on the best of their experiences, past role models, and their relationship with the person of Jesus Christ. Servant-leadership is for everybody; for all who benefit by its exercise (both those serving and those served). It is certainly for those who are open to avail themselves the grace of Jesus Christ in their lives.

DIMENSIONS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

Farling et al. (1999) and Walker and Scharf (2001) viewed vision, credibility, trust, and service as anchor attributes of Servant-leadership that foster higher levels of accomplishment and maturation. Farling et al. presented a leadership model that uses a corkscrew design (Figure 1). In this model, servant-leadership commences from the leader's principles, values, and beliefs, and develops through the upward-spiraling maturation process towards higher levels of attainment (Walker & Scharf). Walker and Scharf explained that, "While some models of leadership take behaviour and outcomes as the starting point, this model follows the view that servant-leadership emerges from the leader's motivations, mental models, passions, values, beliefs and professional convictions" (p. 40). According to Farling et al., and Walker and Scharf, servant-leaders derive their values from spiritual base through gradual progression along the four spiraling dimensions which propel them to increasing effectiveness. The spiral is iterative, situationally specific and our progress through the spiral can be fragile (we have suggested, elsewhere that it is a bit like snakes and ladders "game").

VISION

Many authors have mentioned the importance of vision for motivation of constituents and for inspiration of others to action, for example Kouzes and Posner (2002), and Bennis (1997). For Blanchard (2000), vision was "... a picture of the future that produces passion" (p. 5), implying that the leader has an idea of what the organization will look like in the future. The leader's vision most often is regarded as an organizational vision or a vision of the organization's future destination. Vision is important when choosing a direction to follow. Bennis and Nanus (1985) argued that a leader needs to develop a mental picture of a possible and desirable future state of the organization. This *vision*, may be as unclear as a dream or as specific as a goal or mission statement. Kotter (1990) maintained that one of the essential ways leadership differs from management is especially that leaders establish a vision for the future.

The reader will recall that the beginning of this book focused on the mission and mandate of Catholic education, as key understandings and commitments to leading Catholic high school communities. According to Wallace (2000), Catholic school principals are expected to be visionaries because it is vision that opens doors to holistic education. And, for the Christian, according to Munroe (2009) "A vision is an idea inspired by God. It is what God wants [the leader] to contribute to the world. ... A vision is a picture of where you want to end up" (p. 65). Greenleaf (1977) used foresight and conceptualization to describe vision. He pointed out that

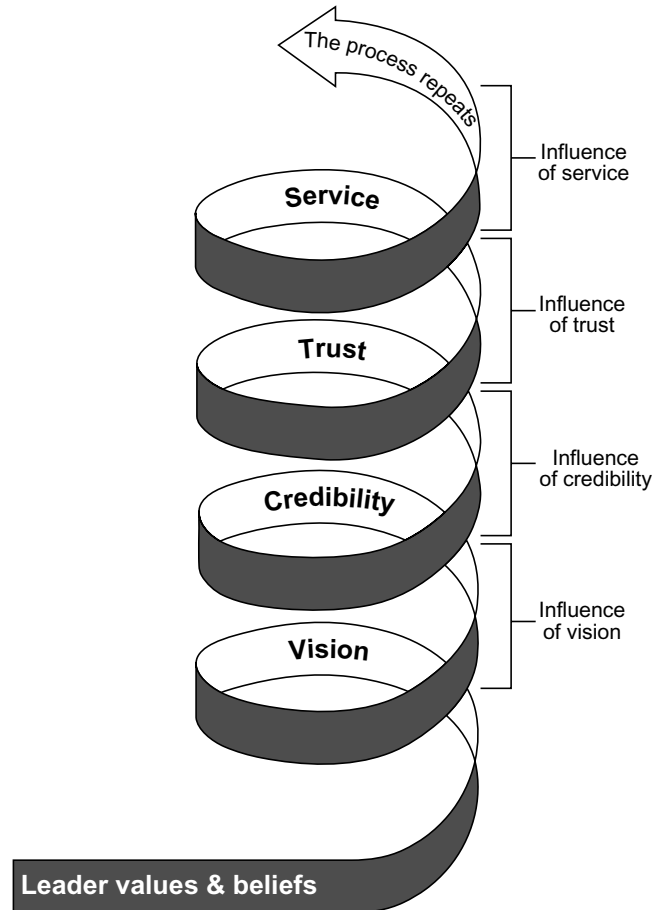


Figure 1. Dimensions of servant-leadership (Adapted from Farling et al., 1999, p. 65).

the servant-leader “needs to have a sense for the unknowable and be able to foresee the unforeseeable” (pp. 21–22). Kouzes and Posner (1995) indicated that vision is an ideal and unique picture of the future that the efforts of the servant-leader endeavour to attain to give meaning and purpose to the community members.

In Proverbs, 29:18, we find the well-known truth: “Where there is no vision the people perish.” The importance of the leader’s role was stressed by Gardner (1990), as follows: “One function that cannot be delegated is the envisioning of goals. Unless the leader has a sense of where the whole enterprise is going and must go it is not possible to delegate” (p. 21). Servant-leaders must share their vision with their constituents if they are to rally them toward that vision. Hence, the leader’s central role of co-constructing, establishing, casting, and sustaining focus on a strategic vision for the organization (Batten, 1998; Bennis & Nanus, 1997; Block, 1987; Faiholm, 1997; De Pree, 1997; Melrose, 1995).

A good vision that is not down to earth, and easy to understand, and achievable does not appeal or motivate anyone to action (Block, 1987). The leader has to animate the vision and make its purpose manifest so that others can see it, hear it, taste it, and feel it. For according to Kouzes and Posner (1989), “In making the intangible vision tangible, you have a kindling effect on people. You ignite human flames of passion” (p. 118). Bennis (1997) indicated that a vision must be compelling, inspiring, and empowering, and Miller (1995) stated, a good vision unites organizational members and inspires greatness. Blanchard (1996) observed that even though people cherish freedom and democracy, they need something worthwhile to stand for, because “When people talk about effectiveness they are basically talking about vision and direction” (p. 82).

A vision for the future helps facilitate organizational change and transformation (Miller, 1995). Sergiovanni (2005) viewed vision as such a crucial element for change because it greatly influences the process of transformation in the servant-leader and in teachers, parents, and students and the school community as a whole. A good vision is meaningful if it is credible and can propel constituents to embrace it.

Credibility

According to Kouzes and Posner (1993), credibility is “. . . how leaders earn the trust and confidence of their constituents” (p. xvii). Kouzes and Posner (2003a) argued that credibility is the bedrock upon which inspiring visions are built and credibility provides security to constituents, enabling them to let go of their reservations and to discharge large amounts of personal energy toward fulfillment of the shared vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b). Delhousaye and Brewer (2004) asked: “If the basic substance of leadership is influencing people, how much will people permit themselves to be influenced? The answer lies in the degree of credibility a leader has” (p. 59) since leaders need to obtain from people the right to exercise influence over them. The option is coercion and exercising power over instead of power with.

Credible leaders have the habits, values, traits, and competence to bring about trust and commitment in those they direct (Ulrich, 1996). They also arouse hope and courage by practically living out their beliefs through facilitating positive images and thoughts, and through supporting others and seeking support for themselves (Greenleaf, 1997). By demonstrating that they keep abreast of knowledge on the technical aspects of their fields, they enhance their credibility among colleagues (Yukl, 1998); because, as Behr (1998) maintained, credibility is built and earned over time. Some say it is not merited, but earned (Farling et al., 1999). Kouzes and Posner (1989) proffered the following advice:

Credibility is one of the hardest attributes to earn. And it is the most fragile of human qualities. It is earned minute by minute, hour by hour, month by month, year by year. But it can be lost in very short order if not attended to. We are willing to forgive a few minor transgressions, a slip of the tongue, a misspoken word, a careless act. But there comes a time when enough is enough, and when leaders have used up all their credibility, they will find that it is nearly impossible to earn it back. (pp. 24–25)

Competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism are significant elements of credibility (Hackman & Johnson, 1996). Credibility inspires confidence in followers and builds stronger relationships between leaders and their followers. According to Dalhousaye and Brewer (2004), credibility is founded on the feeling followers experience towards the leader on the basis of how the leader treats them. For Dalhousaye and Brewer:

You don't love someone because of who they are; you love them because of the way they make you feel.... [We] contend, however, that all things being equal, we will work harder and more effectively for people we like. And we like them in direct proportion to how they make us feel. (p. 59)

Similarly, Walker and Scharf (2001) suggested that servant-leaders demonstrate credibility when they act courageously, keep promises and exhibit themselves as persons of integrity. Credible leaders explore and listen to the dreams and aspirations of their constituents, which in turn strengthens their credibility (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). In the school, where young minds, bodies and spirits are being formed, the principal cannot take his/her credibility for granted but must earn it for meaningful interaction with the hopes and future of the school community. Where credibility exists, it provides a fertile ground for trust to develop (Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

Trust

Tschannen-Moran (2004) defined trust as "... one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, honest, open, reliable and competent" (p. 17), while Bennis and Nanus (1985) described trust as "... the emotional glue that binds leaders and followers together" (p. 153). For Munroe (2009), "... the fuel of leadership is trust. ... [but] trust is the product of time and integrity" (p. 100). Trust is significant for creating interdependence that exists between leaders and their constituents (Farling et al., 1999). Greenleaf (1977) viewed the function of trust in servant-leadership as the root of servant-leadership and decision making, and stressed that trust is engendered as followers gain confidence in the values, competence, and determined spirit of the leader. In fact, trust is the variable by which many leaders are judged and followed (Kouzes & Posner, 2003b). For Evans (1998) trust is the essential link, to people's job functions and loyalty, and is vital to fellowship. Matusak (1997) advised:

Trust is fragile, it is extremely important to maintain, extremely easy to lose, and very, very hard to win back. Trust is the glue that binds team members together. Trust is the ingredient that serves as the basis for a leader's legitimacy. Trust cannot be bought or sold; it must be earned. (p. 91)

Kouzes and Posner (1987) considered trust to be so important that they pointed out, trust makes work easier, because it forms the foundation for greater openness between both individuals, their leader, and their workplace.

According to Bennis (1989), establishing trust is essential for servant-leadership, but, like credibility, trust relationships between leaders and their constituents develop

gradually through personal interactions. Showing concern and openness to followers, and putting their needs and self-interest as priorities indicates care that elicits trust (Greenleaf, 1977). Kouzes and Posner (2003b) argued that a leader's concern for followers contributes to both followers' concern and their level of trust in leaders. Martin's (1998) statement that "Trust is the root of all leadership" (p. 41), has important implications for the school principal, as the era in which parents simply trusted school authorities without questioning is gone forever. A school leader and those who lead with her or him must earn the trust of their community (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Tschannen-Moran stated, "Without trust, it is unlikely that schools can be successful in their efforts to improve" (p. xii). Harris (2003) indicated that when trust exists in a school, there is no fear of shared leadership. The leader shares leadership and authority with others and helps them to use authority provided by structure to empower others.

Shaw (1997) counseled leaders to be respectful towards constituents, spend time with them, encourage them in their daily work and struggles, and share information and resources with colleagues. And, to build trust, leaders need to demonstrate honesty and integrity. Matusak (1997) argued, "Shaping a culture in which group members can trust each other enough to work together toward a common goal is one of the most important leadership tasks" (p. 94), because trust creates the environment in which each individual can become fully engaged in the shared vision, and in the part each must play to make it happen. Thus, collaborative leadership becomes possible when trust exists in a school community. The existence of trust in the school environment paves the way for the leader to serve the school community.

Service

Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged (2002) defines service as the act of meeting the needs of others. This definition reflects Greenleaf's (1991) central thesis that the notion of servant-leadership is service to others (Spears, 2004). Inspired by Greenleaf, Bradley (1999) concluded, "Service is the reason for leadership" (p. 49). For Greenleaf, when people care and serve one another, they establish a firm foundation for a good society. We like to remind our principal colleagues that "administration" is the conjunction of two words "towards" and "service" (or ministry). Unfortunately, much of what takes place in modern society happens through large institutions rather than through person to person contact such that care and concern for the individual are overshadowed by institutional concerns (Greenleaf). Greenleaf (as cited in Spears, 1995) argued:

If a better society is to be built, one that is more just and more loving, one that provides greater creative opportunity for its people, then the most open course is to raise both the capacity to serve and the very performance as servant of existing major institutions by regenerative forces operating within them. (p. 40)

He also reminded aspiring servant-leaders to ask whom and how they can help so as to visualize ways of serving by leading. According to Nair (1994), there is a strong

connection between service and leadership. Service is an important component of leadership, as leaders have acknowledged and practiced it over the centuries. For example, ancient monarchs acknowledged that they were in the service of their nations and people, and it was that that led them to seek and work for the welfare of their subjects. Nair described Mahatma Gandhi as a leader who set higher standards of leadership centered on an enduring spirit of personal service. According to Nair, Gandhi is an acknowledged servant-leader known for his insistence that service must be at the core of leadership. Similarly, true greatness, true leadership, is attained not by reducing people to one's service but by giving oneself in selfless service to them (Wilkes, 1998). This, however, entails costs. The spiritual leader is concerned infinitely more with the service to be rendered to God and to his fellow human beings than with the benefits and pleasures to be extracted from life. In this way, the leader puts more into life than he or she takes out of it.

For great accomplishments, Fairholm (1997) advised the leader in a service role to set about providing the resources that others need for success. To this end, Block (1993) advised, "Ultimately the choice we make is between service and self-interest" (p. 9), implying that choice of service over self interest shows that the leader's motivation is not based on selfish needs and material desires (Farling et al., 1999). An authentic *customer focus* demands leadership with service to others, a concern or an orientation to other people that gives pride of place to their well-being (Snyder, Dowd, & Houghton, 1994). Block lamented, "... it seems the choice for service is rarely made" (p. 15). However, the fundamental motivation for leadership should be a desire to serve (Greenleaf, 1977; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Batten, 1998; Block, 1993; Winston, 1999).

Murray (1997) viewed leadership as one of the highest forms of service that is best exercised when it freely inspires others to a decision that is really their own, and one they would not have arrived at without the leader's benevolent influence. Understanding that leaders do not command and control, servant-leaders serve and support (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Several authors (Mulligan, 2005; Furman, 2002; Walker & Scharf, 2001; Sergiovanni, 2000) have noted the increasing recognition in educational communities that service and servanthood are of paramount importance. Servant-leadership is the leadership style needed in today's schools (Crippen, 2006). Although Crippen and Sergiovanni (1993) prescribed servant-leadership as the leadership style which could effectively meet the needs of the changing landscape in contemporary schools. Others, like Lad and Luechauer (1998), Autry (2001), and Fryer (2001), emphasized that servant-leadership presents various challenges.

We want to indicate here that we are not sanguine about organizational pathologies, toxicities and even evils. We, too have experienced vicious leaders and the less desirable workings of power, control, coercion and poor leadership. Our focus, however, was to explore and describe servant-leadership, at its best. Despite our good-finding orientation and tolerance for the idealization of servant-leadership, there were some downsides indicated by our six principals. These included:

DIMENSIONS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

- The reluctance of some colleagues and followers to collaborate and be empowered;
- The difficulty of sharing control, of being humble, and capable of uplifting others, and of knowing very well that colleagues may surpass the servant-leader within the organization; and
- The challenges of dealing with anger, frustration, vulnerability, and despondence as the servant-leader strives to be a role model.

These tendencies may delay or prevent the process of becoming a servant-leader. But the leader must recognize that these barriers, paradoxes, and downsides are not only perceived but also justifiable. The leader can enhance the possibility of a safe and successful journey into servant-leadership by preparing for such anticipated difficulties early during their leadership mandate. Facing such challenges, the servant-leader should remember that *actions speak louder than words* and that it is not talking about servant-leadership that does the trick, but practicing servant-leadership (Lad & Luechauer).

As a reminder, Lad and Luechauer (1998) contributed four ways towards enhancing the practice of servant-leadership:

- Engagement in dialogue, discussion, education and training, since many of the barriers issue from misconceptions and unrealistic tales about its meaning and practice;
- Joining or creating the appropriate study groups so as to receive new ideas and encouragement from other servant-leaders;
- Attending a servant-leadership conference in order to learn from other principals' experiences; and
- Engaging in activities such as decorating one's office with reminders of servant-leadership such as posters, calendars, pictures, daily prayer/meditation/reflection, and maintaining a servant-leadership journal.

For the Catholic school principal, the words of scripture are a source of inspiration and hope in the practice of servant-leadership. A line from Paul's letter to the Romans is a good foundation for hope:

Indeed everything that was written long ago in the scriptures was meant to teach us something about hope, from the examples scripture gives of how people who did not give up were helped by God. (Rom 15:4)

Tenacity, perseverance, strength, and hope are the servant-leader's way to success (Blanchard, 1996).

FURTHER CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The second conceptual framework we offer was inspired by both Farling et al.'s four dimensions of servant-leadership (vision, credibility, trust, and service) and animated by Spears (1995) characteristics of servant-leadership. In this framework, the dimensions are rooted in the leader's principles, values, and beliefs, and grow

through the leader's vision, credibility, trust, and service. Service is the focus of the leader's activities (Spears, 2004), because service to followers is the reason for the servant-leader to lead. Service is the End - the destination of the servant leader: To serve others and to glorify God are ancient and worthy Ends. Service is the *raison d'être* for servant-leadership (Covey, 2004).

As indicated, Farling et al. (1999) explained that vision, credibility, and trust, lead to service, and the process becomes repeated as represented by the inverse and continual flow of the arrows in the figure. The arrows represent an endless journey, because servant-leadership is a process that revitalizes and rejuvenates itself over and over again (Walker & Scharf, 2001), and it is by serving the members of the community that all the characteristics and attributes are strengthened and lead back to service.

Other components of this conceptual framework are the ten characteristics that Greenleaf (1970) identified as the essential day-to-day qualities of servant-leadership.

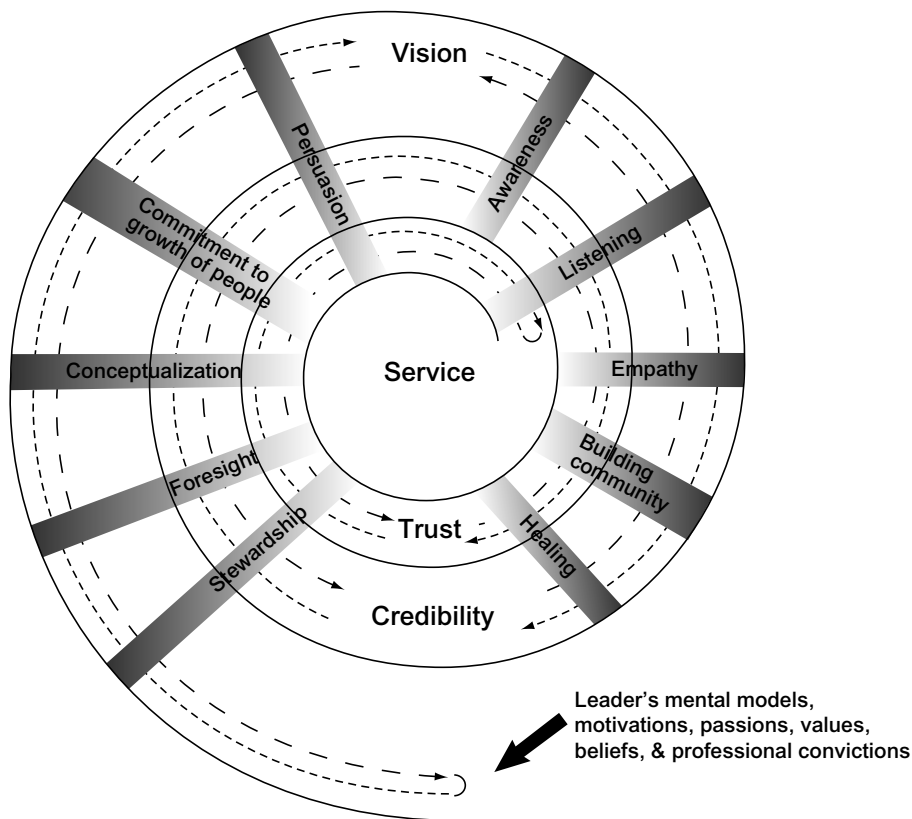


Figure 2. Attributes and characteristics of servant-leadership leading to effective school community building. (Adapted from Greenleaf, 1970; Farling et al., Spears 1995, 2004; Walker & Scharf, 2001; DeGraaf, Tilley and Neal, 2004).

We reviewed these qualities in the previous chapter: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. Of course, these are not the only qualities (see our list of 36 day-to-day qualities or characteristics, named or inferred by the six principals).

The spiral form of the diagram represents the capacity of the school community to expand and grow as the servant-leadership qualities or characteristics are served. However, the ten characteristics must not be viewed as a ladder or a cyclical process where they build upon each other or lead one into the other (DeGraaf, Tilley & Neal, 2004). According to DeGraaf, Tilley and Neal (2004), "It is more appropriate to view these characteristics as a weaving, with each strand supporting and shaping the others"(p. 162). All the characteristics are to be understood as helping to regenerate each other and lead to building of a strong school community.

After analyzing and discussing our conversations with and observations of six Catholic high school principals, elements of servant-leadership emerged that we feel warranted a second conceptual framework. The first conceptual framework delineates four dimensions of servant-leadership as vision, credibility, trust, and service as the major propelling attributes of servant-leadership. Consistent with the model of servant-leadership of Farling et al. (1999), we affirm the reality that these dimensions take their roots from the leader's mental models, motivations, passions, values, beliefs, and professional convictions, and grow through the influence of his/her vision, credibility, trust, and service. The other three dimensions lead to service as the center of the leader's activities. The process rejuvenates itself in an endless journey as represented by the inverse and continual flow of arrows in the figure. The framework includes Greenleaf's (1977) ten characteristics of servant-leadership are considered as the essential day-to-day elements of servant-leadership in a community. The spiral form of this framework signifies the capacity of the school community to expand.

In the context of our listening to exemplary Catholic high school principals, we have identified faith in Jesus Christ as the foundation of principals' servant-leadership, and childhood upbringing as a common antecedent of servant-leadership. The antecedents factors provide an identity that propels the individual towards servant-leadership. Service remains the central dimension of the framework, because, without it, servant-leadership is meaningless (Sergiovanni, 2000). The apparently linear understanding of the first figure, as a ladder with the dimensions building upon each other or leading one to the other, was too limiting. The understanding here is that, from the leader's mental models, motivations, passions, values, beliefs, professional convictions, childhood upbringing, and identity, he/she, through faith in Jesus Christ, could move to service, and though service, clarify or strengthen the other dimensions consequently leading to a better service to the community. Also, through faith, it is possible to move to trust, and then to service, and to move from faith to vision, to credibility, to trust, and then to service. Again, the servant-leader advances from faith to vision and then to service, and while rendering service strengthen the

other dimensions. It is important that the figure not be interpreted as one dimension leading to another in a linear fashion. Identity (with and in Christ) is understood as providing the center of gravity for an iceberg with the characteristics presented in the triangle forming the tip.

The basic conception here is that servant-leadership is established and strengthened in the very act of rendering service. Thus, one does not have to wait to gain credibility or trust before commencing service to his/her community, because the very act of serving is the way to gain credibility, trust, and a clarification of one's vision for better service. The reversible arrows suggest that servant-leadership is not only an endless journey, but also a model that revitalizes and rejuvenates itself through the inspiration that comes from service. Other components of the framework are the 36 examples of day-to-day characteristics that have made servant-leadership effective for our six Catholic high school principals. These were derived from their answers to follow up questions regarding what they believed to be important servant-leadership characteristics apart from the ten identified by Greenleaf (1977).

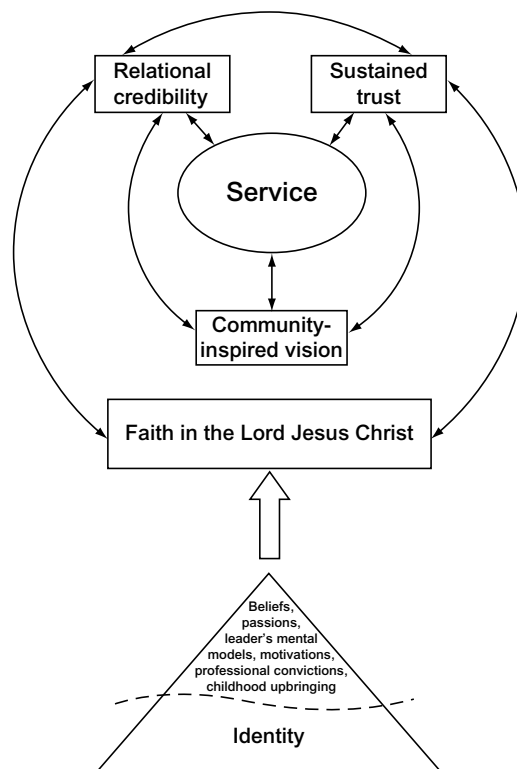


Figure 3. A conceptual framework for servant-leadership: dimensions and characteristics of servant-leadership leading in catholic high schools.

These day-to-day characteristics are meant to be located in the second conceptualization but for lack of space are presented in table form. Additional characteristics were evident from our conversations with principals, including: collaboration, mutual support, support and care for constituents, fostering good relationships with followers, forgiveness, compassion, tenacity, courage, wisdom, admitting mistakes, humility, visibility, prayerfulness, good communication, honesty, truthfulness, kindness, consistency, fairness, respect for others, sharing successes, expression of appreciation for good efforts, openness, visibility of the leader, gentleness, role modelling, and altruism.

We emphasize that this framework may not be universally applicable for servant-leadership in all contexts, since it was derived from the environment of the Catholic or Christian school where faith in Jesus Christ forms the foundation of their leadership. We don't want to imply through this framework that successful leadership is only achievable through the Catholic perspective. Leaders in non-Christian contexts might have their identities mediated through substitute dimensions instead of *Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ*, but this isn't the subject or context of this book.

Table 5. Day-to-day servant-leadership characteristics and their meanings

<i>Day-to-day servant-leadership characteristics: Perspectives from six principals</i>	<i>Meanings of characteristics/qualities</i>
Listening	Ability to pay attention in order to clarify the will of constituents
Empathy	Disposition towards understanding others, and recognizing their unique needs, gifts, and spirits
Prayerfulness	Communication with God for strength and wisdom to serve constituents in the most appropriate manner
Fairness	Dealing with followers and arriving at decisions devoid of discrimination and prejudice
Healing	Making whole communities and people with whom one comes in contact
Sharing successes	Acknowledgment of others as contributors to the successes of the community
Tenacity	Holding on to the course of a community-inspired vision in spite of challenges
Role modelling	Visible personal inspiring example worth emulating by members of the school community
Courage	Confidence to pursue one's community-inspired vision despite the misconceptions of detractors
Stewardship	Commitment to caring for followers and serving their interests for growth

(Continued)

Table 5. (Continued)

<i>Day-to-day servant-leadership characteristics: Perspectives from six principals</i>	<i>Meanings of characteristics/qualities</i>
Wisdom	Ability to utilize understanding and insight in dealing with situations
Awareness	Capacity to understand one's self and followers in order to be better disposed to serving them
Compassion	Consciousness of followers' needs in ways that elicit sympathy resulting in alleviating their needs.
Mutual support	Readiness of community members to promote the interests of each other
Honesty	Dealing and relating sincerely with constituents
Expression of appreciation	Visibly congratulating, valuing, encouraging, and making followers aware of their good efforts
Altruism	Unselfish devotion to the welfare of others
Collaboration	Respect for followers' opinions and involving them in leadership decision-making
Conceptualization	Thinking beyond day-to-day realities and dreaming great dreams for the good of the school community
Visibility	Public presence, conduct, and meaningful interactions of the leader with followers
Fostering good relationships with followers	Leader's ability to understand the import of healthy relationships with followers
Admitting mistakes	Ability to apologize in the face of an obvious mistake resulting in unfair treatment of a student, staff member, or a parent
Persuasion	Use of consensus building rather than control
Community building	The ability of the leader to galvanize members to pursue common goals and interests for stronger and better relationships
Respect for others	Politeness and kindness towards constituents
Humility	Quality of not esteeming one's self as being above all others to the extent of disregarding their opinions
Consistency	Absence of contradictions between the principal's words and actions
Forgiveness	Ability to untie one's self from thoughts and feelings that dictate revenge towards and punishment of the constituent

(Continued)

Table 5. (Continued)

<i>Day-to-day servant-leadership characteristics: Perspectives from six principals</i>	<i>Meanings of characteristics/qualities</i>
Gentleness	Capacity to treat followers with respect despite occasional disagreement on issues
Care for constituents	Keeping in mind that one's leadership is for the good of followers and not for one's selfish ends and fame
Openness	Capacity to be sincere with members of his/her school community
Honesty	Speaking the truth to and creating trust with followers
Truthfulness	Being realistic and without intention to deceive followers
Kindness	Consideration and humane treatment of followers
Foresight	Ability to understand past lessons in the context of present realities and making decisions in light of their likely consequences for the future
Good communication	Capacity to clearly articulate one's vision to followers and keeping constant information flow in the community

Our principals suggested that without exhibiting these or allied characteristics as day-to-day circumstances demand, servant-leadership remains only an ideology that has no practical consequence or authentic manifestations. Since servant-leadership concerns itself with service to followers and helping them to grow, these characteristics are some of the useful means to achieving that goal. Questions about the different strengths or hierarchy of the qualities of the characteristics are beyond the scope chosen for this book but do warrant further consideration. Thus, the qualities or characteristics of servant-leadership that we have named here should be viewed as an inventory of the acknowledged and observed qualities from principals, and not as a comprehensive list or hierarchy of qualities. Of course, servant-leaders are not expected to have and exhibit all these qualities at one and the same time. One might rest assured that if certain qualities are obviously absent (or if qualities opposite, perhaps a vice were present) in certain circumstances, constituents would take note of this. In our tentative view, there is only a hierarchy of importance according to the dictates of the situations that call for these and the cultural and community needs and values.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS ON SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

We now offer some reflections on servant-leadership on the basis of our interactions with the principals, who so kindly contributed their experiences and insights to this book. We recognize that servant-leadership is no panacea for all leadership

problems, and that it differs from other leadership models in its special interest in the development of followers. Constituents are the reason for the leader's service, not reputation, wealth, or glory. Servant-leadership does not take followers for granted by pretending to know exactly what they feel, but takes the time required to develop empathy which entails getting close to followers to know exactly what their needs are. Showing interest in followers and supporting them in their needs is the way to establish one's credibility and trust in them. A servant-leader whose intent is to gain popularity would not do his/her community any good because the path of popularity could easily lead to visions that have no lasting value, and would direct whole communities into a limbo.

Servant-leaders offer inspirational leadership and bless their followers with their presence because of the hope they provide. If exercised in the right spirit, servant-leadership provides possibilities for constituents and makes leaders out of them by involving them in their own growth process. Blanchard and Hodges (2003) reminded servant-leaders that the way of serving their vision is by developing constituents in order that they can work on that vision even when the leaders are not around. Servant-leaders are signs of light and of possibilities in the face of adversity, and especially in the school environment. We believe Catholic high school principals, at their best and according to their callings, serve as beacons of hope for staff, students, and parents in school communities.

Administrators in the school environment who embrace servant-leadership are called upon to keep in mind that the leadership model goes beyond mere theoretical ideals. Servant-leadership demands practical relationships (even towel and basin-like activities) with members of the school community, resulting in the building of healthy learning school communities. Thus, it runs contrary to the mistaken assumptions of "traditional or conventional leadership" that power is might and that might is right. In our understanding, servant-leadership sees power as an unmerited gift freely given by followers to be redistributed back to them and not monopolized for the leader's personal gains (Sims, 2005). The authentic servant-leader is the one who seldom uses power, in the sense of power over. We are reminded of the words of Jesus:

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercised authority over them; not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (St. Matthew 20:25-28)

When a servant leader uses power, it is in the interest of followers, and as a manifestation of his/her care, concern and, indeed, sacrifice for constituents and not an expression of the leader's position or aspiration for greatness. Neuschel (2005) seemed to capture these thoughts on power when he observed, "... the leader by definition has the power to hurt, yet the mature servant-leader will rarely, if ever, use that power" (pp. 95–96). This reluctance to use power over people however does not imply a leadership model that is soft, or that one that never resorts to calling for

accountability. Carver (2004) argued that power must be used, “but only servanthood tempers the power and makes it incorruptible. Servant-leadership, in other words, enables incorruptible power” (p. 31). Since servant-leadership aims at bringing the best out of followers by involving them in their own developmental process, the use of power in calling for accountability involves helping them to unlearn and change for the good of the whole community (McGee-Cooper, 1998).

We have come to perceive servant-leadership as a model that better serves both leader and followers if the leadership style is voluntarily embraced as an intentional choice because of its unselfish and sacrificial demands. Thompson (2005) reminded leaders, “. . . most of us have to struggle with the fact that the ego is there” (p. 110); but we need to re-awaken the understanding within ourselves that the ego is only a part of the self because we have a spiritual reality that is more than just the ego. The servant-leader must be ready to discipline his/her ego and rejoice in the success of followers, and must appreciate seeing followers develop and grow and achieve greater heights rather than perceiving their development as a challenge to his/her power and ego. While we haven’t dealt with the crucial notion of servanthood or servant identity formation in this book. We believe that one’s identify of servanthood in Christ is the key or root source of this kind of servant leadership. We resonate with the words of Saint Paul who said:

I want them [leaders in Laodicea and others] to be strengthened and joined together in love so that they may be rich in their understanding. This leads to their knowing fully God’s secret, that is, Christ Himself. In Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are safely kept . . . As you received Christ Jesus as Lord, so continue to live in Him. Keep your roots deep in Him, and have your lives built on Him. Be strong in the faith, just as you were taught, and always be thankful. (Colossians 2: 2, 3, 6, 7)

The servant-leader can better serve by cultivating the spirit of forgiveness as an additional means for disciplining the ego. Blanchard and Hodges (2005) reminded leaders with ego problems that “Self-serving leaders react to things that happen to them. If you say something or do something that hooks their pride or fear, they *react*” (p. 51). When confronted with an offence, the best solution is to consider what is in the best interests of followers and their relationships in the community. During moments of betrayal, the servant-leader needs to allow him/herself to be inspired by the forgiving spirit of Joseph towards his brothers in the Book of Genesis, for forgiveness provides opportunities for new beginnings.

Servant-leadership is not a destination but an opportunity to increase one’s understanding of others and of one’s self, because the more one serves wholeheartedly the better one becomes. The images of a caring mother or father fit the responsibilities of one who accepts to exercise leadership through the servant-leadership model. Braye (2002) pointed out “One cannot be better unless one cares enough” (p. 298). Looking for and expecting perfection in people, especially neophytes, can easily lead to frustration, anger and anxiety. This is also a pitfall for new leaders or persons with a

predisposition to perfectionism and legalism. We need to learn to ask for grace to do those things within our sphere of doing and effecting and ask the Lord to enable others and orchestrate the circumstances that are beyond our control. The servant-leader needs patience in order to bring out the best in followers. We emphasize that servant-leadership does not mean condoning mediocre performance (in fact, just the opposite expectation for performance is in keeping with the sacredness of Catholic education), but rather that the leader perceives potential in followers, and because of this genuine interest in them uses opportunities to help them develop and grow. Imperfection is not the opposite of excellence. The detection of flaws or weak points should serve as leverage to encourage the follower to aspire to better and higher heights. It is healthy practice to focus on the good performances of the majority of followers and affirm them rather than to concentrate on those whose negative behaviour could provide no direction or leads away from the right course of action. While we have not dealt with strength-based or gift-focused leadership in this book, we believe such an approach to people, assignment of responsibilities and review of performance is vital.

Preoccupation with immediate results sets the servant-leader down the path of dissatisfaction. There is therefore the need to understand servant-leadership as setting in motion a series of causes, effects, and reciprocities in followers that eventually set communities on the path to growth and development. Christian servant-leaders need to rely on faith that things will unfold and come to fruition. An example of this faith is the student who shows appreciation to a principal or staff member years after he/she has left school. The servant-leader needs to understand that the desire to control followers implies denying them their freedom which human nature naturally craves; but in the words of Ruschman (2002), “Servant-leadership offers new ways to capitalize on the knowledge and wisdom of all [in the community]” (p. 126).

As earlier indicated, servant-leadership is time-intensive (Wheatley, 2004), and demands that the leader cultivate a genuine love for people with the sole aim of helping them develop and grow. This requires much patience and an unending desire to seek to understand rather than to condemn. As a result, sensitivity to the needs of followers is a requirement for success. The leader has to appreciate the art of listening as paramount, because it is the way to understanding the needs of followers in order to serve them better. McEwan, (2003) stressed the importance of listening when she said, “. . . successful administrators learn early in their careers that the ability to listen isn’t just a nice thing to do, it is an essential skill to surviving and thriving in the principalship” (p. 7). The servant-leadership approach requires simultaneously showing the way and also being open to learn from situations and followers; so as to lead to a constant renewal of communities.

Respect for constituents is founded on the leader’s humility and is a necessary condition for better service. Respect leads to an appreciation of the worth of followers and is the beginning of true collaboration. Stressing the need for collaboration in leadership, Moxley (2002) said, “Leadership is co-created as individuals relate as partners and develop a shared vision, set a direction, solve problems, and make meaning of their work” (p. 47). Hubris is a deadly and destructive quality and is to be avoided as it breeds disrespect for the opinions of others and leads to unhealthy

complacency in the leader thereby stifling initiatives. We are reminded “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5; Proverbs 3:34). For Christian leaders like the principals we talked with, Tan’s (2006) observation is worth remembering, “Humility is an essential part of Christian . . . maturity . . . as well as of servanthood. Servanthood and humility are inseparable” (p. 88). Humility guides the leader to live in a constant state of gratitude to his/her Creator for the privilege to serve, for a grateful attitude towards God and others is the source of strength and peace that sets a positive tone for leadership (Munroe, 2009).

Ignoring relationships is comparable to working for people for whom one cares very little. Without healthy relationships with followers, servant-leadership has no meaning. It is through relationships that followers are assured of the care of the leader for them, thereby increasing their credibility and trust which are essential ingredients of community building. So important are relationships in leadership that when Braye (2002) divided the concept of leadership under three major components of self, relationships, and tasks/resources, he put six of Greenleaf’s (1977) ten characteristics under relationships. These are: listening, empathy, healing, persuasion, commitment to growth of people, and building community. He observed that leadership is based on relationships with people and considered to be more important than things. Servant-leadership opts for relationships as the basis for strong community building.

Christian servant-leaders need the support of faith in Jesus Christ as a condition for sustained hope in their daily interactions with followers. Adopting a prayer life and engaging in quiet time for meditation are helpful ways of deriving strength in the face of uncertainties. In today’s challenging world, the strong enticement to abandon one’s core beliefs of integrity and become a morally weak voice is strong. Servant-leadership demands a commitment to high moral standards in order to provide hope for followers in an uncertain world. Leaders need to brave the storms of misunderstanding in order to provide the way forward as role models. Thompson’s (2005) observation is worth considering. He said, “educational leadership is inseparable from moral leadership” (p. 100), and servant-leaders in schools have the moral purpose of developing young people into citizens who can contribute to democracy and chart their own moral course.

Bennis (2004) expressed a similar view when he indicated that servant-leadership is a moral compass. One can be authentic in his/her commitments, but devoid of a moral compass, the outcomes of one’s actions can be evil and destructive. School leaders need to serve as the moral voices that inculcate useful social values in the members of their school communities. Lenz and Bottum (1998) challenged servant-leaders to be the pointers to success in societies when they indicated that high moral values and excellence need to dictate the state of affairs in the twenty-first century if progress is to have positive meaning. Servant-leadership is a morally-based leadership style whose strength and sway on constituents is crystallized through personal moral example.

Tenacity is required of the servant-leader because success does not come without perseverance. Kahl (2004) argued that tenacity involves purposefulness, commitment, and “Hanging in there when times get tough” (p. 61). Procrastination without a genuine reason in dealing with the serious needs and affairs of followers breeds

the impression that the leader is uninterested in the constituent. In the event of complicated problems, the way out is for the servant-leader to confront situations honestly and to avoid pretending that the problem did not exist.

Communication is important in a servant-leader, for, without it, the leader cannot make his/her ideas known, let alone explain his/her vision. Wheatley (1999) noted that effective communication changes organizations and builds trust for better performance. Visibility to constituents is required because it is by being present to them that communication can effectively take place. In the event of detractors, the way out is not to concentrate on their negativity but to focus on what is helpful and on what builds community spirit. The true servant-leader is one who through patience is able gradually to bring detractors to his/her side (Kahl, 2004). Fassel (1998) found fun to be helpful in communities when he said, "Having fun and experiencing joy at work function like an immune system of the organization . . . When fun goes out of work, it is the sign that something is dysfunctional in the organization" (p. 225). Humour and fun are needed ingredients in communities where servant-leaders are the stewards, because when well executed, fun and humor have the power to lighten the follower's day.

Like Sims (2005), we conclude that servant-leadership is akin to most internal qualities, that, "[it] is easier to define as what it is not than what it is" (p. 29). Whether one's practice of servant-leadership is based on belief in the Lord Jesus Christ or not, committed servant-leadership is more of a personal life-journey, anchored in the strength of faith and hope with a genuine interest in people's welfare and development. No one religious denomination or organization has the exclusive license for prerogative of servant-leadership but rather it approximates an ideal for flourishing conditions within human communities.

As we have explored the servant-leadership role of Catholic high school principals, we have endeavoured to investigate the sources and substance of Catholic high principal's notions of servant-leadership, how these principals perceived their servant-leadership role, and the manner in which this role was manifest and experienced by them.

Servant-leadership was perceived to be manifest through the multiple opportunities it offered for dealing with situations, and the promotion of collaborative leadership leading to the building of healthy school communities. This type of leadership was not only seen as advantageous for better relationships that engendered the growth of followers, but it also presented some challenges and tensions. The underlying theme of this book is that servant-leadership is the kind of leadership that provides hope for followers because of its special interest in helping them pursue their interests leading to their growth. In effect, servant-leadership is not about passivity, its community-building characteristic demands that all community members be inspired by the leader to get involved in their community. The servant-leader who conscientiously carries out his/her duties nurtures the growth of future servant-leaders while simultaneously developing personal growth toward greater heights of community service.

Our prayer and aspiration for this book is that it might be read by high school staff, aspiring and practicing school administrators to put words to their own practice and perhaps encourage their framing of their own experiences. We have aimed to bring the words of our collaborators – these six servant principals to the point of description.

APPENDIX

SERVANT LEADERSHIP PLATFORM QUESTIONS

After reading through the account of servant-leadership and reflecting on the insights of our six Catholic high school principals – what is the platform you are standing on as an aspiring or practicing leader? Responding to the questions, below, will help you to determine and clarify your points of reference:

- Who are your models in life – images of leadership – their qualities?
- What is your leadership mission?
- As an educational leader – what is the difference you want to make – destination?
- What are the personal values, convictions, ethical positions drive life and leadership for you – what matters to you?
- What are your beliefs about motivating, influencing, serving and leading others?
- What can people expect from you and what do you expect from them?
- How are you going to model and mentor your leadership platform with others?

Values are important for servant leadership; so we suggest the following:

- Verify your own values, beliefs, convictions, principles**
- Articulate your own ethical grid and philosophy of life**
- Learn to balance & weigh perspectives on issues**
- Unpack your integrity through diligent action**
- Evaluate your growth as a leader**
- Share these truths (your principles) with others**

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SELECTED SCRIPTURE RELATED TO SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Matthew 25:31-46 (ESV)

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you? 40 And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." 41 "Then he will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." 44 Then they also will answer, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?" 45 Then he will answer them, saying, "Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Matthew 5:3-10 (NKJV)

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 20:25-26 (NCV)

25 Jesus called all the followers together and said, "You know that the rulers of the non-Jewish people love to show their power over the people. And their

SELECTED SCRIPTURE RELATED TO SERVANT LEADERSHIP

important leaders love to use all their authority. 26 But it should not be that way among you. Whoever wants to become great among you must serve the rest of you like a servant.”

Mark 9:35-37 (NIV)

35 Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “if anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all.” 36 He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, 37 “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

Mark 10:42-45 (NCV)

42 Jesus called them together and said, “The non-Jewish people have rulers. You know that those rulers love to show their power over the people, and their important leaders love to use all their authority. 43 but it should not be that way among you. Whoever wants to become great among you must serve the rest of you like a servant. 44 Whoever wants to become the first among you must serve all of you like a slave. 45 In the same way, the Son of Man did not come to be served. He came to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many people.”

Luke 22:26 (NKJV)

26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.

John 15:16 (NKJV)

16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

Acts 6:1-6 (ESV)

1 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the world of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

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Philippians 2:1-13 (NIV)

1 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. 12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

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http://www.schoolofpublicpolicy.sk.ca/our_people/faculty/Keith_Walker.php
<http://www.usask.ca/education/people/walker.htm>

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“I have found myself fully consumed in several administrative dilemmas recently where I, quite frankly, have found it difficult to slow down to fully read and consider this manuscript. However, I found a block of time today where I could commit to completing the task. While I began reading the book with the sole purpose to fulfill my commitment to provide feedback. It did not take long before I found myself reading it for personal consumption and reflection. I have been employed as a Catholic school system Superintendent and Director of Education for 14 years. It took me longer to read the manuscript because I continually found myself looking into the distance and thinking about my personal and professional experiences from both leadership and faith perspectives. What a wonderful day it has been!”

“The solid research base and analysis of best practices in the area of servant leadership, along with the testimonies of “servant” principals, ignited an age-old passion of mine that just wouldn’t let me stop reading until I had read the entire manuscript.”

“Our staff members are quickly loosing the language to meaningfully express the difference in our Catholic schools. This book helps us to define ourselves with common language related directly to our Catholic faith, with our leadership, programming, relationships, and our communities.”

“A solid understanding of servant leadership provides fertile ground for excellence in both teaching and learning for all schools, most particularly Catholic schools whose mandate it is to model and witness the servant leadership exemplified by Jesus. This book provides such a context and has the power to transform how we think about and practice leadership in the context of Catholic education.”

“This book is multi-dimensional by providing: A blend of leadership theory, practice and theology; an overview of the Catholic dimension and the application of Catholic faith within the context of publically-funded education; real life, real time experiential reflection that connects the six principals to the reader; practical application and how the principles are delivered, followed, and observed in a Catholic High School principal.”

“I found this book personally interesting and informative and inspiring. But, even more than that, I felt a strong desire and need to “use it” with our administration team as a means of engaging in a meaningful dialogue.”

“The authors provide some balance or perspective to learning and developing a true servant leadership style. I believe the book gains greater credibility by providing some attention to struggles of adhering to the principles of servant leadership in the

COMMENTS FROM REVIEWERS

context of the greater society. The authors have made “learning” servant leadership so much more authentic by describing the “journey.””

“This is a great and timely resource, long overdue within our Catholic school community. Growth of people, building of community and service to others is continually realized through the living examples of these principals. As the Director and Superintendent I will purchase a copy of this book for every principal, vice principal, high school learning leader, senior administrator and Board Trustee within our school system.”