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Animated by the Spirit: An Ecclesiology for Assessing Charism-Centered Mission in Higher Education

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AN ECCLESIOLOGY FOR ASSESSING CHARISM-CENTERED MISSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

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Dissertation supervised by George Worgul, Ph.D., S.T.D.

A "charism-centered" institutional mission is a mission that is believed to be instantiated and guided by the working of the Holy Spirit. Countless Catholic higher education institutions claim to have missions rooted in one or more charisms. However, institutional assessment processes tailored to charism-centered missions have remained in their infancy due to the lack of a theological grounding for institutional charism and its assessment. This work uses Yves Congar's pneumatological ecclesiology to establish a theological framework for interpreting charism as respecting and enhancing stakeholder diversity and uses Louis-Marie Chauvet's ecclesiology of symbol to pioneer a model for institutionally assessing charism-centered missions. It is argued that assessment processes provide valuable tools for discerning institutional charism.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to members of the Duquesne University institutional community, without whom this work would not have been possible, and in honor of the Duquesne University institutional charismatic commitment to "walking with those on the margins."

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Gratitude and thanksgiving for this work belong God through the Son and in the Holy Spirit. This work has truly been a charism to me, uniting me ever more closely to the Body of Christ, the Church. In my weakness God has given me strength.

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Introduction

Higher Education at the Confluence of Ecclesiology and Pneumatology

The challenges of assessing charism-centered missions in U.S. Catholic institutions of higher education arise from a broader set of circumstances. Charism-centered missions are those institutional missions that are "charismatic," that is, they are believed to be instantiated and guided through the workings of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Thus, to develop an adequate methodology for assessing chrism-centered missions, theologians must work in the challenging fields of ecclesiology, that is the study of the Church, and pneumatology, the study of the Holy Spirit.

The Church throughout her history has struggled to develop an adequate ecclesiology that takes into consideration her fundamental nature of Church as communion. Catholic theology has a profound respect for both the individual and also for the community of individuals known as the "visible Church," yet it has suffered in developing a theological account of how individual persons are together community, or, as I will argue later, how they have "being-in-community." The Church has also come to grapple with the circumstances that there are, presumably, persons who are not members of the visible Church, but who are members of the People of God and the Body of Christ. The Church's struggle for self-understanding as a communion of persons ultimately mirrors the Trinitarian mystery of three persons in one God and the Incarnational mystery of the Son of God having taken on human flesh. The incarnation of Christ, as the New Adam, the Exemplar of all humanity, has defined what it means to be human in divine terms. Human communion must participate in divine communion. Thus, human communion itself belongs to a realm of mystery. At the same time as the Church has

struggled with her ecclesiology, the Church has also struggled with her Pneumatology, which has included her self-understanding of charism. Though countless persons, both Catholic and non-Catholic, have come to claim to truly experience this phenomenon, theology has been slow in coming to grips with it. These challenges in theology on the scale of the Church have produced subsequent challenges in more applied areas of theology, such as the assessment of charism-centered institutional mission.

Though one cannot propose to resolve these challenges, given that they arise from the inner life of the Trinity, I argue that the Church can develop its own self-understanding in regard to these mysteries by reading them together as being intimately connected. There is a Trinitarian theory that the Spirit is the love of the Father for the Son that is so complete, so perfect, that this Love is actually a Who, the Holy Spirit. That is, the Holy Spirit is not only, as will be argued below, the principle of communion for the Church, but also He who is Communion in the life of the Trinity. Thus, I argue that charismatic institutions of higher education, that is, those institutions with charism-centered missions, must assess their competency at community, or, more precisely, their being-in-community, in order to assess their missions. This, however, is a daunting task in that to assess one's charism is in part to assess bringing to fruition the work of the Spirit in the institutional community.

To approach this task, I will draw from what I believe to be unexplored potentialities for Louis-Marie Chauvet's ecclesiological framework. Chauvet's ecclesiology, I argue, is well suited for deriving a theology of charism because it has integrated into the theological disciplines a sound philosophical account of functioning in community. Chauvet himself uses his account primarily for articulating a sacramental

theology. In that the sacraments might be described as the pinnacle means by which the visible Church comes together in communion, this is an appropriate application of Chauvet's philosophical framework. What Chauvet does not do, but which I proposed to accomplish here, is to integrate pneumatology into his ecclesiology in order to propose a methodology to examine, reflect upon, and improve – i.e., to assess – institutional charism-centered missions.

Chapter One of this work begins by examining literature regarding the present state of investigations into charism-centered mission and its assessment. It argues that due to the lack of a sound philosophical and theological account of charism-centered mission in Catholic institutions of higher education, this research has become bifurcated in order to manage this absence. The first chapter then launches into an attempt to integrate ecclesiology with pneumatology and concludes with an argument that the language of "being-in-community" is preferable to speaking of "person" and "community" because it respects better the "present-absence" of the "world," speaking in the Heideggerian sense.

Chapter Two reflects on the interrelationship between assessment and community-building and then argues that assessment is both philosophically and theologically a method of discernment, which makes it both philosophically and theologically appropriate for evaluating charism-centered mission.

Chapter Three launches into an introduction of Chauvet's ecclesiology as it is relevant to the task of assessment and demonstrates its appropriateness for working with "being-in-community." The third chapter demonstrates that this ecclesiology can speak to the circumstances of the higher education institution.

Chapter Four argues that enacting charism-centered mission is a liturgical act and that institutional charisms have a sacramental nature to them. The fourth chapter also deals with the thorny issue of "who decides" the boundaries and limits of the charism-centered mission.

Chapter Five concludes by presenting a methodological framework for assessing charism-centered missions by applying the foregoing ecclesiology to the practice of assessment.

Chapter One

Present Circumstances of Charism-Centered Mission Assessment – A Bifurcated Schema

Assessment in Catholic higher education is often presented with an air of foreboding about it. This is no less true for the assessment of charism-centered missions. These assessment pressures are surfacing at a time of considerable transition in the U.S. higher education context. The theological character of charism itself presents unique challenges for assessment. Among these, two particularly salient challenges encountered are: 1) the absence of a theologically and philosophically adequate account of charism and its assessment in higher education and 2) capacity building amidst a collegial environment characterized by increasing diversity. Nevertheless, some see charism assessment as an opportunity for hope, an opportunity to address key issues arising at the heart of charism-centered mission assessment, and an opportunity to re-(en)vision the meaning of Catholic higher education in the contemporary and ever-changing United States higher education context. It is here that I propose a phenomenological ecclesiology of charism as a means of proffering a theologically and philosophically sophisticated account of charism and its assessment in Catholic higher education.

1.1 The Winds of Transition: Mission and Diversity in Catholic Higher Education

Contemporary Catholic higher education increasingly discovers itself swept up in the seeming riptides of demands to increase the sophistication and effectiveness of its assessment practices. These demands are frequently identified with the pressures from the United States Department of Education and regional accrediting agencies for colleges and universities to justify their social and economic value. At the heart of these pressures is

the pursuit for accountability for invested societal resources.[1] Nevertheless, measures proposed to assess institutional accountability on a national scale – such as standardized tests, completion rates, graduate earnings data, increasing standardization of assessment measures, and even competence-based badging – have left institutions unsatisfied with the value of such measures.[2] Banta and Palomba particularly cite conflicts between higher education as providing job preparation and higher education as providing general education, as well as conflicts between "accountability" and "improvement," as particular points of contention in deriving national measures.[3] While national calls for sophisticated and effective assessment practices are not expected to recede, the direction that assessment is expected to take in a time of "significant transition" for higher education remains unclear.[4] This, then, is a critical period for research in the assessment of charism-centered missions in order that Catholic higher education might effectively examine and express its needs in the national context so that it may retain a space for the confessional distinctiveness animating its institutional effectiveness.

Increasingly, sectors distinctive of Catholic higher education have turned to the assessment of charism-centered mission as a response to additional transitional winds that are unique to Catholic higher education. These transitional winds, centered stalwartly around the forces of varying types of increasing diversity, also surface in literature that, while not directed towards charism assessment, still seeks to respond to changing times by means of more comprehensively integrating charism-centered mission. Thus, the

[1] Trudy W. Banta and Catherine A. Palomba, *Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in Higher Education*, 2d ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2015), 263.
[2] Ibid., 263-6.
[3] Ibid., 264-5.
[4] Ibid., 263.

concerns of the latter can be used to elicit a picture of the broader context to which the concerns of the former belong.

1.1.1. Research Contexts Integrating Charism-Centered Mission

Research contexts seeking to integrate Catholic identity-centered mission tend to follow two discernable paths: one path focuses on the charism itself and thrives in working with its particularities, while the other focuses on Catholic identity and thrives in emphasizing the sources and tradition of Catholicism. Though certainly not mutually exclusive and often worked in tandem, these two paths are not well integrated. Emphases on charism itself continuously aspire to relevance among a broader milieu of Catholic charisms, while emphases on Catholic identity continuously aspire to relevance in the particular contexts in which specific charisms are situated. This seems largely due to the absence of a theological account of charism in higher education. Not only do both paths struggle with the challenges of increasing diversity among university stakeholders and directions of disciplinary studies, but the theological challenges posed by increasing diversity may constitute the most pivotal challenge for formulating a theological account of charism in higher education.

The research path that attempts to more comprehensively integrate charism-centered mission conducted by way of focusing on charism itself emphasizes specific institutional charisms or a specific charism shared by multiple institutions – e.g., the "Jesuit," "Dominican," or "Franciscan" charism – to the extent that each charism applies to multiple institutions as a collectively shared charism. Members of this body of literature are not necessarily engaged with broader transitional forces facing Catholic higher education given that they belong to a more quotidian expression of charism

animation. Such reflections are countless in their number and offer insights on their respective charisms, performing the footwork of discussing what an institutional charism might mean to the given context they address.[5] Nevertheless, their specificity to distinctive charisms often makes their insights difficult to apply cross-institutionally to deal with variant charisms, and – lacking a depth-oriented account of charism itself (i.e., "charism" as opposed to "this charism") – new directions animated by a given charism are challenging to originate and evaluate while existing directions in charism can remain entrenched and adverse to the humility of self-critique and calls to conscience.

The challenge of cross-institutional relevance is raised among the arguments offered in "Teaching Comparative Theology from an Institution's Mission."[6] This article engages the challenge of integrating institutional mission in the process of attempts to transition curricula to a location respectful of religious diversity. Specifically, it notes the challenge of offering a comparative religion course, and even more so a theology course, at a publicly funded institution, while at a confessional university being viewed as "competition rather than augmentation."[7] At the outset, Bede Bidlack, Mara Brecht, Christian Krokus, and Daniel Scheid successfully defend the position that the curricular contentiousness of courses on comparative theology might be mitigated by "inviting the

[5] Examples include: Anthony J. Dosen, "Vincentian Eucation and the Charism of St. Vincent de Paul," *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 9, no. 1 (2005): 47-57; Vicky S. Karahalios, Shannon M. Williams, Joseph R. Ferrari, and Elizabeth Matteo, "Written in Their Own Voice: First-Year and Older Students' Perceptions on Their University's Identity," *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community* 41 (2013):15-23; Jesus Miranda, "Living the Dominican Charism in Education in the Philippines," *Philippiniana Sacra* 45, no. 135 (2010):530-567; Mary Evelyn Govert, "One University's Attempt to Name the Franciscan Charism in Higher Education," *Journal of Catholic Higher Education* 29, no. 1 (2010): 59-72; Aurelie A. Hagstrom, "The Dominican Charism and Higher Education: A Personal Reflection from the Field," *Journal of Catholic Higher Education* 29, no. 1 (2010): 73-82.
[6] Bede Benjamin Bidlack, Mara Brecht, Christian S. Krokus, Daniel P. Scheid, and Reid B. Locklin, "Teaching Comparative Theology from an Institution's Mission" *Teaching Theology and Religion* 17, no. 4 (2014): 369-87.
[7] Ibid., 370.

[institution's] mission into the comparative theology course" such that "professors can demonstrate that their course is at the center of the institution's mission, rather than being marginal or questionable to it."[8] Bidlack, hailing from the Benedictine mission of Saint Anselm College, argues that his course on "Chinese Religion and Christianity" draws parallels between Daoism and the monastic Benedictine tradition especially to bring greater insight to the practices of the monastic traditions of "internal alchemy" (Daoism) and *lectio divina* (Christianity).[9] Similarly, Brecht from St. Norbert College uses Norbertine hospitality as an entry point to interreligious dialog respectful of the other; Krokus from the University of Scranton highlights the Jesuit value of *cura personalis*, or, "care of the person," as an entry point to interreligious dialog and "contact" between Christianity and Islam; and Scheid from Duquesne University uses comparative theology and service learning to "promote an ecumenical atmosphere (comparative theology) and service to the world (service learning)," which are values drawn from the Spiritan charism centered on "ecumenical availability."[10]

Nevertheless, Locklin offers a poignant critique to the broader applicability of their claims. He argues that "it is significant … that the institutions described here are not merely religious but Christian, not merely Christian but Catholic, and not merely Catholic but animated by the *charism* of a founding religious order."[11] Locklin argues that this capacity to demonstrate courses of comparative religion as central to an institution's charism has occurred through a process of "render[ing the charism] suitably vague."[12]

[8] Bidlack et al., "Teaching Comparative Theology from an Institution's Mission," 370.
[9] Ibid: 371-3.
[10] Ibid.: 373-376.
[11] Ibid.: 382. Emphasis original.
[12] Ibid.: 382-3.

What Locklin seems to mean by this is well-captured in his claim that Bidlack, Brecht, Krokus, and Scheid have "reconstrued [distinctively Benedictine, Norbertine, Jesuit, and Spiritan orientations to religious life] as distinctive, localized practices of knowledge-construction."[13] Locklin compares this approach to that where the "St. Francis of Assisi birdbath can become both a totem for the catholic faithful and a symbol for attractive, more general values like compassion, social justice, and environmentalism."[14] Though the course of this present argument will stake a claim against Locklin's characterization of the process at work as an effort to "vague up" charism and will accomplish this by situating such accounts within a liturgical and ecclesial framework, the basis of Locklin's argument has merit in raising a critical critique of Bidlack, Brecht, Krokus, and Scheid. According to Locklin, the success of their arguments depends on ascertaining "distinctive, localized practices of knowledge-construction" raising a crucial challenge in what Locklin terms "the paradox of specificity."[15] Locklin argues that the "categories deployed by [Bidlack, Brecht, Krokus, and Scheid] require a certain level of specificity in order to be rendered suitably vague, rather than becoming simply devoid of intelligible content."[16] In contrast to their arguments, Locklin raises the circumstances of his own institution of higher education, Saint Michael's College. Locklin argues that the charism of Saint Michael's College has "little in the way of a distinctive identity beyond generic 'Catholicism' or 'Christian Intellectual Tradition,'" which leaves "no single, animating charism to offer [their] students in this context."[17] The challenge highlighted by Locklin

[13] Bidlack et al., "Teaching Comparative Theology from an Institution's Mission,": 383.
[14] Ibid.: 382
[15] Ibid.: 384.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

is that while Bidlack, Brecht, Krokus, and Scheid demonstrate the potentiality for cross-institutionally offering comparative theology courses from the heart of variant charism-centered missions, they have not offered an account of charism itself, which makes new directions in fostering charism difficult to originate and evaluate.

One might push Locklin's argument farther to inquire into the relationship between charism-centered mission and transitions in non-theological curricular components and disciplinary diversity. Jane Duncan of Fontbonne University argues that the discipline of Family and Consumer Sciences shares a unity of mission with Catholic higher education and particularly with Fontbonne University's charism drawn from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.[18] Duncan's argument draws on more universal elements as well such as congruities with Catholic Social Teaching and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. Yet, because a fundamental account of charism is absent, Duncan's argument faces the same hurdles of cross-institutional relevance, as well as facing similar critiques as Locklin raises, that is, that her argument merely reflects an attempt to "vague up" charism. Without a broader theological framework within which to evaluate the relationship between the particularities of her discipline and Fontbonne's charism, the significance of her reflections remains obscured in terms of their cross-institutional applicability and relevance. Further, without a broader theological framework from which to evaluate her assertions, Duncan's resources are limited for developing new charism-centered, non-theological curricular elements and pursuing new charism-centered directions in discipline exploration. Further, lacking a framework from which to evaluate the relationship between non-theological disciplines and charism renders existing

[18] Janine Duncan, "Rooted in Mission: Family and Consumer Sciences in Catholic Universities" *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 14, no. 4 (2011): 391-412.

relationships between charism and non-theological curricular elements challenging to critique.

In addition to transitional curricular and disciplinary forces, transitional stakeholder demographics further present challenges for charism-centered mission integration. Rich Whitney and Mark Laboe, reflecting on the Vincentian Personalism of DePaul University, see a "crisis point" in the "decline in the number of priests and other religious from founding religious communities actively involved in on college and university campuses." [19] This, they argue, "requires that religious communities and institutions implement creative and meaningful ways to share, teach, and form lay leaders who can understand, sustain, and continually evolve these mission-based charisms, as the religiously professed become less visible and active in classrooms, leadership, and day to day operations at most Catholic institutions."[20] This situation, they argue, is complicated by the fact that lay leaders tend to be "diverse in their own religious identification or limited in their previous faith formation or religious education." [21] Responding to these circumstances, the authors support a framework of mission wherein "all members of a campus community" understand and have agency in "determining how to live the mission through their work."[22] They conclude that "the challenges of this transition compel institutions to consider various and myriad ways to teach, form, and prepare faculty, staff, and students to be agents of mission transmission, to learn to live and breathe the charism

[19] Rich Whitney and Mark Laboe, "Grounding Student Affairs in Catholic Charism: The Journey of One Faculty Member in Connecting Curriculum with Mission" *Journal of Catholic Education* 18, no. 1 (2014): 136-53, 136.
[20] Ibid.: 136-7.
[21] Ibid.: 137.
[22] Ibid.: 136.

of the founding order in new ways and in ways that they can understand and find meaningful based on their own diverse backgrounds, lives, disciplines, and practices."[23]

For their part, the authors offer as a case study the reflections of Rich Whitney "from an initial point of skepticism before arrival on DePaul campus as a new faculty member … to active mission agency" in order to highlight "key elements" of mission-enculturation.[24] These elements involve: "meeting individual people and forming relationships with those who embody, transmit, and help to translate mission"; "being provided accessible resources for further study and learning"; "making accessible and known the established programs of formal and informal assistance"; "deepening mission expertise through formal and informal processes of recognition and affirmation"; "providing forums within one's particular field or academic department"; and "offering faculty the opportunities and incentive to share their mission … expertise through public speaking and writing."[25] These elements – founded on building relationships, providing adequate resources and incentives, and supporting development along lines of personal interest and expertise – tie in well with secular principles of institutional change, especially those of high importance in the institutional assessment process.[26] Due to their generality following their derivation from the charism-specific context of Vincentian personalism, they also suggest strong cross-institutional relevance. Nevertheless, such an account of charism transmission still lacks the key component that is a theological

[23] Whitney and Laboe, "Grounding Student Affairs in Catholic Charism": 137.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.: 148-9.
[26] Trudy W. Banta, Jon P. Lund, Karen E. Black, Frances W. Oblander, *Assessment in Practice: Putting Principles to Work on College Campuses* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996). 'Secular' here refers to 'not specifically religious,' as opposed to 'necessarily non-religious' or 'anti-religious.'

account of charism in higher education. That is, the theological meaning and implications of the elements identified remain unexplored.

This is not merely an issue of something more that could be explored but presents hidden, unrecognized challenges to the argument of Whitney and Laboe. As noted, Whitney and Laboe offer their research precisely in reaction to transitional demographics in order to locate charism integration in a place where lay leaders embrace both agency and creativity in their engagement with charism-centered mission. However, as Bidlack, Brecht, Krokus, Scheid, and Locklin show in their very attention to charism-centered mission as a means to mitigate contention towards courses on comparative religion, the values of agency and creativity – especially with respect to matters of diversity – are not always easily welcomed or appreciated, and the manner in which any given element of diversity arises from the heart of the charism is not necessarily obvious or well-understood. This can make the process of originating new directions in institutional charism a cause for treading cautiously, if at all, when faced by institutional forces fostering hesitancy or contention towards institutional change. Even without hesitancy or contention, it can be challenging to adequately evaluate and academically critique new directions in charism expression, such as the interpretations of Bidlack, Brecht, Krokus, and Scheid, without a theological account of the role of charism in higher education. Since these authors already teach courses on comparative religion, it can be concluded they are working from institutional contexts that are, at least to some extent, already open to allowing courses on comparative religion and working with persons having some sense of their location within institutional mission. Yet, even in their contexts, this fundamental challenge remains. What a theological account of charism in higher education can

provide to such circumstances is a means by which stakeholders proposing and evaluating new directions in charism expression may articulate and wrestle with their positions such that new directions in institutional change are neither assumed nor foreclosed. Moreover, Locklin's challenge to Bidlack, Brecht, Krokus, and Scheid can again be raised here with respect to the argument of Whitney and Laboe to demonstrate a second critique of their contribution. Whitney and Laboe rely on the presupposition of an already existing depth of culture animated by charism, that is, on the assumption that a culture exists that is consciously recognized as being animated by charism. In such a context as that raised by Locklin where a Catholic institution does not have a developed sense of institutional charism, the need for space for originating and evaluating new directions in charism becomes particularly underscored.

Though cross-institutional relevance may seem easier to attain when a single charism is shared among multiple institutions, such as the Jesuit, Dominican, or Franciscan Charisms, multiple factors must be considered. The charism of one, for example, Jesuit university will not be specifically equivalent to that of another Jesuit university, which causes challenges in comparing assessment results among Jesuit institutions. Thus, not only would it be challenging to evaluate the cross-institutional relevance of assessment results for, say, a Jesuit versus a Dominican charism, but it would also be challenging to compare the assessment results of one Jesuit institution versus another Jesuit institution. Some direction on why this is the case can be critically derived from the research of Morey and Piderit.[27] Morey and Piderit develop four models of Catholic higher education institutions. Their, highly problematic, premise is that

[27] Melanie M. Morey and John J. Piderit, *Catholic Higher Education: A Culture in Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

institutions differ in their missional institutional identity because the institutional "economics of higher education steers Catholic institutions toward one [educational] approach rather than another."[28] Their argument is that the institutional mission will depend on what types of students the institution wants to attract. Some institutions will adjust their institutional identity to attract Catholics and non-Catholics of variant faith levels and so will adjust their institutional culture and educational strategies to their prospective student base. While this may occur in practice, Morey and Piderit's models subjugate institutional identity, and thereby charismatic identity and the working of the Holy Spirit, to an economic analysis. However, if one were to set aside Morey and Piderit's premises for how they develop their models of differing academic communities, what these models still show is that institutional communities differ based on their contingent qualities, that is, their place in time and space. Two Jesuit universities will differ simply because the community that comprises it differs. This is why one must make a careful distinction between the charism of specific religious orders and the charisms of academic institutions. The type of community that comprises each is different. Thus, even though all Jesuit institutions of higher education and all Jesuit religious orders in some way share the same charism, this charism is also different from community to community. What is needed for assessing institutional charism, then is a theologically founded assessment strategy that can take into account the differences among specific distinct communities.

A second research path seeking to integrate charism-centered mission focuses more generally on Catholic identity and thrives in emphasizing the sources and tradition

[28] Morey and Piderit, *Catholic Higher Education*, 49.

of Catholicism. This research path, generally speaking, retains close research ties with the concerns of Cardinal John Henry Newman's *The Idea of a University* and Pope John Paul II's *Ex corde ecclesiae* and addresses such issues as academic freedom amidst episcopal oversight, the "unity of truth" amongst disciplinary diversity, and developing a Catholic anthropology for a higher education context marked by increasing diversity amongst student populations. This is a research context within which the either "visionary" or "infamous" Land O'Lakes statement is a contentious subject of debate and within which questions tied to the Church's relationship with modernity and post-modernity take center stage. Additionally, this research path tends to reveal the entanglement of Catholic higher education with Western liberal arts education as the Western liberal arts tradition faces its own critique and decline in dominance. Further, as general education becomes increasingly intertwined and even subordinated to specialization and as core curricula influenced by the trivium and quadrivium give way to a greater diversity of disciplines and distributive elements, Catholic identity no longer acquires an assured philosophical stability from a shared, or imposed, Western liberal arts identity.[29] In this research context, the issues of Catholic higher education become a microcosm of the Church's relationship with the contemporary state of modern and post-modern culture and still further a microcosm of the Church's relationship with global diversity, especially the Church's relationship with voices from spaces of marginalization and oppression.

Though the proverbial, and quite literal, countless pages of ink indubitably have been spilled over the question of that which constitutes Catholic identity in higher education, the contours of the present conversation as it relates to charism-centered

[29] Mario O. D'Souza, "The Resurrection of a Catholic Conviction: The Reform of the Charism of Education," *The Canadian Catholic Review* 16, no. 2 (1998): 36-48.

mission integration is well exemplified by a series of articles published in *Commonweal* and followed up in *Spiritan Horizons*. In the first *Commonweal* article of this debate "What Makes a University Catholic?: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Hard," Catholic University President John Garvey and Notre Dame Dean Emeritus Mark Roche offer a joint argument that the key to further integrating university mission and identity as being Catholic lies in hiring decisions and, particularly, in faculty hiring decisions.[30] However, to read Roche's argument as following from Garvey's would be a mistake. Roche's departure illustrates some of the tensions arising from the absence of a theological account of charism as expressed in higher education.

Garvey argues that to be a "great university" one must hire "great players," meaning that because "in a fundamental sense, the faculty are the university," "if the faculty are great scholars and teachers, the university will be great."[31] Thus, staking a claim to employing the norms of *Ex corde*, Garvey argues that for a university to be Catholic "a majority of its faculty must be Catholic."[32] For Garvey, "Building a Catholic faculty is not tribalism" but "a recognition that, in order to create a distinctively Catholic intellectual culture, [Catholic universities] need to build an intellectual community governed by a Catholic worldview."[33] In presenting this thesis, Garvey employs it as a counterargument to those who argue that a diversity of voices are required for "discovering truth" and avoiding the pitfalls of "tribalism" created by "orthodoxy" and "authoritarian selection."[34]

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[30] John Garvey and Mark W. Roche, "Hiring for Mission: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Hard," *Commonweal* (February 10, 2017): 10-16.
[31] Ibid.: 10.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.: 13.
[34] Ibid.: 11-2.

Garvey uses examples of universities exhibiting what he believes to be markers of success while at the same time preferring like-minded faculty hires to demonstrate that a university can be both "great" and "discover truth" without a diversity of voices. For example, Garvey points to the University of Chicago's commitment to neoclassical economics and its success in boasting of 28 Nobel prize winners who were faculty, students, or researchers, as well as to the Bauhaus School of art that "liked flat roofs, right angles, and minimal ornamentation" but would "not have hired Bernini."[35] Their success, Garvey argues, emerges from working towards something new out of a common project rather than from a stance open to diversity of voices. In defending the position that diversity is not necessarily desirable, Garvey goes on to draw from Michael Polanyi's metaphor comparing intellectual communities to a jigsaw puzzle.[36] The key factors of this metaphor in Garvey's specific use of it are 1) that "right and wrong" opinions exist – i.e., the metaphor affirms that an orthodoxy exists in that there are right and wrong ways to assemble puzzle pieces – and 2) that these opinions are not governed or judged by a centralized authority, but instead by competencies regulated by admission into the intellectual community – i.e., the metaphor affirms that orthodoxy is determined by peer experts in that adjacent pieces govern whether or not a particular pieces fits.[37] Garvey argues that each piece of the puzzle, each academic, is characterized by exhibiting an independent role within the community; acting with competence to judge one's own area of study, as well as to offer judgements on adjacent territories; and abiding by standards of admission into authoritative roles.

[35] Garvey and Roche, "Hiring for Mission: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Hard": 12.
[36] Ibid.: 12-3.
[37] Ibid.

What is clear from Garvey's account is that his claim – that the Catholicity of a university is founded upon the religious commitments of its faculty – rests squarely upon what is essentially an epistemological argument. That which ought to take center stage in the university is truth and determining what is right and what is wrong. Measures of success are closely tied with measures of socio-cultural success (e.g., Nobel prizes and socio-culturally respected schools of art). Diversity is only welcome to the extent that it abides by existent orthodoxy to pursue something new using established communities of authority. For Garvey, defending orthodoxy is essential to genuine originality and academic freedom.

The heavily and unabashedly ideological nature of Garvey's argument is inescapable. Garvey follows staunchly in taking up the issue as one of protecting a specific Catholic cultural identity and worldview. First, Garvey's strong stance that some opinions are right while others are wrong is stated with explicit enmity towards what Garvey calls "postmodernism," which, in his use of the term, refers to the position that truth does not exist and that all ideas are of equal value. Even Garvey's explicit interlocutors, he clarifies, do not go so far as to take such a deplorable position as "epistemological and moral relativism." Nevertheless, many Catholics in academia of good will who take a postmodern stance would not recognize such a position as their own. Though this term is used in so many ways it almost becomes meaningless, one indelible factor of its use is that post-modernism constitutes an explicit rejection of the grand narratives of modernism. However, the rejection of a grand narrative, especially one entangled with a specifically Western tradition and steeped in the dregs of colonialism, does not necessarily imply the rejection of narratives altogether. Just

because there is not one best, or all-encompassing narrative, or just because even narratives judged to be better might be judged also as flawed through and through due to some *aporia* of knowledge, does not necessarily entail that shear lawlessness of judgement exists. Yet, this is evidently Garvey's implicit assumption, that a diversity of worldviews must result in willy-nilly chaos. Garvey's digs at postmodernism are not relevant for this present argument in terms of either defending or rejecting postmodern positions. What is relevant is what his explicit epistemological standpoint means for what he considers to be a Catholic worldview with respect to effectively integrating a charism-centered mission into the hiring practices of universities. Garvey's epistemological account of a Catholic worldview retains the characteristic of rigidly maintaining grand narratives, except that it occurs by means of individual, rather than apostolically enforced, initiative. To give up a stance of surety of worldview to embrace diverse viewpoints is not valued for its own sake. In this way, the Catholic worldview is itself characterized as a that which is shared by like-minded individuals. That is, the unfortunate consequence of such an ideologically tinged argument is that Garvey implicitly assumes that the Catholic worldview itself is not open to a diversity of voices.

Additionally, Garvey's theological position is evidently underwritten by a clear economic capitalist position of a *laissez faire* variety. In praising the merits of the University of Chicago hiring like-minded faculty, Garvey acclaims the university as the "embodiment of free-market thinking," hiring "faculty who believed in markets and worried more about government regulation than they did about private monopolies."[38] Garvey targets communist thinkers as interlocutors who fail to see that regulation by a

[38] Garvey and Roche, "Hiring for Mission: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Hard": 12.

single authority can only suppress effectiveness rather than elicit effectiveness. Making a strong connection between communism and hierarchical oversight, Garvey argues that *Ex corde* "does not undertake to regulate, Soviet style, the teaching of" academic disciplines but "insists … that the people who build the university community be apprenticed in the Catholic tradition … and committed to the common project of building the Catholic intellectual life."[39] Instead of the "Soviet style" oversight attached to the role of the bishops, Garvey supports a system of individual autonomy within a self-regulating community. That is, his account of fostering a Catholic character within the university looks conspicuously like *laissez faire* free-market capitalism. This is not to say that Garvey draws a strict identity between the two, but to say that there are strong capitalist and anti-communist overtones in his argument identifying that which he believes to determine a university in its Catholicity. As above, the purpose of this argument is neither to defend nor to reject a specific economic theory *per se*, but rather to illuminate its consequences on Garvey's account of what it means to be a Catholic university. Answering the *theological* question "What makes a university Catholic?" by means of drawing from the example of what are primarily *socio-economic* models should, at the very least, draw a pause of hesitation in Garvey's reader. Problematically, this socio-economic emphasis is the vehicle through which Garvey engages with the meaning of Catholic identity. Thus, what is most striking about the ideological nature of Garvey's argument is his emphasis on Catholic university hiring functioning as a kind of gatekeeper for the purity of the university's Catholic identity. That is, in Garvey's account, there seems to be an underlying standard of "Catholic enough," a focus on

[39] Ibid.: 13.

"who's in" and "who's out," mirroring the polarized contention between *laissez faire* capitalism and Soviet communism. Integrating Catholic identity in the higher education context becomes a function of the question of authority, who has hiring authority, and what are the means by which such authority is exercised to determine the nature of Catholic identity. Though the emphasis on "who has the power" is not unique to Garvey's socio-economic approach to argumentation, the ideological characteristics of this approach both highlight and intensify a pre-existing issue with this line of research, which is the reduction of the question of the ecclesial identity of Catholic higher education to what is essentially a power struggle. Catholic identity, in such an account, can seem to arise more out of a process of division than from the People of God as a flourishing community animated by the Holy Spirit.

Mark Roche attempts to "flesh out Garvey's somewhat abstract reflections by discussing struggles and strategies [Roche] had as a dean at the University of Notre Dame in trying to hire outstanding Catholic faculty," yet Roche's argument diverges from that of Garvey in subtle yet critical ways.[40] Roche notes that Notre Dame sought a predominantly Catholic faculty even prior to *Ex corde* but that as soon as the university sought to compete on a global scale, challenges arose in identifying candidates who also identify as Catholic.[41] Roche argues that the best strategy for retaining a presence of Catholic faculty above the fifty percent mark is to develop a compelling vision for the role of Catholicism in the university but qualifies that such a vision must be strategically supplemented by incentives, guidelines, and support structures.[42] Nevertheless, Roche

[40] Garvey and Roche, "Hiring for Mission: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Hard": 14.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.

encourages "mov[ing] beyond the numbers," arguing that while "a preponderance of Catholic faculty may or may not be necessary to protect and advance mission," such an attention to the *number* of Catholic faculty is "certainly not sufficient."[43] Roche notes that while he found measuring Catholic hires to be valuable, he also sought "mission hires."[44] These "mission hires" are "persons who, irrespective of faith, worked on topics that were a superb fit for a Catholic university or who exhibited a deep understanding of, and an unusually rich desire to contribute to, [Notre Dame's] distinctive mission."[45] For Roche, choosing "mission hires," who might or might not be Catholic, is preferable to hiring simply based on religious affiliation: "mission hires often contribute more in advocating for mission or in developing distinctive programs than faculty members who simply happen to be Catholic."[46] To ignore this distinction between "mission" and "Catholic" hires may result in "administrators … hiring Catholics who fail the mission question over superb mission candidates who are not Catholic."[47] In this way, Roche takes a significant turn away from Garvey's position. One need not subscribe to a "Catholic worldview" in Garvey's sense to be considered a "mission hire" in Roche's sense. In fact, here Roche is making an unacknowledged distinction between "Catholic identity," as defined in his shared article with Garvey, and "mission" identity. Roche seems far less concerned about Catholic affiliation than engaging meaningfully in a distinctively Catholic university mission.

[43] Garvey and Roche, "Hiring for Mission: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Hard": 15.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.

Roche, having long blurred the lines between Garvey's worldview-centered use of Catholic identity and his own mission-driven reference to Catholic identity, argues that mission-driven hiring practices, far from adding an additional burden to the hiring process, work to form a competitive advantage. Roche argues that prospective faculty members "will leave higher-ranked departments or universities to help create or advance a university with a unique mission."[48] Though Roche admits along the lines of Garvey's argument that there may be some point at which diversity for the sake of diversity is not desirable due to consequences for the mission of the university, Roche argues that a distinctive vision and effective hiring resists "homogenizing tendencies" and increases diversity. That is, contrary to Garvey, Roche argues that a strong mission requires diversity.

In "Mission Before Identity: A Response to John Garvey and Mark Roche," David O'Brien, Professor Emeritus at College of the Holy Cross, makes three key points in critique that follow along similar lines as Roche, yet add a poignant critique of their own.[49] The first point of critique involves the tendency of some Catholic leaders and faithful to impugn the good faith judgements of those associated with Catholic colleges and universities who hold diverse worldviews and opinions. This, O'Brien argues, arises from a climate wherein "for decades since [*Ex corde ecclesiae*], Vatican officials, post-Vatican II bishops, and assorted lay militants have argued that U.S. Catholic colleges and universities have achieved academic and economic success by compromising their Catholic faith."[50] In particular, O'Brien points to the outcry when President Barack

[48] Garvey and Roche, "Hiring for Mission: Why It's Necessary, Why It's Hard": 16.
[49] David O'Brien, "Mission Before Identity: A Response to John Garvey and Mark Roche," *Commonweal* (March 24, 2017): 8-9.
[50] Ibid.: 8.

Obama was invited to Notre Dame's 2009 graduation ceremony wherein it seemed that "hardly anyone noticed that the attack on Notre Dame for inviting Obama was an attack on those of us who voted for him."[51] O'Brien argues that this charge to adulterating Catholic identity by "placing professional excellence and shared public responsibility ahead of the Catholic faith" impugns the professional and civic vocations of the Catholic faithful:

> For a while, Catholic mission and identity had started with solidarity, participating fully in the works of our democratic society, including its intellectual and academic life. But increasingly Catholic identity seemed to center on what made us Catholics different from others and what placed Catholics apart from, and in opposition to, the so-called secular culture we shared with others.[52]

This history of impugning the judgements of Catholics made in good will contributes to an atmosphere where "university presidents and deans calling for 'hiring Catholics' makes some Catholics, and many other academic colleagues, nervous."[53] One need not exonerate Catholic institutions of higher education from worldly pursuits – such as accumulating wealth and status at the expense of Catholic commitment – to acknowledge also that certain, specific Western worldviews have been proposed and treated as if only they could make claim to Catholic orthodoxy and as if Catholic orthodoxy could only be found in them. To put O'Brien's argument more pointedly, the near-dogmatic adherence to certain, specific intellectual and political worldviews, *à la* Garvey, confuses the issue of integrating Catholic identity with the issue of determining viable, systematic structures of theory such as epistemologies and socio-political models by making the former

[51] O'Brien, "Mission Before Identity": 8.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.

subservient to privileged members of the latter. This disallows the vocation to conscience by the very rejection of diversity amongst worldviews. That is, O'Brien illuminates the fact that Garvey is not insisting, as he claims, on a worldview that is Catholic, but rather on a specific worldview that is oriented towards excluding Catholic worldviews posited in legitimate disagreement of his own. Rather than promoting a fruitful and healthy sense of Catholic identity, the climate resulting from such intolerance results in a Catholic identity that is stale in nature, which in turn allows worldly behavior to pass unchallenged:

> Almost everyone now involved in Catholic higher education, including its very best leaders, attends to "Catholic identity" in the terms set by the critics: hire self-identified Catholics, hope for a majority, avoid speakers and policies that might offend the local bishop, pay lip service to a museum-like "Catholic intellectual tradition," and get on with business as usual.[54]

That is, institutional intolerance for diversity results in an ultimately self-defeating account of Catholic identity.

O'Brien's second point in critique follows from this first. For O'Brien, the work of shaping Catholic identity in higher education must arise from an effort that involves broad community participation. He argues that "at our very Catholic college [Holy Cross] we thought that, for the good of the church, the country, and our students [fundamental human questions] were best engaged with, and not apart from, others – all others."[55] By placing the onus of determining Catholic identity on the shoulders of hiring committees and administrators, not only is the ecclesial dimension of Catholic vocations called into

[54] O'Brien, "Mission Before Identity": 8.
[55] Ibid.: 9.

question by fostering a "gatekeeper" approach but so also is the Church's call to support and nourish human dignity, which requires encounter amidst diversity.[56] For O'Brien, "the very idea of a Catholic college or university depends less on hiring Catholics who show up than on how Catholicism in the United States and across the world works out," which is the "shared responsibility of all Catholics and a special responsibility for those of us [Catholic and non-Catholic] who live and work in Catholic institutions."[57] An account of charism as expressed in higher education, out of theological necessity, must emphasize the gifts of the Spirit to the community, thereby, requiring an account embracing broad communal participation and, thereby, the value of a diversity of gifts over a "gatekeeper" approach. However, lacking a strong theological account of charism in higher education, this avenue of argumentation might not have been as ready-to-hand to O'Brien as the lines of argument that he pursues.

O'Brien, in his final point of critique, concludes with the assertion that mission ought to shape identity, rather than vice versa:

> Follow *Ex corde* and the wisdom of Garvey and Roche and identity shapes mission, as Pope Benedict always said it should. Follow the life and work of many Catholics, and the practices of many Catholic colleges, universities, and scholars, and mission shapes – and critics would say endangers – identity. That difference defines what some call a fight for the soul of the Catholic Church.[58]

As Michael Galligan-Stierle and Jeffrey Gerlomes note, the particularly pertinent claim made here is that while 'mission' and 'identity' are often used interchangeably, these two

[56] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating to Fraternal Humanism: Building a Civilization of Love 50 Years After* Populorum Progressio, September 22, 2017, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_20170416_educare-umanesimo-solidale_en.html, Para. 20.
[57] O'Brien, "Mission Before Identity": 9.
[58] Ibid.

concepts can interact in tension with one another in practice.[59] However, O'Brien's depiction problematically suggests that the interrelationships between these terms must function unidirectionally, making one dependent upon and, possibly even, inferior to the other. Further, one need not assume that just because tension may occur between the application of these terms that, as a consequence, they are mutually distinct. Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes' response to O'Brien seems to attempt to ameliorate this conundrum by positing charism as functioning to mediate between mission and identity by acting as an element of discernment. However laudable this approach is, key challenges remain.

In their article "Catholic Identity, University Mission, and Charism of the Founding Order," Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes argue that Catholic identity, university mission, and charism are interdependent as a matter of institutional vocation.[60] Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes follow Garvey and Roche in emphasizing the fundamental role of faculty with respect to mission; however, citing Newman's *Idea of a Catholic University*, it is the faculty's significant role in effecting the university's intellectual mission as the university's *raison de être* that, for them, constitutes this fundamental role.[61] Though Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes seem to suggest indirectly that certain academically legitimate worldviews ought to be unwelcome among faculty members – such as the position that the United States and the Catholic Church have participated in and still participate in forms of colonial oppression – university charism forms the basis of

[59] Michael Galligan-Stierle and Jeffrey Gerlomes, "Catholic Identity, University Mission, and Charism of the Founding Order" *Spiritan Horizons* 12 (2017): 116-25.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.: 118.

discernment among worldviews rather than adherence to a specific worldview.[62] In their account, charism itself as "distinct perspective" functions to mediate diversity:

> A university mission is the collaborative search for knowledge and ethical formation. A Catholic identity is an identity in communion with the Body of Christ. The mission enriches the identity with a space to carry out Christ's educational mandate and the identity enriches the mission with the cumulative body of Catholic intellectual, social, and spiritual traditions. The charisms by which the People of God respond to the needs and circumstances of a particular time and place form countless ways of integrating that mission and that identity, and so we see the whole variety of institutional vocations.[63]

According to Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes, the identity, mission, and charisms assist institutional founders in "discern[ing] the special historical vocation of the one institution that they were founding."[64] In their embrace of charism for the purpose of mediating diversity through the discernment of institutional vocation, Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes make what is a promising yet also troubling move that requires some parsing in terms of the issues that they amalgamate.

First, amongst this interrelationship of mission, identity, and charism, Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes employ a rather static sense of Catholic identity by taking the, obviously disputed, position that "there are clear requirements for what can be considered a Catholic university."[65] These "requirements," drawn from *Ex corde*, include communion with the local bishop as well as exhibiting the four characteristics of: 1) having a "Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community as such"; 2) maintaining a "continuing reflection in the light of the Catholic faith upon the

[62] See Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes, "Catholic Identity, University Mission, and Charism of the Founding Order": 123.
[63] Ibid.: 125.
[64] Ibid.: 122.
[65] Ibid.: 120.

growing treasury of human knowledge, to which it seeks to contribute by its own research"; 3) manifesting "fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church"; and 4) enacting an "institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life."[66] These principles, according to Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes, codify Catholic identity by providing an "authoritative framework" distinguishing a university as Catholic.[67] The rather practical sense in which they make this assertion is to argue that a university is Catholic at the institutional level as opposed to Catholic identity remaining segregated to one of its constituent elements such as student population, academic engagement, or through the characteristics of its graduate placement. Still, rather than removing Catholic identity away from gatekeepers acting in isolation to a shared project that includes broader stakeholder participation, this model still seems to place the largest share of the burden on the shoulders of the few in high level leadership positions that include university administrators and mission officers. In this sense Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes do not address O'Brien's point that shaping Catholic identity should arise from the work of broad community participation, that is, the personal vocation to discernment as one participates in the university community as an institution. This "gatekeeper by the few" mentality that guards a static sense of Catholic identity obstructs avenues of self-critique such as, as O'Brien argues, through the call to personal vocation – such as demonstrated by Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes' dismissal of voices raising the academic

[66] John Paul II, *Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1990, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15081990_ex-corde-ecclesiae.html, Para. 13; Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes, 119.
[67] Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes, "Catholic Identity, University Mission, and Charism of the Founding Order": 119.

critique of the Catholic Church and the United States for participating in colonization.[68] It also assumes that Catholic identity itself is something static and codifiable and, therefore, free of the development over time that arises from self-critique. That is, it results in an implicit denial of divine pedagogy.

Secondly, there is an unstated assumption carried through Garvey and Roche and then through Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes that Catholic identity as an abstraction exists superior to and should become manifested or incarnated in the specific environs of the local ecclesial community by using the gifts of the Spirit as tools or lenses of application. Or, to express this more bluntly, it is rather a funny claim to presume that the work of the Holy Spirit in the local ecclesial community functions as a tool to manifest some greater identity. This position has the consequence of making the work of the Spirit in the community somehow subordinate to the abstraction that is "Catholic identity" Perhaps, rather than attempting to subordinate the work of the Spirit in communities to a more generalized sense of what it means to be Catholic, one might view charism as establishing the very Catholic identity itself, an identity from which a common sense of Catholic identity might be abstracted in an attempt to describe the work of the Holy Spirit amidst diverse communities. That is, their argument reflects the larger issue that they are operating without a well-developed account of the theology of charism in higher education. By recognizing that charism itself manifests Catholic identity, the work of mission and identity relies less on the gatekeeping abilities of certain members of the wider institutional ecclesial community but becomes the work of the community as a whole.

[68] See Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes, "Catholic Identity, University Mission, and Charism of the Founding Order": 123.

This, nevertheless, is not quite the "whole story" when it comes to Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes' argument. Though they retain a sense of "Catholic identity" as distinct from but interdependent with charism, there is also an extent to which that which is meant by "Catholic identity" becomes interchangeable with charism and, thereby, with the active living out of charism amidst the university as a community. To be clear, Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes typically and explicitly refer to charism as a kind of tool or lens of discernment to apply a more general Catholic identity to the specific lived-context of any given Catholic institution. However, there are times in their account at which the line between these two concepts fades. This is particularly well exemplified by their use of the concept of embodiment: "each institution makes [considerably different decisions], not because of some lack of commitment to mission and identity, but because of a keen sense of how they are called to embody their mission and identity in the context of their own institutional vocation."[69] That is, though the concept of embodiment might be used in a mechanistic manner, the shift towards embodiment allows the concept of institutional charism to be not so much distinct from but a specific manifestation of, expression of, embodiment of Catholic identity in the time and space inhabited by the Catholic institution. This allows the lens of Catholic identity itself a range of importance as complex and interwoven as that of charism. Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes gravitate in the direction of blurring the line between Catholic identity and charism in other ways. In referring to the "codification" of that which makes a university Catholic, though Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes claim this codification to be "clear," they also consider it to be "based less on easily measurable externals and more on a deeper sense of animating

[69] Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes, "Catholic Identity, University Mission, and Charism of the Founding Order": 123.

purpose," i.e., charism.[70] Finally, while not explicitly referencing charism, the gravitation towards a more communally established account of Catholic identity, such as occurs when the problematic distinction between Catholic identity and charism fades, appears in their endorsement of John Cavadini's position that the "successful Catholic university is not so much the one that strikes a 'balance' between dialog and witness but the one that finds some way to fully embrace both roles."[71] Thus, while lacking a theologically sophisticated account of charism in higher education, Garvey and Roche, O'Brien, and Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes are nevertheless pulled by tensions arising from diversity that require a theologically sufficient account to adequately address charism.

Thus, the present research avenues for integrating charism-centered mission, both the avenue that tends to be centered either on specific charisms themselves and the avenue centered on Catholic identity as abstracted from the lived-experience of the institutional community, exemplify the pressing need for a sophisticated theological account of charism in Catholic higher education, especially as universities are ever-pressed to face head on issues of diversity.

Timothy Cook has, perhaps, done the most to examine the relationship between charism and higher education. However, his approach still struggles to address some of the fundamental theoretical and practical tensions raised in the accounts of others in that his framework, even in its strong theological references, does not derive properly speaking from a theological account of charism as expressed in higher education.

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[70] Galligan-Stierle and Gerlomes, "Catholic Identity, University Mission, and Charism of the Founding Order": 119.

[71] Ibid., 125; see also John Cavadini, "Witness, Dialogue Key in Higher Ed: Catholic Universities Need to Stand Firm in the Church's Teachings, But Also be Charitable to Non-Believers," *Our Sunday Visitor Newsweekly* (April 2, 2014), https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/Story/TabId/2672/ArtMID/13567/ArticleID/14407/Witness-dialogue-key-in-higher-ed.aspx.

Timothy Cook and Thomas Simonds recognize the pressing need for an account of charism as expressed in Catholic education in their "The Charism of 21st-Century Catholic Schools: Building a Culture of Relationships" where they note that "although there are common themes in various Church documents, such as dignity of the human person, faith community, and integration of faith and learning, it is our opinion that the documents lack an organizing principle or thread that captures the essence of Catholic school education in a manageable and memorable way."[72] Cook and Simonds attempt to remedy this problem by offering a "coherent and relevant framework for thinking about Catholic identity and charism in contemporary schools using relationships as the organizing principle."[73] They point to the theological centrality of the trinity and the consequences of relationship for Christian self-understanding, as well as statements from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and the Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE), declaring one of the major purposes of Catholic education to be "form[ing] 'persons-in-community.'"[74] In this vein, Cook and Simmonds propose a model to develop relationships among "self, God, others, the local and world community, and creation."[75] Nevertheless, their model serves more as an indexical point of reference than a theological one. Their initiative seeks to provide a framework to allow educators to think through how well mission addresses each point of reference (self, God, others, etc.), yet working with an indexical framework is problematic in that the depth of theological

[72] Timothy J. Cook and Thomas A. Simmonds, "The Charism of 21st-Century Catholic Schools: Building a Culture of Relationships," *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 14, no. 3 (2011): 319-333.
[73] Abstract in ibid.
[74] Cook and Simmonds, 322-3; see also United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. *To Teach as Jesus Did*. (Washington D.C., United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1972); Congregation for Catholic Education. *Educating together in Catholic Schools: A Shared Mission Between Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful.*
[75] Cook and Simmonds, 323-4.

reflection becomes limited by the complexity with which one is able to engage the indices, which is ultimately limited due to the lack of a developed account of charism as expressed in the higher education context.

Nevertheless, in *Charism and Culture*, a companion text to his earlier *Architects of Catholic Culture*, Cook presents what is perhaps one of the most developed accounts of charism-centered mission integration in this area of research.[76] Cook's account of charism-centered mission integration proceeds in two stages. First, Cook relates charism to higher education as a form of corporate identity. Cook accepts the traditional account of charisms as "gifts of the Holy Spirit used to build up the church and world in glory to God" and emphasizes that these gifts are given for the good of building community, especially understood as building the Kingdom of God and the Church.[77] Cook argues that just as individuals are given gifts so also can there be a "group charism or corporate charism that may or may not have originated in an individual."[78] Cook argues repeatedly against the assumption that university charism must be tied to the charism of a religious order and highlights the character of charism as a gift from the Holy Spirit to a community for the purpose of building up the community in holiness.[79] This shared charism is that which he refers to as a "corporate charism."[80] Cook describes corporate charism as "a source of spiritual affinity that gives a sense of common vocation and

[76] Timothy J. Cook, *Charism and Culture: Cultivating Catholic Identity in Catholic Schools* (Arlington: National Catholic Educational Association, 2015); idem, *Architects of Catholic Culture: Designing and Building Catholic Culture in Catholic Schools* (Arlington: National Catholic Educational Association, 2001).
[77] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 5-6.
[78] Ibid., 6.
[79] Ibid.; see also Idem., "Charism: A Catholic School's Mark of Distinction," *Momentum: The Official Journal of the National Catholic Educational Association* 35, no. 1 (2004): 18-21, esp. 18-9 and Cook and Simmonds.
[80] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 6.

mission, and a common understanding of what success looks like."[81] Charism, for Cook, is "dynamic" through time and "includes the group's giftedness but also encompasses the group's entire identity."[82] Having identified charism as a form of corporate identity, Cook's second move is to argue that corporate charism comes to fruition when expressed through corporate culture. For Cook, enculturation is the mark of fully integrating the Gospel message into Catholic schools. He argues, "the importance of Catholic school culture cannot be overstated because Catholic school culture brings a school's Catholic identity to life."[83] In Cook's account, Catholic school culture is manifest in symbolic culture, which he associates with icons, traditions, and mythology, and normative culture, which he associates with programs, policies, and practices.

Developing his account of symbolic culture, Cook, drawing from Andrew Greeley, argues that Catholic school symbols are sacramental "in the sense that we find God in all things, experiences, and people" and communal in the sense that "community is at the heart of Catholicism and subsequently at the heart of Catholic school education."[84] They serve as "identity markers and cultural touchstones."[85] In Cook's use of the concept, symbols are "physical manifestations and visible signs that represent and communicate what a school values."[86] Their physical manifestation, for Cook, offers a psychological significance as "subliminal transmitters of culture" that "have an almost mystical power in the way people develop a sentimental attachment to them," which

[81] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 6.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 2.
[84] Ibid., 17; see also Andrew M. Greeley, *The Catholic Imagination*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).
[85] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 17.
[86] Ibid.

"tend[s] to evoke an emotional response."[87] They are used to develop a specific Catholic identity and charism by developing Catholic imagination.[88] Examples of Cook's category of symbolic culture include architecture and campus landmarks; the careful selection and upkeep of religious artifacts such as crucifixes and statutes; incorporating Catholic identity and charism into visual identity such as emblems, logos, mascots, and the school web site; developing human symbols through selecting a heroic patron, such as a saint and celebrating patronal feasts and founders; fostering traditional rituals, ceremonies, and celebrations such as school prayer, identity-specific songs, and anthems; and crafting an identity-specific graduation ceremony.[89] For Cook, symbolic culture is held together in cohesion through the storytelling and almost mystical capacity of Catholic school mythology, which "inspires, instructs, motivates, and communicates cherished values in a concrete and vivid manner."[90] Cook sees the school's founding story, patron, and mascot all as potential sources of mythology.[91] Cook uses the concept of "normative culture" to signify the embodiment of a school's core values in practical application. Cook refers to this application of values as "normative behavior," by which he means "commonly accepted forms of behavior and ways of doing things that include customs, habits, routines, and rules."[92] Examples include the code of conduct, student handbook, educational programs featuring the school's mission and values, service and outreach programs, and co-curricular student activities.[93] According to Cook, enculturation and formation engender: "cohesion" understood as a "common vision, collective values, and

[87] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 17.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid., 17- 24.
[90] Ibid., 25-26.
[91] Ibid., 25.
[92] Ibid., 31.
[93] Ibid., 31-41.

a shared spirituality"; "community" understood as "camaraderie and collegiality"; "commitment" understood as "deepen[ed] personal dedication to school mission"; and "competence" understood as "efficacious formation [that] gives … the confidence and skills needed to live the school's charism and advance its mission."[94]

Cook's approach in *Charism and Culture* offers significant advantages over the earlier indexical approach that he offers with Simmonds. By tying identity-formation to the process of enculturation, Cook provides a broader theoretical framework in which to approach the integration of charism-centered mission. That is, charism-centered mission integration becomes a function of enculturation, which provides a theoretical framework from which to originate and evaluate new directions in charism. An additional advantage of Cook's account is that, using an account of corporate charism as culture, it embraces, to some extent, the broad communal participation as a call to respect personal vocation, and thereby avenues for self-critique, that O'Brien endorses. Cook's distinction between symbolic culture and normative culture opens the path for a dynamic interrelationship between the two wherein symbolic culture influences normative culture and vice versa, thereby allowing those participating in symbolic and normative culture to participate communally in the formation and direction of that culture. Moreover, Cook's advocacy for attention to enculturation is particularly apropos for the present period of transition as reflected in in the call to a "culture of dialog" set forth in *Educating to Fraternal Humanism*, a set of guidelines for educational institutions released in 2017 by the Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE):

[94] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 43.

> Vocation to solidarity calls people of the 21st century to confront the challenges of multicultural coexistence. In global societies, citizens of different traditions, cultures, religions and world views coexist every day, often resulting in misunderstandings and conflicts. In such circumstances, religions are often seen as monolithic and uncompromising structures of principles and values, incapable of guiding humanity towards the global society. The Catholic Church, on the contrary, "rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions," and …. she is also convinced that such difficulties are often the result of a lacking education to fraternal humanism, based on the development of a culture of dialogue. [95]

Here the CCE not only sets enculturation as a priority for Catholic education but goes further in prioritizing Catholic education's continuing conversion to the vocation of solidarity amidst diversity, which helpfully provides an explorable link between Cook's account of enculturation and diversity-related concerns. Nevertheless, Cook's account carries substantial drawbacks.

Though by "corporate charism" Cook clearly intends the notion of a charism that is institutionally "collective" or "shared," Cook's choice of representative elements of symbolic and normative culture, especially those involved in branding (logos, websites, etc.), and explicit references to organizational literature suggests that "corporate charism" additionally refers to Catholic schools as business entities. While this association allows charism to be analyzable through disciplines such as that of organizational studies, which could in turn support charism development by providing supplemental theoretical frameworks for analysis, such an association without a firm theological account of charism in higher education can easily go awry. For example, though Cook raises such impetuses for pursuing charism development as evangelization and as a resource for

[95] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating to Fraternal Humanism*, para. 11.

developing an effective educational environment, he also unequivocally presents branding and market competition as an impetus for pursuing charism development.[96] This association is problematic in that branding attempts to present the best face of the university, whereas charism-centered mission integration must be open to elements of self-critique through elements such as the call to conscience and personal vocation. Elsewhere, Cook himself cautions that identifying charism development too closely with branding can have a "dark side":

> At the higher education level, I have observed Catholic institutions undertake sophisticated "branding" initiatives for the purpose of positioning and marketing themselves as a particular brand of college or university. I become concerned when Catholic colleges founded by religious orders, for instance, only refer to themselves in terms of their specific educational tradition. In particular, an institution might identify itself as "Jesuit" instead of "Catholic Jesuit." To me, that way of self-identifying is a problem because it sets Jesuit apart from Catholic. I think it's important to remember that Jesuit is a brand of Catholic.[97]

Here Cook is more concerned with retaining the identification of charism as a charism that is Catholic than with questioning the relationship between branding and charism. While the question of the relationship specifically between branding, which certainly should reflect charism-centered mission integration, and the lived charism of the institution of higher education is certainly as question of relevance, what is critical in recognizing this challenge is also to recognize that without a solid theological account of charism as expressed in the context of higher education such conflations can be taken for granted easily. Even when not taken for granted, barriers to institutional change can be

[96] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 1-2; Cook and Simonds, 319-20.
[97] Cook, "Charism: A Catholic School's Mark of Distinction": 20-21.

challenging both to critique and overcome when the tools for examining the relationship between charism and the mission of Catholic higher institutions are limited from the outset. While Cook's incorporation of the process of enculturation and his reflections examining avenues for culturally embedded symbology provide useful tools for exploring the expression of charism in higher education, they have not yet approached dealing with the nature of Catholic higher education as a particular ecclesial context animated by the Holy Spirit.

1.1.2. Charism-Centered Mission Assessment Initiatives

It should be unsurprising that the assessment of charism-centered mission also reflects the theological vacuum formed by the lack of a theologically and philosophically sophisticated account of charism as expressed in the higher education context. Assessment efforts likewise struggle with the challenges presented by diversity, yet also often attempt to address diversity specifically by using assessment as a tool. Most notably among efforts to turn to assessment as a response to increasing calls for diversity are those of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU), which, in conjunction with the Catholic Higher Education Research Cooperative (CHERC) and selected experts from ACCU member campuses, has launched the Catholic Identity Mission Assessment (CIMA) project.[98] Describing the present transitional character of Catholic higher education in their own words, they state: "[ACCU Member] institutions have changed over the years in response to student needs, social trends, and changes in college and university staffing. With these adjustments comes the question of whether and how Catholic identity, as well as the charism of the founding and sponsoring group,

[98] Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, "Catholic Identity Mission Assessment," August 28, 2017, http://www.accunet.org/CIMA

are expressed on campus and assimilated by students."[99] The CIMA project consists of four population-specific surveys and offers "Institutional Assessment Principles."[100] Its purpose is to "produce questions and guidelines to provide direction for any Catholic college or university engaged in assessing the effective articulation of Catholic identity."[101]

It is a concern of the CIMA project that "no single approach to the Catholic mission is assumed" in order to respect the diversity of its member institutions.[102] The CIMA project draws from the work of Estanek, James, and Norton wherein they seek "to identify and categorize dominant institutional values [drawn] from mission statements that may inform a Catholic identity assessment process."[103] That is, the survey draws heavily from an account of Catholic identity that is derived from a survey population of existing mission statements to ascertain "dominant institutional values." This approach to characterizing Catholic identity for the purpose of assessment is a kind of *in medias res* approach. It offers the simplicity of determining, and evaluating, that which ought to characterize Catholic identity in Catholic higher education by relying on dominant perceptions of that which in practice is said to constitute Catholic identity as it is embedded in mission statements. This leaves out the messiness of contentious debates over theological issues by appealing to an existing consensus.

Nevertheless, this approach has several drawbacks. First, it prefers those accounts of Catholic identity that are, as Estanek, James, and Norton admit, *dominant*. Aside from

[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] See Sandra M. Estanek, Michael J. James, and Daniel A. Norton, "Assessing Catholic Identity: A Study of Mission Statements of Catholic Colleges and Universities," *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 10, no. 2 (2006): 199-217.

omitting presently underrepresented institutional values, such an approach prefers the status quo and, by which means, may result in unintended resistance to the development over time of Catholic identity as expressed through charism. Additionally, this approach is not necessarily suited to charism-centered missions in their particularity. While any given institution might value a broad array of values associated with Catholic identity, various charisms tend to appreciate and emphasize some values over others. This is to say that, while the CIMA project has attempted to provide tools for Catholic identity mission assessment that assume "no single approach," the CIMA assessment survey tool results in a *de facto* normative account of that which constitutes Catholic identity. The CIMA project itself, not quite speaking to these objections but on a similar note, indicates that "given the diversity within our community of colleges and universities, no single strategy can apply to every aspect of Catholic identity in depth." [104] They continue, "Catholic institutions of higher education do share many challenges in assessing mission, however, and the development of a set of solid principles and tools provided by CIMA can be of great value to many ACCU members."[105] This is not to argue that such an approach as the CIMA project is unhelpful, but to denote certain instrument limitations that colleges and universities should take into account when selecting and deploying such measures. These instrumental limitations become further exacerbated by the absence of a theological account of charism-centered mission in that the meaning of their data points are challenging to analyze having by-passed their theological underpinnings.

Aside from survey apparatuses, a variety of assessment "principles" have been constructed to assist institutions in performing assessment authentic to their individual

[104] Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, "Catholic Identity Mission Assessment."
[105] Ibid.

mission commitments. In addition to its survey instrument the CIMA project offers "Institutional Assessment Principles."[106] These principles are "a short guide to help campuses structure their own plans related to institutional assessment," and, like the survey instrument, they are expressed via a manner of caution: "this guide does not define the 'ideal' character of an institution within the Catholic college and university community. Rather, institutions express their Catholic identity in a variety of ways that respond to their history, their mission within the local community, the charism of their founders, and other important factors."[107] These principles are divided into topical "Assessment Domains" that include "presentation of Catholic identity and mission"; "mission integration"; "leadership and governance"; "curriculum and courses"; "faculty and research"; "student life, campus ministry, and co-curricular learning"; "student access, support, and achievement"; "service to the church"; and "institutional practices in management and finance."[108] However, like Cook and Simmonds' proposed model, principles of good practice serve more of an indexical purpose rather than providing the kind of depth account needed to foster and evaluate charism-centered mission integration.

James and Estanek have a lengthier history working with Catholic identity assessment than the CIMA project, and their significance lies not only in the influence of their scholarship on the CIMA project but also in their participation in the assessment movement as it came to coalesce in conversation with the reception of *Ex corde* in Catholic higher education. The memory of this process they have documented well in the

[106] Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, "CIMA Institutional Assessment Principles," August 28, 2017, http://www.accunet.org/Mission-Identity-Catholic-Identity-Mission-Assessment-CIMA-Principles.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.

course of their publications. Like the CIMA project, they also offer a set of principles, theirs focusing predominantly on student affairs. The *Principles of Good Practice in Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities* were developed specifically with Senior Student Affairs Officers (SSAO's) in mind in response to their role as interpreters for "integrat[ing] the Catholic identity of the institution with student life" and communicating the role of student affairs to other organizational units.[109] In a 1996 publication Estanek "found that the SSAO's understood this role but struggled [to work towards this end] because they believed they did not know enough about the Catholic tradition," largely identifying as lay men and women having graduated from secular institutions.[110] Estanek and James indicated that *The Principles* are intended to "provide a framework for reflection and conversation, planning, staff development, and assessment for student affairs professionals who work at Catholic colleges and universities" and, with diagnostic queries, are a "tool of self-reflection and self-improvement."[111] Though, as Estanek and James show and borne out in the research of others, *The Principles* have the utility of making charism-centered mission assessment more accessible to many university stakeholders in that they are divorced from a theology of charism as expressed in the higher education context, yet their indexical form offers the same challenges as the CIMA principles in that they do not provide a sound theoretical basis for further

[109] Michael J. James and Sandra M. Estanek, *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs* (Chicago: Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Association for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities, Jesuit Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 2007); idem, "Building Capacity for Mission through Use of the *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities*: A Survey of Presidents and Senior Student Affairs Officers" *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice* 15, no. 2 (2012): 140-159, 143.
[110] James and Estanek, "Building Capacity for Mission": 143.
[111] Ibid., *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs*, 6; idem, *Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs: Second Edition with Diagnostic Queries* (Chicago: Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Association for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities, Jesuit Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 2010), 3.

exploration. Though omitting systematic theological reflections might, in the short run, enable a broader range of stakeholder participation, it also allows for the uncritical, and even unconscious, importation of theological assumptions and prejudices, assumptions and prejudices that, as O'Brien argues, make faculty, and potentially other stakeholders, nervous by assailing the vocation to conscience in the foreclosure of avenues for self-critique on systemic theological grounds. That is, positions such as Garvey's, especially dominant positions originated from spaces of power and prestige, are challenging to critique when avenues from which to originate such critiques are limited by such a theological vacuum. Thus, while delving into the theological messiness of developing a theology by which to account for charism-centered mission, may provide challenges for accessibility by some, it enables the academic leeway for Catholic higher education institutions to engage in the self-critique needed to build capacity among their full range of stakeholders, and especially among faculty members, rather than approaching charism, for example, from an uncritical "gatekeeper-by-the-few" approach. Accessibility challenges as Estanek and James attempt to address might be mitigated further in a context where scholarship filling this theological vacuum has grown and developed in sophistication; however, to engage in that next step in scholarship dealing with this theological vacuum, scholarship must be developed in the first place to provide a sophisticated theological account of chrism-centered mission in higher education.

Cook's manner of addressing charism assessment is consistent with his accounts of enculturation and symbology, while also sharing consistency with the dual sense in which he uses "corporate" charism. For example, Cook argues that Catholic schools should conduct assessment "in relation to the school's overarching charismatic goals and

not just student academic achievement" while also listing the goals of charism assessment to include: "strengthen[ing] school appeal," "guaranteeing truth in advertising," "instilling confidence and justifying investment," and "affirming current efforts and providing directionality for growth."[112] Nevertheless, Cook's use of theologically-enriched theoretical frameworks allows him to address the process of assessment with a unique kind of depth. For example, in that Cook provides a theoretical framework within which to assess charism-centered mission integration, Cook additionally provides a perspective on what he believes charism assessment to *mean*, by which is meant the manner in which the process of assessment is seen to derive meaning. For Cook, to assess charism is to assess authenticity in self-representation, that is, to answer the question, "Are we who we say we are?"[113] The meaning of assessment impacts the kinds of outcomes desired and, in turn, impacts the measuring of outcomes, an issue the CIMA project attempts to skirt in respect for member diversity. Still, without a theoretically sophisticated account of charism as expressed in higher education, accounts such as Cook's should be approached with a modicum of caution in that the theoretical framework lacks such a critical piece as an account of charism expression in Catholic education.

1.2 Persons-in-Community in Catholic Higher Education

Charismata (i.e., charisms) are ethereal yet powerful, quotidian yet mysterious. They are gifts given by the Holy Spirit for building the Body of Christ and are given for communal benefit, or, the "common good" (1 Cor. 12: 7). John Haughey notes that charisms are unique in that they are graces given for the sake of others rather than for the

[112] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 59.
[113] Ibid., 57.

individual use of those receiving them: "They are God's way of building up families, communities, parishes, the Church, but also businesses, neighborhoods, and cities."[114] That is, charisms reveal the work of the Spirit in persons-in-community.

This interpretation of charism, though not well appreciated in the life of the Church, has firm theological roots. Theological investigations into charisms saw something of a renewal at the time of Vatican II. When it came time to prepare the modest section on charism in the Constitution on the Church, the document that would become *Lumen Gentium*, two traditionally oppositional views came to a head. One position, championed at the Council by Cardinal Ruffini, argued that charisms were "rare and extraordinary gifts of grace" that were particularly characteristic of the early Church, whereas a second position, championed at the Council by Cardinal Suenens, argued that charisms "are distributed widely among the members of the body, as each member is intended to make some contribution to the life of the whole body."[115] It was ultimately Cardinal Suenens' position that was reflected in *Lumen Gentium*.

Yves Congar, a Vatican II *peritus* (i.e., theological expert) who had influenced conciliar opinion on charisms through his work *Lay People in the Church*, would come to publish in the post-conciliar years his landmark three volume work *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, which has been and remains one of the most comprehensive and authoritative theological studies on the Holy Spirit's relation to the Church to date and, thereby, offers

[114] John C. Haughey, "Charisms: An Ecclesiological Exploration," in *Retrieving Charisms for the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Doris Donnelly (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999), 2.
[115] Francis A. Sullivan, *Charisms and the Charismatic Renewal: A Biblical and Theological Study* (Ann Arbor, Servant Books, 1982.

reflections useful for developing an account of charism applicable to the context of Catholic higher education.[116]

Though charisms themselves are creaturely, they share in the ecclesial unity of the Holy Spirit, who is, as Congar notes, the principle of communion.[117] In that, the "mission of the Spirit … made manifest at Pentecost" is "co-extensive with the life of the Church and Christians" and its "'co-instituting principle,'" charisms participate incarnationally in co-effecting that unity through Christ as Head of the Church, that is, the Body of Christ.[118]

As Congar goes on to point out, it is not enough to speak of communion in sublime and ideal terms while leaving aside "effective and concrete *human* communion."[119] To illustrate this point Congar references the work of John Séguy in which Séguy argues that while "[during nineteenth century segregation] black and white Catholics communicated and received communion at the same altar, … they returned to their places with their hands together and their eyes lowered and left the church without speaking to each other, without shaking hands, and even without exchanging a glance."[120] The significance of this for Congar is the implication that the communion of liturgy and faith was not brought to fruition in the building of human communion. In building human community through charism, the work of the Spirit is brought to

[116] See Yves Congar, *Lay People in the Church* (London, Newman Press, 1957) and Sullivan, 14 regarding Congar's influence on the council.
[117] Yves Congar, "The Holy Spirit Makes the Church One: He is the Principle of Communion," in *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* v. 2, translated by David Smith (New York: Seabury Press, 1983).
[118] Congar, "The Holy Spirit Makes the Church One: He is the Principle of Communion," 7, 9; for the relationship of the Spirit and Christ to the Body of Christ see idem, 20.
[119] Congar, "The Holy Spirit Makes the Church One: He is the Principle of Communion," 21.
[120] Ibid., 21.

perfection and completion. Nevertheless, Congar warns that true unity only occurs amidst diversity.[121]

The Holy Spirit is in this sense an eschatological reality "further[ing] God's plan, which can be expressed in the words 'communion,' 'many in one,' and 'uniplurality'" such that "at the end, there will be a state in which God will be 'everything to everyone' (1 Cor 15:28)."[122] Congar continues, "in other words, there will be one life animating many without doing violence to the inner experience of anyone, just as, on Mount Sinai, Yahweh set fire to the bush and it was not consumed."[123] For Congar, the work of the Holy Spirit is not to bring uniformity out of union but to "bring [the kingdom of God] to unity … by respecting and even stimulating … diversity."[124] Further, while it might be tempting for some to limit this pneumatological unity to ostensibly Catholic or ostensibly religious expressions of persons-in-community, Congar extends this unity to all persons of goodwill and even to earthly creatures.[125] In short, charisms do not build community as if something added on to community, rather they enact human communion, human community itself, by incarnationally participating in the work of the Spirit.

These foregoing reflections flag attention to the need for authentic expression of diversity amidst the expression of institutional charism. Such reflections suggest that authentic communion occurs, not in spite of diversity, but precisely as an expression of diversity. Consequently, any account of charism-centered mission development and assessment must avoid functioning as an excluding practice where no secure place – that

[121] Ibid., 16.
[122] Congar, "The Holy Spirit Makes the Church One: He is the Principle of Communion," 17.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid., 16-7.
[125] Elizabeth Teresa Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 156.

is, no authenticity of identity – can be found for non-Catholic stakeholders and other stakeholders of diverse backgrounds. Further, in that Catholic social justice demands a "preferential option for the poor," marginalized and vulnerable populations of faculty, staff, and students, are particularly loci for institutional charism to flower and flourish.

1.2.1 Some Philosophical Considerations: Thing-like Entities and Possession

In the encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, John Paul II defends the position that theology and philosophy are not opposed but rather are "two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth."[126] Nevertheless, philosophical frameworks themselves are not theologically neutral and impose limitations and challenges for theological reflection. That is, the philosophical frameworks in which theology is couched have consequences for theological speculation, and openness to diversity is one place where traditional theological frameworks are well-recognized to struggle. Consequently, in pursuing a solid account of charism-centered mission integration, it is not enough to assume unchallenged the philosophical frameworks in which charism-centered mission is typically posed but to press these philosophical frameworks for new theological openings.

One thing to notice is that already in this present account charisms have become treated to some extent as thing-like entities. That is, charism is already treated here as *this thing* (i.e., a grace) that *I/we have* for the sake of others, for the sake of community. The other directionality of charism is founded on my/our *possession* of this thing-like entity or capacity. One might think back to the gatekeeper approach mentioned above in which charism-centered mission is treated as this thing that we the institution of higher

[126] John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html

education have, or possess, to institutionally safeguard and develop. The language of 'charism' compounds this difficulty in that grammatically speaking 'charism' functions as a noun. Congar touches on this issue in noting that "Greek words ending in *-ma* usually point to the result of an action" as *mathēma* (i.e. knowledge) is the result of *mathēsis* (i.e., the act of teaching).[127] The Greek, in this sense, draws attention to the incarnational, co-effecting power of the grace that is *charisma* (i.e., the singular noun form of the plural noun form *charismata*), and, to some extent, the thing-like quality of *charisma* is ameliorated by stressing the integral role of charisms as incarnationally participating in the work of the Spirit as the principle of ecclesial communion. However, even when treated as actively unifying forces, charisms still retain an object-like character in that the agency of unification is grounded in 'this thing' as indicated through a grammatically nominal form. To describe the theological consequences of this difficulty in short, *person* and *community* tend to be emphasized to the diminution or even exclusion of what might be called *persons-in-community*.

One way to look at charism expression in communities of higher education is to say that individual human persons who have unique and distinctive charisms are united in the Spirit to form a relationship, a community, that is greater than the sum of its parts, not just in terms of a synergy of community but also in terms of a community receptive of the grace of the Spirit. In this approach charisms tend to be attributed either to the individuals forming the community or to the community itself. That is, charisms are treated as a quality of the individual as individual or the group as group. This is the approach of Thomistic philosophical metaphysics in that charism as a grace is treated as an accident

[127] Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 161.

either of nature (as with individual persons) or of a moral unity (as with a collectivity of individual persons). It is also the approach most prevalently assumed in the research surveyed here and, consequently, is hence referred to as the "current dominant approach."

There are two particular considerations of note in examining the consequences of the current dominant approach. The primary consideration of note is that such an approach tends to emphasize 'person' and 'community' as semi-stable, though developing individualities. That is, just as charism can be treated as a thing added on to person and community, "person" and "community" in turn can take on a kind of thing-likeness. This grace that I as a person or we as a community have belongs to my/our use as steward(s) of this gift: it (the grace) is my/our gift and nourishes my/our community. This approach is problematic in that it requires the imposition of a clumsy dichotomy between person and community wherein attention is directed towards the members of the pair as if they exist independently and in isolation. In this account one can speak of individual charisms apart from the being-in-community of the ecclesial community and of a corporate/group charism as if functioning in isolation from the being-in-community of individual persons. This skips over the being-in-community of the community itself in order to rush to community and person as if they were independent entities discussed via independent concepts. Because this approach does not provide much assistance in working with the being-in-community of the charismatic community, it has the potential consequences of obscuring reflections on the work of the Spirit in institutions of higher education. That which is thing-like can be possessed and controlled in its very objectification and resists change in maintaining its coherence as "this charism" as opposed to "that charism." One might think back to O'Brien's contention that Catholic

higher education becomes less genuinely Catholic when its separateness, its distance from other communities, becomes emphasized. That is, when Catholic education becomes objectivized as 'this particular thing,' it can be marked with some defining, semi-stable element that can be raised to say, "Here! Look! This is the difference!" or "This is what it means to be a Catholic university!" As enticing as such a framework might sound for demonstrating the value of Catholic higher education in marketing campaigns, it loses something of the value of Catholic education as a charismatic community.

Metaphysical causality does not address this issue in that, though the discipline of philosophical metaphysics offers extensive and subtle reflections on causality, the underpinning assumptions of philosophical metaphysics prefer that which is stable. Correspondingly, these philosophical assumptions tend to subject – that is, *sub-iaceo*, throw beneath, throw under – elements more descriptive of person-in-community to semi-stable concepts such as "person" and "community." With respect to charism-centered mission, this has the unfortunate consequence of making the work of the Spirit secondary to, subject to, person and community rather than bringing charisms to light in a more incarnational manner. Nevertheless, if the institution of Catholic higher education encounters the work of the Spirit in effecting divine and human communion, especially through the respect for and even stimulation of diversity, a theological and philosophical model that stresses the in-between, being-community, persons-in-community, is far more appropriate for appreciating the work of the Spirit in this context.

A secondary consideration arising from this model of charism is fundamentally epistemic, having to do with surety of knowledge. In treating charisms as objects, it is an

easy second step to equate that which is the lived-experience of charism to the mental concept of charism. In philosophical epistemology, this type of theory of knowledge is referred to as a "correspondence" theory wherein the object in the mind corresponds to the object in reality. Thomistic accounts of philosophical metaphysics tend to employ correspondence theories of knowledge such that the idea of charism in my mind corresponds to charism in reality. Well-developed correspondence theories such as that claimed by philosophical metaphysics, especially Thomistic theories, do not claim to be free from ignorance and error; nevertheless, that which these theories tend to assume is that the epistemic theory itself is free from ignorance and error. That is, they tend to assume assurance of the correspondence itself. This is the case that postmodern accounts raise against the surety claimed by those preferring modern Thomism and other similar epistemological theories. Nevertheless, to claim lack of surety is not the same thing as to claim a chaos of ideas as if two accounts could not be set side-by-side in order to determine which one is better, or at least preferential.[128]

This epistemic philosophical issue intersects with a theological account of charism-centered mission in that if charism truly incarnationally participates in the work of the Spirit effecting communion, there must be something truly ethereal and mysterious about charism, and this something ought to be mysterious not in part, as if only the human imperfections of ignorance and error separates one from the workings of the Spirit, but in whole, as if human cognition itself must prostrate itself before the divine throne. That is, one's grasp of charism can never be too sure lest one confuse the lived-community encounter with one's understanding, or mental picture, of what constitutes

[128] Garvey's attack on postmodern philosophy as a free-for-all of ideas is poorly grounded in a working understanding of postmodern philosophical accounts.

that encounter. Treating charisms as objects can lead to the presumption of their stasis, reducing the work of the Spirit to the work of human beings, that is, to a kind of idol of the mind. Conversely, being-in-community is a thing never quite settled, never certain, never sure – much less self-assured! A feature characterizing both of these considerations concerns the manner in which the current dominant approach is capable of closing off the advent of Otherness, that is, the encounter of diversity and the encounter of the work of the Spirit present in mystery. Openness to Otherness is that which 'persons-in-community' might characterize in a way that 'person' and 'community' cannot. Consequently, philosophical positions particularly oriented towards Otherness might characterize the charismatic encounter more effectively than those more oriented towards surety.

1.2.2 Two Alternative Models: Neoplatonism and The Critique of Onto-Theology

To elaborate more fully upon this distinction between a dichotomy of 'person' and 'community' and 'persons-in-community' and its theological and philosophical consequences for the development and expression of diversity, one may turn to two alternative viewpoints that are associated with Christian Neoplatonism and what is referred to as the "critique of onto-theology." This will be accomplished here by examining the icon as it may appear in the charism-centered mission development of the institution of higher education. As noted above, Cook, drawing upon the insights of Andrew Greeley, argues that the careful selection and maintenance of images, particularly statues and other physical icons, constitutes a vital task in forming the culture of the charismatic community. However, the issue of iconography for the institution of

higher education extends beyond the decorative and beyond the cultural to the theological, and it is at this point where the sharpest divergence emerges from the approach to charism heralded by philosophical metaphysics.

According to the "current dominant approach" discussed above, the icon is symbolic in the sense that it stands in the place of another object or person to draw attention to that object or person. For example, a Francis of Assissi statue in a student union entrance hall might remind one of the life and virtues of Francis of Assisi and inspire a community of actors, that is the institution acting in accordance with its mission, to emulate the virtues that the community perceives Francis of Assisi to exhibit. Here, the icon functions as a kind of aid to memory to make present and embody the type of community the memory aid represents in the mind and actions of the institution as a collection of individuals. This is the approach that focuses on semi-stable, though developing realities, of the individual person and the institutional community.

A first alternative approach is one derived from John of Damascus' iconographic apologetics and exhibits some key features of Christian Neoplatonism. For John of Damascus, icons are necessary for the spiritual journey of contemplation as a necessary consequence of human materiality.[129] The body, for John of Damascus as Vassilis Adrahtas argues, is not something that humans have but something constituting what it means to be human such that even notions and words have a material character.[130] Consequently, theology is limited by the corporeal character of language and thought.[131]

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[129] James R. Payton, "John of Damascus on Human Cognition: An Element for His Apologetic on Icons," *Church History* 65, no. 2 (1996): 173-183, 179.
[130] Vassilis Adrahtas, "The Notion of Symbol as a Logical/Aesthetic Category According to the Theology of St John of Damascus," *Phronema* 17 (2002): 15-34, esp. 16.
[131] Ibid: 17.

However, in that theology is articulated by means of language and thought, it inevitably relies on correspondence between that which is thought and the reality to which the thought refers.[132] That is, for John of Damascus, the correspondence theory of knowledge is somehow unavoidable. Thus, as Adrahtas notes, theology, for John of Damascus, "cannot be absolute, but only relative."[133] Nevertheless, symbols in John of Damascus' account are not just systemic notions but characterize a theological disposition.[134] A "systemic notion" is much like as functions with the Francis of Assisi statue mentioned above with respect to the current dominant approach where the symbol that is the statue functions to call to mind the life and works of Francis of Assisi. This function assumes a kind of correspondence among one's perceptions of Francis of Assisi, his statue, and his actual life. Nevertheless, what is meant here by "theological disposition" is quite distinct from the reflection above in that the symbol itself effects a relationship with the divine.

Adrahtas argues that John of Damascus distinguishes between two types of symbols: "more bodily" (σωματικότερα) and "some greater meaning" (τινά ὑψηλοτέραν διάνοιαν).[135] Those symbols designated "more bodily" symbols concern a correspondence between notions, one bodily (σωματική) and another mental (νοερά).[136] The bodily notions function as symbols by "transcend[ing] their linguistic correspondence, leaving . . . open a spectrum of non-correspondence."[137] From this he argues that the first type of symbol might be defined as "every notion that is not

[132] Adrahtas, "The Notion of Symbol as a Logical/Aesthetic Category According to the Theology of St John of Damascus": 17.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.

attributed with equivalent/absolute correspondence."[138] The second type of symbol (διάνοια) is derived from the first. Adrahtas describes the διάνοια as a synthesis between a thesis, i.e., a correspondence, and the antithesis that is "the distinctiveness of religious experience," i.e., a non-correspondence.[139] That is, the διάνοια "emerge as the synthesis of the symbol and the non-symbolized."[140]

Adrahtas, in asking what the non-symbolized is, responds that "it is the fundamental and absolute Absence that renders an experience religious"; however, he argues that since religious experience is "rendered at the same time an equally fundamental and absolute Presence through the … mediation/interpretation [of unavoidable correspondence], the need for unity within the religious consciousness demands the preservation of both Absence and Presence," which is "achieved as a self-transcending, that is, borderline knowledge."[141] Adrahtas argues that, as a consequence, the "symbolic function is not based on [the correspondence of symbol] to something, but on the fact that [symbols] orient us towards something" and "teach [one's reason] the way it must think in the case of theology."[142] The "distinctive character" of religious experience is its "fundamental insufficiency," which does not preclude humanity's ability to know God, just its ability to do so in an autonomous and absolute way.[143] Thus, for John of Damascus, the purpose of the statue of Francis of Assisi would be not merely to draw correspondences in thought but more importantly to set the soul in relation to the divine encountered through the lived-experience of one's present encounter with Francis

[138] Ibid.
[139] Adrahtas, "The Notion of Symbol as a Logical/Aesthetic Category According to the Theology of St John of Damascus": 18.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.: 18-9.
[143] Ibid: 19.

of Assisi by training the mind to remember its human insufficiency. It is the insufficiency of the encounter that itself prostrates in humility before the divine throne, so-to-speak, and allows the work of the spirit to flower and flourish amidst diversity.

A second alternative approach is one derived from Jean-Luc Marion's phenomenological reflections in *God Without Being* and associated with the critique of onto-theology.[144] For Marion, the icon invariably lies in tension with the idol. The idol is not an illusion but "first visible." The idol is first visible in the sense that *it can be seen* such that seeing the idol suffices to know the idol. The gaze stops and freezes on the idol, becoming ensnared and entrapped by the beauty of its Presence. Thus, the concept signified by "God" is, for Marion, a conceptual idol. The icon, by contrast, "is a matter of rendering visible this invisable as such – the unenvisageable."[145] Consequently, that which "the icon shows [is], strictly speaking nothing."[146] Rather, according to Marion, "the icon summons the gaze to surpass itself by never freezing on a visible."[147] Marion goes on to argue that "in reverent contemplation of the icon … the gaze of the invisible aims at man" such that "the icon regards us – it *concerns* us, in that it allows the intention of the invisible to occur visibly."[148] In other words, "the icon opens in a face that gazes at our gazes in order to summon them to its depth."[149] In that the "intention [of gazing at our gazes] issues from infinity … it implies that the icon allows itself to be transversed by an infinite depth."[150] Speaking more concretely, Marion argues, "What characterizes the

[144] Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being: Hors-Texte*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).
[145] Ibid., 17.
[146] Ibid., 18.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid., 19.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid., 20.

material idol is precisely that the artist can consign to it the subjugating brilliance of a first visible," while "on the contrary, what characterizes the icon painted on wood does not come from the hand of a man but from the infinite depth that crosses it – or better, orients it following the intention of the gaze."[151]

Returning to the example of the statue of Francis of Assisi placed in the front entranceway of the student union, insofar as the statue is the object of my gaze the statue remains an idol. As the object of my gaze, it brings to mind a sense of presence, the presence of the life and virtues of Francis of Assisi. This is not just a sense of "I see" but also an extent to which "I can come to see" such as learning more about the life of Francis of Assisi might assist me in better appreciating the statue. That is, the idol does not stop or freeze the gaze insofar as the gaze is ignorant or in error, but insofar as the gaze is insufficient, incapable of encountering that which exceeds it and is Other. In this respect, Marion is close to John of Damascus, from whom Marion draws as part of his own account, in rejecting a correspondence theory of knowledge. The characteristics of the current dominant approach function as a kind of idolatry in Marion's terms in that the life and virtues of Francis become thing-like entities, conceptual statues of the mind, and close my gaze to other possibilities, to that infinity characterized by the intention of the Otherness who regards me through the icon.

When regarded in the manner of an icon, I do not so much gaze upon the statue as the unenvisageable infinity opened up by the statue gazes at me. The statue functioning as an icon directs the gaze at what exceeds the gaze, what goes beyond and overflows experience. Here, what is important is not knowledge but more a relation-ing, an

[151] Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being*, 21.

encounter of otherness, without trying to control that relationship. Thus, the Francis of Assisi statue, functioning as a kind of face that opens to that which exceeds and overflows experience, is that otherness of Absence gazing upon me. It is a stepping back and allowing the otherness of the other to be present precisely in its otherness, precisely in its absence. In speaking of the charism of the institution of higher education Marion's account leads to a similar account of present absence as that of John of Damascus.

Still, these two accounts retain two concerns for highlighting persons-in-community as opposed to resorting to 'person' and 'community.' The first is that the advent of otherness in the encounter makes sense only in allowing Otherness to be other, whereas the establishment of identity of the believing community requires more than just otherness. It requires one to have the capacity to say something concrete of that community. John of Damascus preserves the ability to say something concrete by preserving the correspondence theory of knowledge, even though that correspondence is intended to train the mind beyond knowledge. Marion, by contrast, is putting forth what is most properly speaking a philosophy, with extensive ostensibly theological elements, and, as a consequence, is untroubled by the prospect of emerging from mystical encounter to speak concretely of charismatic community. The second issue of note is that these accounts are written primarily for the first-person singular perspective, the perspective of 'I' rather than that of 'we.' However, the present absence of persons-in-community is that of both 'I' and 'we.'

1.2.3 A Third Alternative Approach: Louis-Marie Chauvet

A third alternative approach, and the approach of this present study, is that of Louis-Marie Chauvet. Chauvet's liturgical ecclesiology is particularly suited for

developing an account of charism-centered mission, both in his account's capacity to address the Catholic institution of higher education as persons-in-community and in the capacity of his account to address increasing diversity.

Chauvet begins the work of theology not "by descending from the theologies of the hypostatic union but rather by rising from the language of the [historically and culturally situated] New Testament Witnesses."[152] The believer – and, in this context, one might refer more generally to the 'mission participant' – becomes a subject of faith not in isolation but as a member of the missional charismatic community as person-in-community. The question of God, for Chauvet, belongs to the concrete – in other words, it belongs to "families, communities, parishes, the Church, but also businesses, neighborhoods, and cities."[153] This fundamental communality of the mission participant enacts symbolic space. This symbolic space is irreducible to space as extension and has cultural, psychological, and figurative connotations.[154]

Symbolic space is ordered in the sense that the world is constructed as object "already culturally inhabited and socially arranged" with the communality of the mission participant enacted through the concrete mediation of embodiment and language.[155] That is, for Chauvet, the human identity of the individual is always discovered amidst a cultural and social embodiment that is never wholly one's own. Chauvet refers to this priority of cultural and social embodiment as the 'symbolic order.' For Chauvet, the wholeness of personhood is fundamentally communal in that language and embodiment,

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[152] Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans. Patrick Madigan and Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1995), 69. All emphases from this text are original.
[153] c.f. note 114, above.
[154] Louis-Marie Chauvet, "The Liturgy in its Symbolic Space," in *Liturgy and the Body*, ed. Louis Chauvet and François Kabasele Lumbala. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995), 29.
[155] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 84-6.

two inherently communal domains, mediate self-identity. The person becomes a self, actualizes self-identity, amidst community – such as how the Christian believer discovers his or her identity as a believer amidst his or her ecclesial context. Returning to the statue of Saint Francis in the student union entrance hall, such an icon would be relevant for Chauvet as configuring the institution's symbolic space. As configuring that space, the statue is not so much a reminder of things absent that could be recalled or learned but an expression of the being-together of the local institutional community. It, among a vast array of diverse symbols, gives shape and order to the manner of being-together of the charismatic community. These diverse symbols are not equivalences with the being-together of the charismatic community but rather are historically and culturally bound crystallizations of a community whose being-together is irreducible to any crystallization. These crystallizations are transitional spaces in representing a corporate identity consistently in transition as is the communion of persons-in-community. To say this otherwise, for Chauvet, symbol is not a thing but a communion of persons-in-community.

Symbol enacts concrete human community through what Chauvet refers to as symbolic exchange. In articulating his account of symbolic exchange, Chauvet compares symbolic exchange to what he refers to as 'market exchange.' According to Chauvet, symbolic exchange is unlike market exchange in that market exchange is based upon calculative value. For example, in market exchange the value of the Saint Francis statue involves the counting and enumeration of the quality of the statue itself: how many statues there are; how well each statue is fashioned and with what type of materials; how effective the statue is in calling to mind the life and virtues of Francis; how appreciated the statue might be by prospective students, parents, or donors. These are the types of

elements available to quantitative and qualitative measure and demarcate symbols to the extent that they function as transitional objects. These are also the types of elements to which Cook problematically points in his account of charism as branding in *Charism and Culture*. When approaching charism as a kind of market exchange, charism development becomes a set of boxes to be checked, a set of initiatives towards which to direct funding, an object of reverence – it becomes a kind of administrative possession of institutional culture rather than a symbol of persons-in-community.

By contrast, the process of symbolic exchange emphasizes enactment of membership in the community. In symbolic exchange, according to Chauvet, "the important thing is less what one gives or receives than the very fact of exchanging and thus [being] recognized as a subject, as a full member of the group."[156] Though the characteristics of the symbols, such as physical images of charism, curricular components, and orientation seminars, might give shape and meaning to the charismatic community as crystallizations of the charism, what is less important are the crystallizations themselves than the being-together of the charismatic community. In symbolic exchange, one gives generously and freely according to one's talents and resources, as the value of the gift is not central but rather the fact of giving, i.e., communally participating as a subject. In examining charism-centered mission integration as a form of symbolic exchange, charism emerges not as a thing to be possessed in a gatekeeper-by-the-few maintenance approach but as a giftedness as expansive and diverse as the being-in-community of the charism-centered mission

[156] Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2001),
119.

community. The measure of success according to such a model becomes not its capacity to preserve a charism that is pure and unsullied but rather the capacity of diverse members of the institutional community to participate authentically in the charismatic community.

1.2.4 Liturgically Celebrating Charism: Institutional Charism as Liturgy

Symbolic exchange in Chauvet's account is not a mere abstraction, but rather it is realized as liturgy. For Chauvet, liturgy occurs not merely in ostensibly ecclesial settings but also amidst quotidian settings of life where spiritual sacrifice and spiritual worship extends to the everyday, a *sacramentum* of dailiness. Liturgical space communicates the Christian value system and produces tradition in an initiatory manner through engendering Christian identity. When addressed to the context of charism-centered mission in Catholic higher education, those elements to which Cook refers as elements of symbolic and normative culture function as sacramentals, symbols initiating the mission participant into the communal liturgy of the charismatic community.

Yet, as addressed above, the charismatic community is always elusive, especially in its diversity – that is, the extent to which ignorance and error might be overcome by forming community with those whom we might describe as different from ourselves – and otherness – that is, the sense in which the incarnational lived-reality of persons-in-community exceeds human knowledge and cannot be tied down, except through a kind of epistemic idolatry. There is a radicality of distance, of absence, in proposing such a sense of persons-in-community in that institutional mission must be open to the incarnational direction of the Spirit, and this reality of absence Chauvet accounts for through liturgy. Through liturgy, diverse and even dissonant community elements effect persons-in-

community. David Leege also recognizes this characteristic of liturgy in his reflections on the University of Notre Dame's charism:

> Liturgies find expression in both consonance and dissonance. They challenge the cacophony of babble, of individualisms so loud that other voices cannot be heard. While the confident community occasionally needs the strength of the chorale, even then it relies on an ornamented line to play off the stable harmonies and give the chorale depth. Liturgy responds to the challenge of the new, not with ossification, but with examination and often incorporation. The altar is brought out to the people; the Gospel is read in their midst. And to this confrontation with old stone and old paper the people bring new expression and new understanding…. Nowhere is this process more elemental, more vivid, than at the university that springs from, and struggles with, its founding faith.[157]

Sacramental theology, for Chauvet, as for John of Damascus, must constantly negotiate between conceptual knowledge and symbolic non-knowledge. For Chauvet, liturgy functions as a means through which the right distance between human beings and God is negotiated. Thus, for the context of charism-centered mission, lest a pursuit for institutional charism end in idolatry, continuous institutional re-visioning is necessary through a call to institutional conscience, which precisely the objective of institutional charism-centered mission assessment.

In using Chauvet's liturgical ecclesiology to develop an account of the expression of charism such an ecclesiology allows one to theologically operationally describe the process of charism development at the local level. This allows one to speak of the meaning of charism-centered mission at the local institutional level without being tied to the particularities of any given charism, which means that such an account could have

[157] David C. Leege, "The Catholic University: Living with ND (Necessary Dissonances)," in *The Challenge and Promise of a Catholic University*, ed. Theodore M. Hesburgh (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 127-40, esp. 128-9.

cross-institutional relevance. Additionally, in that Chauvet's account of symbolic exchange exhibits a similar epistemic humility as the accounts of John of Damascus and Marion in that what is not at focus is person and community as object or possession but rather as the being-together of persons-in-community. Openings for diversity and otherness allow room for broad community participation and the vocation to conscience through radical openness to self-criticism. The focus of assessment then becomes assessing institutional capacity for authentic participation of diverse mission participants in charism-centered mission and openness to continual conversion.

Chapter Two

Charism Assessment, A Process of Institutional Discernment and Conversion

Having set as the target of this treatise developing an ecclesiology for assessing charism-centered mission at institutions of Catholic higher education, it is appropriate to address what defines charism-centered mission assessment and what makes this task of assessment well done. Two questions of interest emerge here. The first is simply what defines assessment in general and what makes it well done, and the second is what theological significance assessment might have. Each of these questions this chapter will deal with in turn.

2.1. Assessment, a Process not a Destination

In that these reflections are only intended to set the stage for a theologically relevant account of assessment, they are not intended to provide a comprehensive introduction to assessment. For such an introduction, Barbara Walvoord's *Assessment Clear and Simple* and Banta and Palomba's *Assessment Essentials* are excellent places to start.[1] This argument will address two main points: first, it will seek to set out defining characteristics of assessment, and second, it will look at the characteristics, or principles, of assessment that make it well done. In addressing these points this argument is targeted towards demonstrating the manner in which assessment is a form of institutional self-awareness and learning whereby the process of assessment is better appreciated as an ongoing process rather than as an episodic series of fulfilments.

[1] Barbara E. Walvoord, *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010); Trudy W. Banta and Catherine A. Palomba, *Assessment Essentials*.

2.1.1 "Defining" Assessment

In the Second Edition of their landmark text *Assessment Essentials*, Banta and Palomba define assessment as the purposeful collection, analysis, and application of information specifically to improve student learning and development, but more generally "encompass[ing] the entire process of evaluating institutional effectiveness."[2] That is, assessment is a process of institutional learning that serves to provide quality assurance.[3] At the same time, however, Banta and Palomba hasten to add that an institution's definition of assessment will vary from institution to institution depending on the institution's philosophy of assessment and the institution's contextual purposes for conducting assessment.[4] They note that in that "assessment's greatest benefit is fostering academic introspection" one aspect of the assessment process is "to articulate a philosophy of assessment that [is] compatible with institutional culture."[5] Hence, there is room within secular accounts of assessment to articulate an account of assessment that takes into account the confessional consequences of charism-centered mission.

In defining assessment, it is useful to distinguish between what might be referred to as the assessment of individual students and outcomes assessment. Whereas assessing individual students involves activities familiar to the grading or badging-oriented practices of the classroom, outcomes assessment involves taking a "second look" at student proficiencies to determine where students as a group may need additional assistance.[6] Whether addressing a common deficiency in matriculating student

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[2] Banta and Palomba, *Assessment Essentials*, 1-2.
[3] Ibid., 7-9.
[4] Ibid., 10-11.
[5] Ibid., 10.
[6] Ibid., 1-2; Trudy W. Banta, "That Second Look at Student Work: A Strategy for Engaging Faculty in Outcomes Assessment," in *Hallmarks of Effective Outcomes Assessment*, ed. Trudy W. Banta (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 37-42.

populations or modifying an academic program to more effectively assist students in meeting its learning objectives, outcomes assessment focuses on evaluating student knowledge and skills collectively, whether across all students in a course, across sections of the same course, and across all courses in a disciplinary major.[7] Though, depending on curricular structures, charism-focused assessment outcomes may occur vibrantly on the levels of individual and outcomes assessment, it is with respect to institutional assessment that mission concerns particularly come to the fore. Institutional assessment acknowledges that "it takes a campus to develop a graduate" and assesses activities across the institution, including academic programs but also admissions offices, offices providing co-curricular opportunities, physical facilities management, and the wide variety of other institutional offices and services supporting student learning.[8] Institutional assessment addresses the whole picture presented by the campus community and assures that the institutional mission and vision are effectively expressed among institutional units. Due to the institutional scope of university mission, the assessment of charism-centered mission can and should occur across these variants of assessment.

In articulating the characteristics of assessment in greater detail, an adage, often attributed to Ralph Waldo Emmerson, is useful. The adage goes, "Life is a journey, not a destination." As with life more generally speaking, this adage also rings true for the process of assessment. Assessment is more a process than a destination.

First, assessment is a process in that its aim is to produce institutional learning over time. The assessment process, as Banta and Palomba argue, is not and should not be used as a process to evaluate faculty but to evaluate the "cumulative effects of the

[7] Banta, "That Second Look at Student Work," 38.
[8] Banta and Palomba, *Assessment Essentials*, 241-2.

education process."[9] The assessment process opens the door to ask questions like "whether the curriculum makes sense in its entirety"; "whether students, as a result of all their experiences, have the knowledge, skills, and values that graduates should possess"; and "whether students can integrate learning from individual courses into a coherent whole."[10] In addition, the assessment process provides opportunities for re-examining the meaning, value, and allotment of university resources. For example, assessment also allows collective inquiry into whether budgetary allotments are used efficiently to meet learning goals. While "regional accreditors, professional accreditors, and state governments all have specific requirements that affect the assessment process," "internal needs" such as strategic planning, budgeting, and program review should be linked to assessment results.[11] In other words, assessment is a process of institutional reflection and self-analysis for the sake of improvement.

Second, assessment is itself a process in that it occurs through a series of stages. It functions in a cyclical manner that is frequently referred to as the assessment cycle. Though the assessment cycle is broken down in a number of ways the basic structure of the cycle is as follows: 1) relevant stakeholders determine desired outcomes; 2) activities and experiences are aligned with outcomes; 3) activities and experiences are enacted and information is collected; 4) information is analyzed, shared, and meanings, or significations, are drawn; 5) changes are implemented based on the information gathered; and 6) the cycle restarts with fresh eyes in defining desired outcomes, determining useful

[9] Trudy W. Banta, "A Call for Transformation," in *Building a Scholarship of Assessment*, by Trudy W. Banta and Associates (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 284-291, 287; Banta and Palomba, *Assessment Essentials* 10.
[10] Banta and Palomba, *Assessment Essentials*, 10.
[11] Ibid., 220.

assessment measures, and assessing impacts of evidence-based changes. Banta and Palomba summarize this process using the categories of assessment planning, assessment implementation, and sustaining and improving assessment processes.[12] Assessment practices are often referred to as "closed-loop" when the full assessment process is observed, including making changes based on assessment results.

Third, assessment is a process in that it does not take for granted its own methods. Over time "the assessment process itself will be constantly updated and adapted to meet the changing needs of the institution, students, faculty, and the public."[13] "Meta-assessment" is the process of evaluating assessments.[14] Though assessing assessments in the abstract may seem to place assessors at the precipice of an infinite regress, when assessment is seen as a process rather than a thing to get done and get out of the way, re-imagining the process of assessment itself by means of conducting assessment comes to make sense. Banta and Palomba argue that "assessment practitioners place high value on evidence-based results" and "less importance on the randomness of data."[15] In other words, data alone is not enough. The assessment process is about learning and "much of what is learned is about the assessment process itself."[16]

2.1.2 What Makes Assessment Well Done

In *Assessment in Practice*, Banta, Jon Lund, Karen Black, and Frances Oblander characterize a form of assessment they consider to be well done that is patterned after the American Association for Higher Education's (AAHE) document *Principles of Good*

[12] Banta and Palomba, *Assessment Essentials*, 15-6.
[13] Trudy W. Banta et al., *Assessment in Practice*, 29-30.
[14] Banta and Palomba, *Assessment Essentials*, 34.
[15] Ibid., 23.
[16] Ibid., 34.

Practice for Assessing Student Learning.[17] Their analysis shows that assessment that is well done relies on an imaginative conception of learning, a goal-oriented process of development, and, most importantly, comprehensive community building.

First, assessment of learning should reflect something of the complexity of the event that is learning. Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander argue that assessment requires an "imaginative consideration of learning."[18] They follow the AAHE in arguing that "assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time."[19] Assessment that accomplishes this avoids assessing learning as if reducible to the "rote repetition of facts and unimaginative application."[20] Rather, learning "involves not only what students know but what they can do with what they know" and "not only knowledge and abilities but values, attitudes, and habits of mind."[21]

This is no less true, and perhaps even more so the case, when dealing with a theological and spiritual reality such as charism expression. For example, in "More than Words: Examining Actions of Power through Extra-verbal Domains in Theological Education," Elizabeth Barnett and Darren Cronshaw apply this same principle of assessing imaginative applications of learning within the context of theological education.[22] They argue that theological education has come to privilege words and so

[17] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, *Assessment in Practice*; Alexander W. Astin, Trudy W. Banta, K. Patricia Cross, Elaine El-Khawas, Peter T. Ewell, Pat Hutchings, Kay M. McClenney, Marcia Mentkowski, Margaret A. Miller, E. Thomas Moran, Barbara D. Wright, *Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning* (Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 1992).
[18] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 10.
[19] AAHE, 2; c.f. Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 10.
[20] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 11.
[21] AAHE, 2; c.f. Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 10.
[22] Elizabeth Waldron Barnett and Darren Cronshaw, "More than Words: Examining Actions of Power through Extra-Verbal Domains in Theological Education," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 21, no. 1 (2017): 4-26.

have come to separate ethical habits and practices from theological content.[23] They argue, "if we teach a missional gospel, we ought to teach [and assess] missionally."[24] Barnett and Cronshaw argue that the task for theological education is to discover new ways for students to do and apply learning so as to extend learning out of merely verbal domains and into missional expressions. Thus, the confessional orientation of charism-centered mission assessment might particularly require learning to be imaginatively reconsidered.

Second, effective assessment functions as a goal-oriented process of development. The process of assessment is inherently goal-oriented and "works best when the programs it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes."[25] Effective goals are "clear, shared, and implementable" and "derived from the institution's mission, from faculty intentions in programs and course design, and from knowledge of students' own goals."[26] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander argue that "the process of transforming the college mission into specific goals is both internally important, in terms of linking assessment efforts to improvements, and externally important, in light of calls for educational renewal and accountability."[27] Goals "sharpen the focus of assessment" so as to bound assessment and identify what the institution values.[28] Aligning unit goals to institutional goals respects the complex system that is the institution of higher education.[29]

Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander also clarify, though, that assessing goals should occur along with assessing the processes that lead to those goals. They argue that while

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[23] Barnett and Cronshaw, "More than Words": 6.
[24] Ibid.: 6-7.
[25] AAHE, 2; c.f. Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 17.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 18.
[28] Gary R. Pike, "Measurement Issues in Outcomes Assessment," in *Building a Scholarship of Assessment*, 131-147, 133.
[29] Ibid.

attention to student outcomes is a key focus for assessment, additionally the student experiences leading to those outcomes ought to be assessed.[30] This characteristic of effective assessment, for them, touches on everything from classroom pedagogy to student involvement in co-curricular activities and focuses on these as indicators as to which students learn best under which conditions.[31] Gary Pike pushes this argument further to assert that not only do "institutional experiences tell us that an emphasis on both goals (outcomes) and strategies (process) is most likely to lead to effective assessment" but also "evaluating the alignment between goals and strategies" is fundamental to effective assessment.[32]

For example, the document *Ignatian Pedagogy – A Practical Approach*, accomplishes this in that, in addition to outlining a practical Ignatian pedagogy, it provides anthropologically-centered goals for student learning.[33] According to this document, students engaging with an Ignatian pedagogy should: 1) "gradually learn to discriminate and be selective in choosing experiences"; 2) "draw fullness and richness from reflection on those experiences"; and 3) "become self-motivated by his or her own integrity and humanity to make conscious, responsible choices."[34] The term 'experiences' is specially defined in this document to reflect Ignatian values of learning that extends beyond the assimilation of subject matter to the development of the learner in his or her

[30] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, *Assessment in Practice*, 23.
[31] Ibid., 26.
[32] Pike, "Measurement Issues in Outcomes Assessment,"133.
[33] Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy – A Practical Approach*. 2013. http://jesuitinstitute.org/Pages/IgnatianPedagogy.htm
[34] Ibid., 18.

personhood.[35] These goals are paired with an educational process guided by instructors through which students "wrestle with significant issues and complex values of life."[36]

2.1.3 Assessment and Community Building

Third, and most importantly, effective assessment is foundationally intertwined with community building. Community building is fundamental to arriving at shared institutional values, forming communities of judgement, making assessment data meaningful within the institutional community, and developing assessment communities that are receptive, supportive, and enabling. Community building is also a fundamental aspect of public accountability.

Effective assessment begins with developing shared institutional values. Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, following the AAHE, argue that assessing student learning should begin with educational values such that "assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement."[37] Educational values should shape both what is assessed and how assessment is conducted.[38] Assessment "where educational mission and values are skipped over … threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about."[39] Assessment devolves into what seems to become pointless measuring when educational values are dismissed – assessment for compliance alone yields poor results.[40] Part of the reason assessment often takes this turn into triviality is that starting with educational values requires a "shared conception as to what an institution is, what it values, and what it aspires to be."[41] That

[35]Jesuit Institute, *Ignatian Pedagogy*, 15.
[36] Ibid., 4.
[37] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 3; AAHE, 2.
[38] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 3.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 4.

is, effective assessment requires a working consensus. It requires community-building. This consensus should evolve and mature in terms of its complexity over time as it comes to address more aptly the diversity and fluidity of the higher education context, but the key challenge involves the community-building necessary in coming to shared educational values.[42] This consensus-building requires both "looking inward" to examine the institution's own distinct educational context, as well as "looking outward to examine and define the links between higher education and society."[43] This is why assessment, as Banta and Palomba argue, should not be conducted as the exclusive domain of administrators and experts but instead should reflect discussion and consensus and develop as programs and campuses mature.[44]

Evidence suggests that well-specified charism-centered missions may have in their charisms something of a head start in locating shared educational values. Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander argue that "many college and university mission statements fail to capture the true purpose of their institution" because "their broad overview of purpose, most often encompassing the areas of teaching, research, and service, makes them generally ineffective instruments for directing institutional decision-making and improvements."[45] Mission statements are often ineffective when they only resort to specifying inputs or "become nothing more than communications to external constituents," such as when 'mission' becomes reduced to 'branding.'[46] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander particularly commend "small church-affiliated colleges" for

[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Banta and Palomba, 382-3.
[45] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 4.
[46] Ibid.

"express[ing] their missions in documents that suggest these colleges know why they exist and what impact they hope to have on students, especially with respect to intellectual, spiritual, and psychosocial learning."[47] This echoes Locklin's findings, addressed in Chapter 1, wherein instructors of comparative theology had an easier time articulating an account of comparative theology as relevant to their missions when they started with accounts of institutional charism that are already well-developed in terms of their specificity.[48]

Nevertheless, also as addressed in Chapter 1, charism-centered mission occasions its own struggle in the face of diverse worldviews. Due to growing diversity within Catholic colleges and universities, Catholic higher education faces additional challenges in terms of developing assessment communities that involve broad community participation. The AAHE argues in its sixth principle of assessment that "assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved."[49] They argue that "student learning is a campus-wide responsibility" that also "may involve individuals beyond the campus" such as alumni, trustees, or employers.[50] Just as "effective assessment of student learning cannot occur without involving faculty in setting goals and objectives for learning, selecting or developing assessment methods, collecting evidence of student learning, determining the meaning of the findings, and taking warranted improvement actions," so too must administrative decision-making move away from a "largely top-down, management-oriented use of information in planning and decision making toward a culture that more freely embodies

[47] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 4.
[48] Bidlack, Brecht, Krokus, Scheid, and Locklin.
[49] AAHE, 3; c.f. Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 35.
[50] Ibid.

the principles of a learning organization."[51] A gatekeeper-by-the-few approach is as antithetical to the aims and intentions of assessment as it is to the healthy expression of charism-centered mission. Banta and Palomba argue that an effective assessment philosophy must involve "the values and interests of the many stakeholders in assessment, not just of a few decision makers."[52]

Effective Assessment rests foundationally on forming communities of judgement. The community-building central to effective assessment additionally reflects the methodological limitations of the sciences backing assessment practice. That is, community-building is of central relevance precisely as a means for redressing limitations in the empirical sciences.[53] For example, Banta and Palomba note regarding assembling a common scoring rubric that "rather than a mirror of some absolute reality, a rubric is a record of negotiated compromises–a product of many minds and therefore more thoughtful than any one person could conceive alone."[54] In that there is something fundamentally ineffable about learning, epistemologically speaking, "evidence used by assessment must always rest upon a peer-based community of judgement."[55]

While Catholic higher education institutions share with non-confessional universities communities of judgement such as, among others, those formed by disciplinary faculties and by regional and professional accrediting bodies, Catholic higher education institutions must also wrestle with the ever so controversial role of the local bishop as a source of authority and judgement. Much of the literature surrounding *Ex*

[51] Banta and Palomba, 39; Peter T. Ewell, "An Emerging Scholarship: A Brief History of Assessment," in *Building A Scholarship of Assessment* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 3-25, 24.
[52] Banta and Palomba, 13
[53] John Harris and Dennis Sansom, *Discerning is More than Counting* (American Academy for Liberal Education, 2000).
[54] Banta and Palumbo, 102.
[55] Ewell, "An Emerging Scholarship," 18.

corde wrestles with questions pertaining to episcopal oversight. Practically speaking, local bishops typically do not participate in and are far removed from institutional assessment processes. Nevertheless, charism-centered mission assessment touches on areas where a local bishop might conceivably wish to participate. In such circumstances, it may be useful to look towards a more cooperative, community focused model of authority in order to respect the aims and means of the assessment process. For example, in "Power and Authority in the Church: Emerging Issues," Richard Gaillardetz raises David Stagaman's critique of the "modern tendency to speak of authority as if it were the property of persons or things" and in its place offers the model of Victor Lee Austin for whom a "more mature exercise of authority…functions so as to coordinate individual human activity for the sake of corporate action."[56] Gaillardetz points out that "healthy authoritative relationships do not exist in abstraction" but "are performed cooperatively in the life of the community."[57] That is, part of the comprehensive community building necessary for forming effective communities of judgement relies on forming mature authoritative relationships. Additionally, confessionally-based communities of judgement with potentially authoritative roles might include sponsoring religious orders and faith-based (or charism-based) institutional communities such as the ACCU or the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities.

Effective assessment relies on the community building necessary to make data meaningful. Not only does effective assessment begin with the community building

[56] Richard R. Gaillardetz, "Power and Authority in the Church: Emerging Issues," in *A Church with Open Doors: Catholic Ecclesiology for the Third Millenium*, ed. Richard R. Gaillardetz and Edward P. Hahnenberg (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2015), 87-111, 103. See also David Stagman, *Authority in the Church* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 24-28 and Victor Lee Austin, *Up with Authority: Why We Need Authority to Flourish as Human Beings* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 2.
[57] Gaillardetz, 103.

necessary to establish shared educational values, evidence and data collected through the process of assessment must also be used in ways that sheds light on questions people care about – that is, data must be made meaningful to the institutional community to be effective, as argued by Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander.[58] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander argue that too many assessment reports are organized in a manner that is data driven rather than issue driven.[59] Instead, data must be made meaningful for policy-related decisions, while also "pay[ing] attention to and respect[ing] the diverse perspectives on campus in order to ensure that recommendations are believable and practical."[60] This, according to the AAHE, requires "thinking in advance how the [assessment] information will be used, and by whom."[61] They remark that "assessment alone changes little" and that "assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change."[62] To promote change, assessment should be paired with a campus ethos that visibly values and works at the quality of its teaching and learning.[63] Such an ethos is supported by institutional leadership and is central to decision-making, especially in areas pertaining to planning, budgeting, and personnel decisions.[64]

Developing such an ethos at a Catholic institution of higher education requires connecting assessment to mission. Catholic institutions must come to see assessment as more than just a secular venture for secular purposes. Assessment must reflect missional, and thereby, charism-centered values. As argued in further detail below, one way to

[58] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 43.
[59] Ibid., 44.
[60] Ibid.
[61] AAHE, 3; Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 43.
[62] AAHE, 3; Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 50.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.

accomplish such a pairing is to engage in assessment as a form of institutional conversion whereby the institution comes to more effectively live out its mission.

Effective assessment rests on building assessment communities that are "receptive, supporting, and enabling."[65] By this Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander mean that "successful assessment requires an environment characterized by effective leadership, administrative commitment, adequate resources (for example, clerical support and money), faculty and staff development opportunities, and time."[66]

Catholic institutions with charism-centered missions have additional responsibilities in providing assessment environments that are receptive, supporting, and enabling. Among such responsibilities is the responsibility of providing locations in which individuals of diverse perspectives can participate authentically in charism-centered mission assessment.

Effective assessment rests on building assessment communities that demonstrate public accountability.[67] Institutional public accountability recognizes that the higher education institution is not an island unto itself and, as a consequence, has a civic responsibility to stand accountable for its stewardship of public resources. Even if this were not the case, pragmatically speaking, calls for the reform of higher education, whether arising internally or externally, mean that higher education institutions cannot turn their backs on accountability measures.[68] In the words of Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, "the accountability train is leaving the station," and "[institutions of higher education] can either jump aboard and attempt to steer it, or stand on the tracks and be

[65] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 62.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid., 56.
[68] Ibid., 57.

run over by it."[69] Nevertheless, assessment proponents face the reality that though assessment leads to genuine improvements, assessment efforts have "generated little information that external publics find helpful."[70] A need then exists for academics to learn how to address the needs and concerns of external audiences more effectively.[71]

Catholic institutions of higher education, like other confessionally-oriented higher education institutions, are not only publicly accountable to external agencies such as accrediting and governmental agencies but also to external stakeholders such as church members, religious leaders, sponsoring religious orders, and donors, and, as David Brandt notes, "parts of [institutional] assessment might not be of interest to some constituencies but become vitally important to others."[72] Thus, the responsibility for accountability is not less but greater for Catholic institutions of higher education. However, just as the responsibility is greater so is the opportunity for creative ways in which to demonstrate accountability. In that Catholic institutions of higher education have a wealth of resources at their disposal in their ability to draw from the riches of the Catholic tradition, these resources can be brought to bear on the challenges of accountability.

2.2 Assessment as Institutional Discernment and Conversion

Having characterized assessment and that which makes it well done, this argument turns now to tracing the theological significance of assessment as a process of institutional discernment and conversion.

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[69] Banta, Lund, Black, and Oblander, 57.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 57-8.
[72] David S. Brandt, "Assessment: Mandate or Privilege?," in *Assessment in Christian Higher Education: Rhetoric and Reality*, ed. D. John Lee and Gloria Goris Stronks (Lanham, MA: Calvin Center Studies, 1994), 3-9, 6.

2.2.1 Assessment as Institutional Discernment, A Philosophical Perspective

Philosophically speaking, assessment is a process of institutional discernment. As a process of institutional discernment, assessment is a process of judgement and decision making. Copious references to assessment as a process of judgement and evidenced-based decision making emerge in assessment literature. For example, Ikenberry and Kuh define assessment as "the gathering and use of evidence of student learning in decision making and in strengthening institutional performance and public accountability," while Kinzie, Hutchings, and Jankowski argue that "assessment's purpose is to answer questions, shape better policies, [and] make better decisions."[73] Banta and Polumba, likewise, argue that assessment-generated information provides a more reliable basis for decision making than intuition alone.[74] Kinzie, Hutchings, and Jankowski in particular argue that the farther one progresses in the assessment cycle – that is, moving past the collection and analysis of information to applying information collected to inform and assess educational decision making – the more challenging the task of assessment becomes.[75]

Assessment provides evidence that assists an institution of higher education in choosing its own path forward. Decision making has existential consequences for the institution as an institution. As Luke Johnson notes, "in making decisions of any sort, a

[73] Stanley O. Ikenberry and George D. Kuh, "From Compliance to Ownership: Why and How Colleges and Universities Assess Student Learning," in George D. Kuh et al., *Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2015), 2; Jillian Kinzie, Pat Hutchings, and Natasha A. Jankowski, "Fostering Greater Use of Assessment Results: Principles for Effective Practice," in idem, 56.
[74] Banta and Polumba, 33.
[75] Kinzie, Hutchings, and Jankowski, 57

group reveals itself as a group, and it does this by becoming itself a group."[76] Through institutional decision making, institutional identity is both discovered and established.

Institutional decision making both arises from and informs institutional conscience. Just as one might speak of "institutional memory" and the organizational processes used to preserve it, one might also speak of an "institutional conscience." Though it is easy to associate institutional decision making with the decisions of a few key individuals, administrators who may have significantly more power and authority than other stakeholders, in that the institution is more than the sum of its individual constituents, so too is its capacity for moral agency. In this way, institutions are capable of both institutional virtue and institutional violence (that is, institutionally committed or perpetuated injustices) precisely as institutions.

An institution's capacity for virtuous and violent action is perceived through its institutional conscience. This might also be characterized as a corporate ethos. Institutional conscience is the moral compass of the institution as an institution that chooses among a vast array of virtuous and violent organizational structures and actions. Institutional conscience is informed by institutional memory and institutional decision-making. Institutional memory makes present the history and context of the institution, while institutional decision-making directs the course that institutional identity takes. The moral imperative of institutional consciousness is not only about distinguishing right from wrong amidst the institutional context, but also about making better decisions about pursuing virtue, e.g. academic excellence.

[76] Luke Timothy Johnson, *Scripture and Discernment: Decision Making in the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 15.

Assessment enhances the decision-making process by drawing together evidence that characterizes the institution's progress from a variety of sources, leading to evidence-based decision making. Further, assessment's cyclical process allows for evaluating the effectiveness of prior decisions and re-evaluating the methodologies through which the decision-making process has occurred. To say that assessment is a process of discernment is to underscore that assessment results make demands on institutional conscience by discerning possible courses of action.

Furthermore, assessment as philosophically a process of discernment is essentially a process of listening. Assessment is unique in that it's a systematic process of listening through the collection and analysis of evidence drawn from a variety of stakeholders. In that assessment done well involves a comprehensive array of institutional stakeholders, assessment democratizes the institutional discernment process thereby democratizing institutional identity. When done well, assessment makes even hierarchically structured organizations more democratic. Assessment supplies institutional stakeholders with tools to address institutional injustices, e.g. the adjunct crisis, while opening opportunities to pursue greater virtue, e.g. academic excellence. Tying assessment to budget decisions, a standard raised by regional accrediting agencies, particularly democratizes institutional decision-making. As noted above, effective assessment is about more than just numbers – it is about institutional values and listening to the needs of stakeholders.

Discernment is not a simple choosing among alternatives but an engagement with a lived-world experience that resists definition. There is something to the process of discernment according to which that which is discerned resists knowing itself. Pathways discerned rarely offer a fork in the road on a flat plain of clear choice where the end is

well in sight, rather discernment often reveals a dense forest obscuring both the decision being made and the end destination of the choice.

The resistance encountered through assessment as a process of discernment touches upon what Peter Ewell refers to as the "ineffability debate." [77] This debate characterizes learning as having characteristics that are not necessarily measurable or articulable. In their publication "Discerning is More than Counting," John Harris and Dennis Sansom take up the ineffability debate. They argue that, to be effective, assessment must be more than a process of data collection. This, they argue, is in part due to the contemplative and intuitive dimensions of knowledge. [78] Critiquing an application of assessment that ignores the methodological limitations of the empirical sciences in favor of a gross positivism, they argue, "objectivist data alone will not provide a substantive understanding needed to improve student learning and institutional performance."[79] Harris and Sansom argue that to better reflect assessment as a process of discernment, assessment practitioners need to "broaden its operant epistemology"; "become more tentative in reporting quantitative data"; "accept that reality cannot be completely communicated in any language, even mathematics"; "respect the role of tacit knowledge"; "encourage discipline-based assessment"; "consider adopting the reflective practitioner as the dominant paradigm for higher education improvement"; and "encourage and support faculty as communities of professional judgement."[80]

Though the ineffability argument is often used against assessment processes, there is a counter-intuitive argument as to why the evidence-based decision-making process

[77] Ewell, "An Emerging Scholarship," 17-18.
[78] Harris and Sansom, 2.
[79] Ibid., 1.
[80] Ibid., 24.

that is assessment coheres well with an account of learning as inherently ineffable. A key shared characteristic one can see in all of Harris and Sansom's suggestions for engaging in assessment as a process of discernment and respecting the ineffability of learning is the role of epistemic humility. In their account numerical values become more tentative and epistemically alternative forms of evidence beyond empirical values become valuable in addition to empirically collected data. The value in treating empirical values tentatively and seeking alternative forms of evidence of learning is avoiding a claim that is surer than the empirical epistemological strategies can support. Nevertheless, likewise, the empirical data collected through many assessment practices also has a role in challenging the surety of knowledge about learning. As a process of evidence-based decision making, assessment is capable of challenging preconceptions and long-standing perceptions about student learning. Empirical evidence embraces epistemic humility by challenging the surety of non-empirical assumptions about learning. Just as the empirical epistemic methodologies have their limits so too do other epistemic methodologies, e.g. phenomenological approaches. Harris and Sansom do not argue for jettisoning empirical data entirely, rather they seek to place empirical data in a larger context that respects the ineffability of learning.

2.2.2 Assessment and Discernment, A Theological Perspective

Just as assessment is philosophically significant as a process of discernment, so too is assessment theologically significant as a process of discernment. Theologically, 'discernment' refers to a process of judgement and decision-making in a faith context, just as it does in a philosophical context, yet when discernment is undertaken in a faith context it "enables humans to perceive their characteristically ambiguous experience as

revelatory and to articulate such experiences in a narrative of faith."[81] In referring to discernment in his letters, St. Paul uses cognates of *krinō*, which refers to the process of judging, and *dokimazō*, which refers to the process of testing.[82] The process of discernment is a gift of the Holy Spirit enabling the human intelligence to "hear God's Word" and [become] properly disposed to respond to that Word in the practical circumstances of [institutional] life."[83]

As the first chapter of this work investigated the bifurcated schema of research on charism-centered mission – one research path focusing on particular charisms at specific colleges and universities, with the other focusing on Catholic identity and emphasizing the sources and tradition of Catholicism – it was noted that sparse resources exist to evaluate new and existing directions in charism development in large part due to the lack of a cross-institutionally relevant theological framework. Nevertheless, though institutions may lack a *theological framework* through which to discern directions charism-centered mission is to take, a lacuna this study hopes to redress, there is no lack of a *process* by which to evaluate new and existing directions in charism. This process is supplied by assessment.

In that the assessment cycle begins with setting goals and collecting information regarding progress towards fulfilling those goals, assessment functions philosophically as a process of listening to institutional stakeholders. Just as listening is philosophically foundational in the process of assessment, so too is it theologically foundational. When practiced in a faith context the process of setting goals and collecting evidence of

[81] Johnson, 109.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 109-10.

progress towards those goals becomes re-contextualized as a process of listening to the Spirit as it moves in the institutional community. This is not a vague spiritualization but a concrete event. Assessment that reaches deep into the marrow of the institutional community encounters voices not typically heard by institutional members with greater power and privilege. These voices may often challenge the prevailing institutional self-image questioning the extent to which the institutional community truly and authentically lives up to its chrism-driven mission. Through assessment as a process of institutional listening, voices offering constructive criticism are not easily fobbed off as malcontents but embraced as voices of the Spirit. In this way, not only does assessment practiced involving a comprehensive array of institutional stakeholders, philosophically speaking, democratize the institution, so too, when practiced in a context of faith, listens to community concerns and thereby fosters and empowers the institutional higher education community precisely as a community.

Closed-loop assessment takes assessment as a process of listening and moves it to the level of discernment. In that closed-loop assessment not only identifies and implements evidence-based changes but also assesses the impact of those changes, closed-loop assessment particularly shines as a process of judgement and decision making that existentially reveals and determines institutional identity as the institution chooses its own path forward. In providing evidence of the level and quality of institutional effectiveness the institution examines itself in the light of the Spirit; in tying evidence collection results to decision making institutional identity becomes re-anchored in institutional values articulated through the institution's chosen outcomes. The question moves from "who are we, as an academic community?" to "who are we becoming?"

In that Catholic institutions of higher education are indeed institutions, communities centered around the pursuit of academic excellence, Catholic institutions of higher education are morally obliged to embrace social justice and the common good and lay their hearts firmly in Catholic social teaching. Catholic institutions of higher education effectively undermine their charism-centered mission when that mission is used as an excuse to perpetuate institutional injustices. Embracing the constructive criticism of diverse stakeholders, especially those of lesser power and privilege, prepares the institutional community to choose bold new pathways facing the ills plaguing higher education head on, choosing a principled, charism-centered mission approach over an approach that merely "follows the crowd" and so only serves to perpetuate institutional injustices.

The conscience of the institution is significant in a theological context as it is from a philosophical point of view. From a theological perspective, one may speak not just of institutional conscience as a collective ethos but as an ethos guided by the Spirit. Institutional decision making, thereby, has morally significant consequences and is tasked with pursuing holiness and virtue and turning away from evil, such as institutionally-wrought injustice. Moreover, institutional decision making has eschatological significance. Institutions claiming a charism-centered mission claim participation in the divine *missio* – the work of God in the world uniting the world to a supernatural life in the divine. Assessment, as a self-reflective and analytical process, functions as a kind of institutional examination of conscience. That is, assessment functions as an opportunity for the institution to gauge its pursuit of holiness, participation in evil, and its overall progress towards eschatological redemption as an academic community.

Assessment is further useful with respect to the manner in which individual consciences relate to and influence institutional conscience. In that quality assessment is a process of listening to diverse stakeholders, including those on the margins who may challenge the institution's self-perception of fidelity to its charism, assessment provides a means by which to appeal to the individual consciences of administrators and other institutional members of power and privilege. This systemically provides the opportunity to realign the ethos guiding institutional decision-making with that of the institutional community as a community.

In that institutions are morally capable of turning away from evil and towards virtue, they are further capable of institutional conversion. Though the term 'conversion' is often used to refer to the practice of proselytization, it bears the more fundamental reference of turning away from evil and towards goodness and, as a corollary, has eschatological consequences in terms of bringing about the divine plan in the world to its fullness and completion. It is this more fundamental meaning of conversion which bears particular significance for assessment in Catholic institutions of higher education. Insofar as the completed assessment cycle is a force for institutional change, it is also an opportunity for institutional conversion, an opportunity for institutions to move away from systemic injustices and towards institutional virtue.

Charism holds a special role in effecting and developing Catholic identity as an impetus for positive institutional change. An institution of higher education rooted firmly in the expression of a lively charism is not torn down by sources of constructive criticism and calls for greater diversity but reinvigorated by them. Communal brokenness becomes not an element to be suppressed and hidden away but an opportunity to engage in

institutional conversion, that is, moving towards eschatological redemption as an academic community. Openness to the Spirit, then, requires the educational community to engage in a growth mindset precisely as an institution.

Still, the institutional discernment methodology offered by assessment runs also into ineffability challenges, especially when approached from a theological perspective. Discernment, regardless of its context, is an engagement with a lived-world experience that resists definition. That which resists knowing, from a theological perspective, is not only that which presents itself as a dense forest obscuring both the decision being made and the end destination of the choice but extends to the mysteries of the divine work, or *oikonomia*, in the world. There is an extent to which, as discussed previously, assessment becomes an aid to epistemic humility insofar as it challenges assumptions and preconceptions. Though, as this argument defends above, the empirical sciences must be kept within their proper context so as to respect the ineffability of learning, the surety of knowledge claimed by the empirical sciences is nonetheless troubling. This argument thus far has been careful to speak of evidence as opposed to data, the assumption being that what constitutes evidence in the assessment process might extend beyond the quantitative and qualitative evidence so highly prized by the traditional empirical sciences. Nevertheless, even speaking of 'evidence' in order to allow a broader epistemic range of evidence is not enough to mitigate the extent to which engaging with lived-world experiences resists knowing. Assessing charism-centered mission must particularly run up against this ineffability problem in that what is assessed is the institutional living-out of divine mysteries.

Though it may seem that epistemic quest conducted through the process of assessment, and particularly its empirical leanings, denotes the furthest thing from what may be appropriate in evaluating charism-centered mission, the limitations of epistemic methodologies is not a weakness but a strength. As Harris and Sansom demonstrate from a philosophical perspective, the appropriate response is neither to accept with overconfidence the results of any particular methodology, nor to dismiss completely the findings of various methodologies, but to systematically make allowances for the limitations of knowledge through an approach that takes into account the need for epistemic humility. Such a methodology is also crucial in avoiding the over-reification of persons-in-community by reducing this mystery of spiritual community to an overly objectified data point.

Such an approach is particularly a strength in allowing room for diverse viewpoints within the academic community. The task of developing concrete, meaningful, and actionable goals presents a particular challenge for assessing charism-centered mission in that this task requires defining in specific terms something inherently beyond definition, that which must be addressed through epistemic humility, and defining in specific terms something that might be controversial depending on types of diversity that are included or excluded. It is these waters that a theological account such as that of Chauvet's might assist in navigating.

Chapter Three

Locating Charism-Centered Mission Within a Theology of Persons-in-Community

The first chapter made a distinction between "person and community" versus "persons-in-community." In making this distinction, the reifying consequences of treating persons and community as independent objects ("person and community") wherein charism becomes quality of the individual as individual or the group as group were distinguished from a relationship of community formation, being-in-community, that focuses on the relationship itself ("persons-in-community") wherein charisms enact human communion, human community itself, by incarnationally participating in the work of the Spirit. It was further argued that philosophical frameworks themselves are not theologically neutral and impose limitations and challenges for theological reflection. Theologies of charism, therefore, must both philosophically and theologically take into account persons-in-community.

Again, while this may sound like a subtle distinction, a nice-but-not-necessary appendage to the higher education scene, forgetfulness of this distinction can yield great injustices and unnecessary divisions within higher education. When reified, charism becomes far less flexible. With this loss of flexibility, challenges arise in seeing charism in a new light or from a new point of view. Welcoming and increasing diversity becomes more challenging as diverse populations must work harder to challenge the reified conception of charism in order to include their being-in-community as part of the institution's charismatic identity. Other forms of institutional development and adaptation face similar hurdles. For example, when institutional identity lacks flexibility new pedagogical methods and technologies face stronger opposition as institutions struggle to

reconceive themselves. Further, colleges and universities face the danger that the institution's charismatic identity may be usurped, or controlled, by one individual or set of stakeholders to the neglect of the larger institutional community. Whether this usurpation occurs through administration, the Board of Trustees, marketing departments, members of the public, faculty, students, or even episcopal leadership, when charismatic identity understood in a reified way becomes usurped by one individual or group, other valid expressions of the being-in-community of the charismatic community can become marginalized and even suppressed causing stress on the academic community and endangering its "catholicity," its universality.

In that effective assessment, likewise, has been shown to foundationally intertwine with community building, a theology of persons-in-community is indispensable for the process of charism-centered mission assessment. It is precisely a theology of persons-in-community that charism-centered mission assessment lacks, and a key reason why college and university stakeholders defer to speak either of Catholic identity or of particular charismatic missional identities with limited cross-institutional relevance. What this chapter proposes to offer, then, is effectively a theological epistemology of charismatic identity formation. This argument is set forth in two parts. The first relates Chauvet's account of Christian identity formation, and the second applies this account to the context of charism as it pertains to higher education.

3.1. Chauvet's Account of Christian Identity Formation

Though Chauvet does not use the terminology of "person-in-community" versus "person and community," his sacramental theology is uniquely well equipped to deal with the theological mystery that is charism. Not only does Chauvet take up and integrate

the critique of onto-theology into his theological account, but also his sacramental theology is essentially a theology of being-in-community.

3.1.1. Chauvet's Critique of Onto-Theology

The critique of onto-theology argues that traditional theological metaphysics (e.g., some branches of Thomism, though not necessarily Aquinas) neglects what Martin Heidegger refers to as the "ontological difference," the difference between being and entities. This is, for example, the "being-in-community" of the charismatic community versus what might be described as "a charismatic community." The consequence is that when being is confused with entities, being becomes treated as a common trait, which is easily then reducible to "something" or "stuff." In short, onto-theology tends to treat the epistemic experiences of human persons as if they were reducible to discrete objects that can be seized, grasped, and, therefore, controlled. This reduction provides key challenges for the being-in-community of sacramental communities.

Chauvet begins his *Symbol and Sacrament* by examining the overwhelmingly causal, or productionistic, language often used to describe sacramental efficacy.[1] This causal language problematically leans on a reifying epistemology.[2] For example, the 'grace' of a sacrament is often said to 'produce' positive effects in the soul. 'Grace' thereby becomes a descriptor of something a communicant 'has.' Technically, it is only 'held' in an analogous way, as it is a divine gift, but 'grace' ends up becoming treated as a thing-like entity, something reified, versus an active being-in-communion with the divine, something inherently irreducible to objecthood.

[1] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 7, 21-22.
[2] Ibid., 26-33.

Chauvet raises several images of the sacraments found in metaphysical discourses that exemplify the challenges of relying on a productionist schema. The image of the sacrament as an "instrument" troubles Chauvet because it "suggests quasi-automatic production" and "risks [the sacrament] being seen precisely as a product, a product-which-is-an-object."[3] For similar reasons depicting the sacraments as a "channel" of grace is likewise problematic.[4] Further, the image of the sacrament as a "remedy" concerns Chauvet because not only does it depict a kind of automatic production of grace, but also it endangers the sacrament to be "more or less understood as a sort of magic potion to restore spiritual health" while "celebrat[ing the negative image of] what human beings lack as a consequence of sin" instead of the positive image of the "possibility of a different history."[5] The image of the sacraments as a "seed" or "germ" is less problematic for Chauvet because such an image suggests the "dynamism of possible development."[6] However, such an image is still linked with the underlying conception that "God would deposit 'something' into the 'soul.'"[7] One commonality that these images share is that they emphasize the sacraments as the operative means of salvation rather than emphasizing the sacraments as revelatory signs.[8] They become more about the conferral of "grace" than revealing an active being-in-relation with the divine.

Not only does onto-theology tend to objectify being-in-community, but it is additionally "anthropocentric."[9] By objectifying being, onto-theology "degrades" truth in

[3] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, xiv.
[4] Ibid., xiv-xv.
[5] Ibid., xiv.
[6] Ibid., xv.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid., xiv.
[9] Ibid., *Symbol and Sacrament*, 28

treating it as an "unfailingly available foundation," a "substantial permanence."[10] It does this by "begin[ning] with the certitude of the self, with the presence of the self to the self, by which everything else in the world is ultimately to be measured."[11] Here Chauvet is referring to the reifying process engendered by correspondence theories of knowledge. If the "object" of knowledge is treated as corresponding to the "object," or concept, in the mind, the "object" of knowledge becomes "measured by," reducible to, a human-centered view.

Nevertheless, there is a deeper point to which Chauvet is referring and one that will prove critical for Chauvet's sacramental theology, as well as for assessing charism-centered mission. For Chauvet, the foundational hubris of onto-theology is assuming the "presence of the self to the self" and then moving out from there to make present a community of believers and, ultimately, God. The emphasis that is critical here is the centricity of the *anthropos*, the "human being" in the grammatically singular form, the self in isolation as not-necessarily joined with being-in-community. When the self is possessed by the self, being-in-communion, being-in-relation, the liturgical body of Christ, becomes a secondary attribute. A thing added on to a foundational "self."

As opposed to the certitude of such anthropocentric epistemologies, Chauvet places "great thinkers" such as Aquinas who "have always known how to take a step *backwards*, a step of humble lucidity before the truth, a step which has protected them from falling into a deadly dogmatism of confusing their thought with the real."[12] Chauvet admits that "certainly it is legitimate and necessary to focus attention at a given moment

[10] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 28.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid., 8.

on what constitutes the *substantia sacramenti* – matter and form in Scholastic language – and to establish with the necessary conceptual precision theological, not to say canonical, points beyond which the very identity of the sacrament would be threatened."[13] However, "sacramental theology could not stop there without the risk of becoming narrow legalism and abstract speculation" such that "like every branch of theology, it must negotiate constantly between conceptual knowledge (without which it would no longer be theology, and therefore constructed discourse – 'science' as the scholastics call it) and symbolic non-knowledge (without which it would no longer be respecting the mystery of God)."[14] Chauvet contends, nevertheless, that while it is one thing to take into consideration the disparity between conceptual knowledge and symbolic non-knowledge, as figures such as Aquinas have, it is another "to take this disparity *as a point of departure and as a framework*."[15]

Thus, for Chauvet, one respects the mystery of God when doing systematic theology when one starts with the rupture between presence and absence. Presence is metaphysical. It is the claim to say anything about God, the believing community, and the self – that is, to utilize the representative schema that is conceptual, systematic knowledge. Absence respects divine mystery, the distinction between being and entities, and the non-possession of the self. Absence is the "*non-available*, the non-representable, the 'Incalculable.'"[16] Nevertheless, presence is unavoidable, as "to want simply to *jump* outside metaphysics with one bound would be to naively condemn oneself to repeat it."[17]

[13]Chauvet, "The Liturgy in its Symbolic Space," 36.
[14] Ibid. 36-7.
[15] Ibid., *Symbol and Sacrament*, 8.
[16] Ibid., 49.
[17] Ibid., 53.

Instead, Chauvet encourages taking the phenomenological path, the path of "learning to 'let go'" and allow the absence to continually challenge the claims of presence.[18] One must stand in this rupture between presence and absence, and the ability to stand in this rupture requires a process of conversion.[19] This process of standing in the breach between presence and absence, for Chauvet, results in an account of the self, the believing community, and, ultimately, the divine, as "present absence." Present absence allows for otherness; it allows for diversity in charism-centered mission expression.

This experience of the divine as present absence is particularly illustrated through the biblical pericope of the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35).[20] This pericope is accompanied in Luke by two others of note: the message of Jesus to the women at the tomb (Luke 24:1-12) and the apparition of Jesus to the Eleven (Luke 24:36-53). Chauvet argues that "those receiving the message in all three pericopes are in a condition of non-faith" following the crucifixion and death of Jesus, which "in all three cases…is linked to the desire to find, to touch, or to see the body of Jesus."[21] Even seeing and touching are insufficient for faith in the case of the apparition of Jesus to the Eleven (Luke 24: 41). The message, for Chauvet, is that one "cannot arrive at the recognition of the risen Jesus unless you renounce seeing/touching/finding him by undeniable proofs."[22] "Faith begins," as Chauvet argues, "precisely with such a *renunciation of the immediacy* of the see/know and with the assent to the mediation of the church."[23] On the road to Emmaus the two disciples knew about Jesus, but this was not enough for faith. The road to faith

[18] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 53.
[19] Ibid., 53, 74.
[20] See Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 161-2 and *Sacraments*, 22-8.
[21] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 161.
[22] Ibid., *Sacraments*, 25.
[23] Ibid.

begins with the stranger opening the Scriptures to them in such a way as to interpret them through the "new hermeneutics" of the death and resurrection of the Messiah.[24] Still, it is only "around the table…that their eyes are opened."[25] Yet, the disciple's eyes were opened, at this pinnacle moment in the pericope, not on presence but on absence: as soon as Jesus was recognized, "he vanished from their sight."[26] Finding, touching, seeing Jesus in immediacy were not enough for faith, but in renouncing presence and accepting absence faith arose. Nevertheless, that absence was filled with a presence that they set off from there to announce.

3.1.2. Chauvet's Theological Epistemology of Symbol

Chauvet takes the critique of onto-theology and develops his systematic theology in a way peculiar to the critique of onto-theology by following the path of Jacques Lacan. Though Glenn Ambrose is right to point out Chauvet's unique genius, one of the most overlooked and undervalued characteristics of Chauvet's theological epistemology is his application of Lacan's psychoanalytic epistemology.[27]

A cornerstone of Lacan's epistemology that Chauvet also takes up is the "mirror stage."[28] The mirror stage refers to a time period between the age of six and eighteen months when a child learns to recognize itself in the mirror. This is a critical stage, for Lacan and Chauvet, in that the child learns to have a self, an *I*. Prior to this the child only sees a body, and even body parts as unrelated to one another. When a child learns to

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[24] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 24.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid., 26.
[27] See Glenn P. Ambrose, *The Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet: Overcoming Onto-Theology with the Sacramental Tradition* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012).
[28] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 95-7; idem, *Sacraments*, 10-1; Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function, as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," in Écrits*: A Selection*, trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999); John P. Muller and William J. Richardson, *Lacan and Language: A Readers Guide to* Écrits (New York: International Universities Press, 1982).

recognize itself in a mirror by being named by someone, this fragmentation yields to become a unity, the self. This is the case whether the mirror is a reflective surface or the reflection of the child as seen through another's eyes.

Several key aspects of this phenomenon are significant in understanding Chauvet's response to onto-theological accounts. The first to recognize is that though the image of the child in the mirror is an *image* of the child: the image is not the child in his or her reality. That reflection which the child identifies with for forming its perception of selfhood is not itself in its complexity and ineffability. The sense of self of the child becomes reduced to the image. This is what Lacan and Chauvet refer to as the "imaginary." It is the mistaking of self with image. This follows in the same vein that the critique of onto-theology is attempting to point out, that when one's conception – and for Chauvet and Lacan, one's self conception – becomes identified with reality, what emerges is an objectification.

Nevertheless, the child does not remain in this imaginary state confusing itself with its image but enters what is referred to by Lacan and Chauvet as the "symbolic." Chauvet argues that the child "must hear itself *named* by someone, someone using its first name and subsequently a personal pronoun."[29] When this naming occurs, a distancing occurs. The name both "includes the subject (here, the child) by representing it and at the same time…excludes the child by only representing it."[30] In learning this process of inclusion and exclusion child learns what Chauvet terms "symbolic recognition." In symbolic recognition, the child gives up the immediacy of the image, the immediacy of its own selfhood, and allows its self to be mediated by language, its name.

[29] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 10.
[30] Ibid.

For Chauvet, subject and language are contemporaneous and build each other up in tandem. From this perspective, language is a mediation, not a tool. When language is treated as a tool, that is, according to an instrumentalist scheme, language, and by extension sensible mediation, become an obstacle to truth, an obstacle to be overcome, which, as Chauvet notes, is an odd position for Christians to take, who profess the Son of God, the Word.[31] By contrast, when language is treated as mediation, sensible mediation is not an obstacle to truth but the milieu in which the subject accedes to its own truth.

Returning to the image of the child before the mirror, the child encounters itself in the absence yielded by the presence of the image in the mirror. The child accepts this present absence in accepting its name and allows the name to both unite it with and separate it from its self. It approaches itself in its mystery in allowing itself to be present absence. In this sense the name is not so much a tool to designate this child as opposed to that child, but a signification of the child's communion with itself in present absence, its selfhood.

This selfhood is not an isolated selfhood that then goes out to the world to find communion, but a selfhood that constructs and is constructed by the world already sharing communion with it. When language is treated as a mediation, reality is mediated by, that is, constructed by, language: "precisely by constructing reality as 'world' the subject constructs itself as subject."[32] Chauvet uses the image of a child building with Legos, who forms his own world and is in turn formed by it.[33] Thus, language constructs

[31] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 5-6.
[32] Ibid., 8.
[33] Ibid.

reality in a twofold sense: objectively in the construction of reality as world and subjectively in that the subject constructs itself as subject.[34]

Without this "reality would be left to its raw factualness and would only be a chaos or a meaningless jumble."[35] The fact that this table is four feet high would have no more or less significance than my neighbor drowning, yet this is not the case in that moral meaning is assigned to the latter in a way not also assigned to the former. Thus, "everything speaks, not only in the intransitive sense" as when "nature speaks to us…but also in the transitive sense when we are spoken by it."[36] For example, the tree that I observe is "never a purely 'natural' thing but is necessarily grasped by my understanding as 'signifying' to some degree."[37] The world human beings encounter is never a "purely natural" world, but a world of signification, a world bearing my own culture and desire.

Thus, language as a mediation is not sterile but opens the subject up to what Chauvet, following Lacan, refers to as the "symbolic order."[38] In that reality is constructed by language, "every properly human relation to reality is culturally constructed."[39] Language has history and culture. It is embodied. Chauvet describes the symbolic order as "the system of connections between the different elements and levels of a culture (economic, social, political, ideological – ethics, philosophy, religion…)" that is a "system forming a coherent whole that allows the social group and individuals to orient themselves in space, find their place in time, and in general situate themselves in the world in a significant way."[40] The symbolic order is a neutral 'other' that "designates

[34] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 8.
[35] Ibid., 13.
[36] Ibid., 11.
[37] Ibid., 12.
[38] Ibid., 15.
[39] Ibid., 8.
[40] Ibid., *Symbol and Sacrament*, 84-5; idem, *Sacraments*, 15.

the agency under which or in the name of which the subjects agree with one another."[41] To say this another way, the symbolic order functions as a kind of law. Consequently, the naming that distances the child from itself is not a distancing into some void of solipsism, it places the child in communion with other persons, co-partakers in the symbolic order. The child enacts being-in-community through its naming and consequent emergence as a subject.

3.1.3. Characteristics of Symbol

Symbols, according to Chauvet's analysis, enact communion through four characteristics: "fitting together," "crystallization," "recognition," and "submission to the communal Other."[42] With respect to the characteristic of "fitting together," Chauvet argues that "what characterizes the symbol is not its material value in quantity or quality but its *relation* to the whole to which it belongs."[43] The symbolic order, as a system of connections, only properly functions when one symbolic element is functioning in relationship to the symbolic whole. Chauvet gives the example of a stone from the Berlin Wall. When it functions symbolically, one's experience of the stone joins it with the whole of the wall and all the wall stood for. When an element becomes "isolated, not fitted together with the whole to which it belongs, it does not function symbolically but *imaginarily*."[44] Removed from its context, the element loses its symbolic, communion-making, function, and becomes objectified and open to manipulation. This is not to say that removed from its context it must function only imaginarily, as it may take on new symbolic function in a new context, but it functions imaginarily with respect to its

[41] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 16.
[42] Ibid., 20.
[43] Ibid., 71.
[44] Ibid.

original context. As Chauvet argues, "since the performance of symbol is linked not to the value of its 'content' as such but to its relation, one understands that it is impossible to transpose a symbolic element from one cultural or religious system to another or from one context…into another without causing it to produce effects completely different from those it had in its original system or its initial context."[45]

With respect to the characteristic of "crystallization," Chauvet argues that each symbolic element "crystallizes in itself the whole of the world to which it belongs," which is why "it *is* what it represents."[46] This is why the stone from the Berlin Wall is symbolically "the whole of the totalitarianism of the communist regimes."[47] Symbol "crystallizes" in that it makes the whole of the symbolic order of a world present (in its absence). This is not to say that the symbol is "'really' but [to say that it is] 'symbolically' what it represents, because the function of symbol is to *represent* the real, therefore to place it at a distance in order to present it, make it present under a new mode."[48] Nevertheless, though symbol places the 'real,' understood in one sense, at a distance, symbol is the "most significant and the *most real*" in another sense, which is in the sense that the symbolic order places the subject in communion with the "humanly," i.e., "symbolically," constructed world.[49]

With respect to the characteristic of "recognition" or "identification," symbol "allows all persons to *situate themselves as subjects* in their relation with other subjects or with the worlds of these other subjects."[50] Chauvet's assertion here reaches back to the

[45] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 71.
[46] Ibid., 71-2.
[47] Ibid., 72.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., 73.
[50] Ibid.

Greek origins of "symbol" in *sym-ballein*.[51] *Sym-ballein* has the fundamental meaning of "placing side by side" and, in antiquity, indicated circumstances wherein a contract was denoted by the fracturing of an object among contract holders.[52] Returning the fractured elements together like a puzzle recognized, or identified, the holders of those elements to be joined in the contract. This process of recognition, or identification, is not a matter of the "order of knowledge," but rather "belongs to the order of recognition, therefore to the order of the relation between subjects as such."[53]

The final characteristic of symbol significant for Chauvet's analysis is that of "submission to the communal other." This Other is "what binds subjects among themselves, what subjects them to a common 'symbolic order' and allows them to form a *community*."[54] Thus, "the symbol is a mediator of identity only by being a creator of community."[55]

Chauvet clarifies his concept of "symbol" further by contrasting it with that of "sign," showing that while symbol enacts communion, sign does not. While a sign "'leads to something other than itself'" and "belongs to the order of knowledge or information or else value," a symbol "belongs to the order of recognition or communication between subjects as subjects and is outside the order of value."[56] He goes on to say that while "the sign is situated on the side of "'saying something about something,' that is, on the side of the transmission of information or knowledge," "the symbol is situated on the side of "'saying to someone,' that is, on the side of

[51] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 14.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 74.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., 74-6.

communication with a subject recognized as a subject and situated in the place of the subject."[57] For example, when one speaks of a "tree," there are two different principles at work. One is the reference of the concept to the tree–the principle of sign – and according to this principle we can talk about the kind of tree and how high it may be or what I think of forests versus cityscapes, while the other refers to the manner in which I as a subject recognize myself in relation to other human beings. So, as Chauvet argues, if one were lost in the Amazonian forest and heard the word 'tree,' one would not be interested in the kind of tree or how high the tree is but in the community shared with the one who uttered the word 'tree,' symbolizing that one is no longer alone.[58] Chauvet argues that, though symbol and sign function at different levels according to two distinct logics, they are "two poles of human expression" in the sense that there is no pure symbol without sign or sign without symbol.

Taking his foregoing analysis of symbol, Chauvet moves to analyzing the act of symbolization by dividing it into four "moments."[59] Chauvet's illustration is particularly useful here. He tells the story of two agents who do not know each other being assigned to a clandestine operation towards the end of the Second World War. Each agent is given half a bank note irregularly cut in half so that they might recognize one another. Thus, the act of symbolization concerns the moment these two agents come to recognize each other through the joining of the elements of the note.

The first "moment" of the act of symbolization is to recognize that "symbolization is an act and not an idea."[60] The act in the example of the two secret agents is the fitting

[57] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 76.
[58] Ibid., 75.
[59] Ibid., 83.
[60] Ibid., 84.

together of the two pieces of the bank note to form the relationship between the two agents. Notice that "*only differences can be symbolized*."[61] Chauvet argues that the sacraments are acts, not ideas, and join Christ and the church and "more widely, God and humanity."[62] However, since "only differences can be symbolized, such a symbolization is possible only inasmuch as Christ and the church are rigorously *differentiatied*" so as not to confuse one with the other.[63] The role of the sacraments is "to manifest the vacant place of Christ," his "absence," as at Emmaus."[64]

The second "moment" of the act of symbolization is that "each of the elements of a symbol is relevant *only in its relation to the other*."[65] Without this relationship, the elements of the symbol devolve into the imaginary in which they can *signify* any number of things but *symbolize* nothing. In our example with the two secret agents, both halves of the bank note only signify the relationship between the two agents in their relationship with one another. Likewise, though "Christ and the church should not be identified, sacramental symbolization indicates that the church and Christ have relevance only in their mutual relation."[66]Similarly, if one element of the liturgy becomes cut off from the faith of the church and the wider celebration to which it belongs, its significance can easily regress into the imaginary, at which point it becomes unavoidably idealized.[67]

The third "moment" is that the value of the element does not matter for the act of symbolization.[68] The bill used by the secret agents could be any monetary amount and it

[61] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 84.
[62] Ibid., 85.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid., 84.
[66] Ibid., 86.
[67] Ibid., 15, 86.
[68] Ibid., 84-5.

would still function in the same way. Additionally, commercial value, use value, aesthetic value, cognitive value, and emotional value are all ancillary to the functioning of the bank note. It is not the value, but the relationship that matters. One can see this tension in the concept of 'grace.' Though referring to "grace" as an object is to some extent unavoidable, Chauvet prefers the terms "gratuitous" and "gracious": "as *gratuitous*, grace is not something due [but] depends on the generosity of God who alone takes the initiative" and "as *gracious*, grace pertains to beauty, to this way of being pleasing which cannot be calculated and therefore is given free of charge."[69] As long as grace remains treated as an object, it loses its symbolic functioning and places grace as an object solidly in the domain of value.[70] Chauvet argues that the "grace of the sacraments must be regarded less as "something" (as spiritualized as it might be) than as a process of 'receiving oneself' as daughter or son, as sister or brother in Christ through the Spirit."[71]

The fourth "moment" is that the act of symbolization is both a "revealer" and an "agent."[72] Returning to the example of two secret agents, Chauvet argues, "By symbolizing, they reveal to one another their identity as secret agents and at the same time they find themselves bound together in the mission entrusted to them."[73] Thus, symbol "effects [community] only by revealing [community]" and "reveals only by effecting."[74] With respect to the sacraments, they both reveal Christian identity as they also effect it.[75]

3.1.4. Christian Identity Formation

[69] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 87-9.
[70] Ibid., 89.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid., 85.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid., 89-91.

From the foregoing reflections one can draw a picture of Chauvet's account of Christian identity formation. The subject is not a solitary point but a participant in the symbolic order, the symbolic order in the case of the Christian being the whole of the Christian faith and identity. The narrative of the "mirror stage" illustrates how Christian identity is shared among subjects as a symbolic order. Chauvet transfers Lacan's reflection on selfhood to understanding the selfhood of those who share in Christian identity. Christian identity as *possessed* by the self does not share in symbol but enters the imaginary in that it has been removed from its context. So, whenever one says "aha, this is it, this is what it means to be Christian" one has mistaken the image of Christian identity with Christian identity in its reality. Christian identity enters the symbolic when it mediates the presence of the Christian community through present absence. Just as the young child allows its selfhood to be mediated by its name, so too do Christian communities allow their self-identity to be mediated through symbol.

Symbols both reveal and effect unity among Christians. Through participation in Christian identity subjects come to recognize each other as Christian subjects, as members of a Christian community, the church. For Chauvet, the church institutionally mediates Christian identity as the communal "Other."[76] "Christian identity," Chauvet points out, "is not self-administered" but received through baptism by "another person acting as the minister of the church in the name of Christ."[77] Entering into a communal identity is, therefore, a matter of initiation.

In that symbol develops community, the "primary locus of the church is the celebrating assembly" because the "church manifests its identity best as a concrete

[76] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 13, 20.
[77] Ibid., 20.

liturgical assembly."[78] The local church is part of the universal church as the "concrete *integral* realization of this same church of Christ."[79] The church occupies the place of the absent Christ and serves as Christ's "symbolic witness" by "keeping alive…the memory of what he lived for and why God raised him from the dead" through the scriptures, sacraments, and ethics.[80] It is through the worship of the believing community enacting the death and resurrection of Christ through the scriptures, sacraments, and ethics that the act of symbolization occurs revealing and effecting Christian identity.

Because only differences can be symbolized, diversity is a matter for rejoicing rather than consternation: "differences are no longer partitions" but rather "offer to the 'body of Christ' this rich diversity of members and functions which any body needs."[81] As it is Christ himself who presides as head of the church, "this community acts as a constituted body," meaning that while the ordained minister may have a special role in liturgical action, "the more one stresses the liturgical action is that of Christ himself risen through the Spirit…the more one is led to emphasize that the assembly, which is his present body of humanity, is the active sacramental mediation of his action."[82] Thus, "the other is no longer to be considered a rival or a potential enemy" but "welcomed as a brother or sister."[83]

Christian symbols "crystallize," or make present, the whole of Christian identity in all its diversity. In that Christian identity, as language, has history and culture and is embodied, it cannot be treated as monolithic. Symbols that fit together in one community

[78] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 34.
[79] Ibid., 37.
[80] Ibid., 28.
[81] Ibid., 32.
[82] Ibid., 33.
[83] Ibid., 32.

or liturgical context might not be effective in another. Still, the Christian assembly unfolds Christian identity most manifestly "only in *diversified* assemblies, that is, those made up of all ages and social conditions."[84]

In that the self is mediated by symbol, that is, by the name, and thereby by the symbolic order, the symbolic order has priority over the individuality of the subject. As a consequence, the "church precedes the individual" such that the church is not a matter of individual Christians uniting to then form Christian communities but of the church forming Christians.[85] For Chauvet, "one cannot be a Christian without belonging to the church because Christian identity begins with the confession of Jesus as Christ" and "in this sense, there are no 'anonymous Christians'"[86] Nevertheless, this is a matter of Christian identity, not the salvation of human beings, as one can be saved without being a member of the visible church.[87] Furthermore, the "circle" of the church is not closed but opens out to the reign of Christ, which is wider than the church. [88]

3.2. Charismatic Identity Formation in the Catholic Higher Education Context

Chauvet's theology of persons-in-community can inform a robust theological account of charism-centered mission at Catholic institutions of higher education.

3.2.1. Institutional Identity as Mediated by Symbol

The term "distinctive" is often employed to refer to that which makes a college or university's approach to education unique. In the higher education context, "distinction" is not just a high-sounding word used to buttress impressions of institutional prestige but

[84] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 37.
[85] Ibid., 29.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.

a promise to contribute to the common good by pursuing excellence in education. In their guidelines "Educating to Fraternal Humanism," the Congregation for Catholic Education argues that *all* educational institutions must promote "a new humanism, in which the social person [is] willing to talk and work for the realization of the common good" with the consequence that educational institutions must "put the person at the center of education, in a framework of relationships that make up a living community, which is interdependent and bound to a common destiny."[89] In this sense, the corporate (i.e., collective) body of an institution of higher education serves a distinct educational vocation through a concrete and complex community of stakeholders. Though this educational vocation centers on a "solidarity, sharing, and communion" founded in a "globalizing hope," it nevertheless, is accomplished according to the capacities of the local institutional community. Each institutional body shares communion with the larger educational community through its pursuit for academic excellence within the contexts with which it engages.

Though all Christian colleges and universities have a special location in fulfilling this vocation in their special relationship to the Source of life and hope, colleges and universities with charism-centered missions particularly enact this vocation through their charisms. Such institutions of higher education are uniquely distinctive in that their missions explicitly center on enacting communion and the common good. Charism-centered mission is not just distinctiveness in terms of a shared academic pursuit but also distinctiveness in terms of being-in-community. Though every Catholic mission enacts charismatic communion as being "Catholic," charism-centered missions are special in

[89] Congregation for Catholic Education, "Educating to Fraternal Humanism," para. 7-8.

that the self-identity of the institution is tied to its unique way of being-in-community. While one can speak of institutional symbols in general, which apply to every institution, there is something to say about charismatic symbols, i.e. charisms, that applies most evidently to institutions with charism-centered missions. This is that the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community enacts symbolic recognition in and through the power of the Holy Spirit. That is, the identity of the institution is one explicitly claiming communion in and through the Holy Spirit according to its charisms. This is not to say that institutions without charism-centered missions do not participate in communion through the Spirit, but that their self-identity is not tied to being-in-communion through the grace of the Spirit.

Being-in-community is not something that the charismatic institution has as a property but a way of enacting its self-identity. Though charism-centered mission should directly address the institutional charism, institutional charism is irreducible to a mission statement. Returning to Chauvet's appropriation of Lacan, just as the image of the child in the mirror is not the child in his or her reality, so too is the mission statement a kind of image that includes the institution by representing it but excludes the institution by only representing it. Though there is more to say later about the significance of what Cook refers to as "normative culture" and what are referred to here as "normative symbols," the central point here is that no image or conception of the mission is identical to the mission itself because the mission itself is a matter of being-in-relation. Thus, one best analyzes mission *effectiveness*, not so much by analyzing specific conceptions or images of the mission, but by analyzing the institutional quality of being-in-relationship. Here, mission effectiveness should be differentiated from mission consistency. It is one thing to analyze

a system of normative symbols for their internal consistency, which is necessary and useful, but another to analyze the effectiveness of those symbols for being-in-community. This is because when the latter occurs one is looking for *absence* as much as presence.

When mission becomes identified with, that is, reduced to, an institution's mission statement, or any other institutional sign, mission no longer enacts a life-giving being-in-community guiding institutional development but reverts to the imaginary. As imaginary, what was once an institutional symbol becomes objectified and able to be controlled or usurped by one or more institutional stakeholders. It becomes taken out of its context of being-in-community and can signify any number of institutional potentialities without mediating institutional persons-in-community. Nevertheless, while institutional symbols such as mission statements cannot be taken out of their context of persons-in-community without becoming imaginary, when institutional symbols are treated as symbols they mediate persons-in-community by mediating institutional identity. Just as when the child allows its name to mediate its identity it enters the field of symbolic recognition so too do institutional symbols mediate institutional identity.

In symbolic recognition, institutionally-situated subjects give up the immediacy of their corporate selfhood and allow their identity to be mediated by language. Language such as that found in the mission statement is not a barrier to be overcome in order to get at a "real" community behind it. Instead this language becomes the milieu in which the subject accedes to its own truth. That is, language, in its broadest sense and in all its forms, becomes the structural context within which the human person discovers his or her own meaning as a subject within the institutional context. The statue of St. Francis at a Franciscan institution of higher education is not merely an image referencing St. Francis

and his life and work, but also is a form of language saying "this is who we aspire to imitate" and symbolizing the being-in-community of the institutional community. It is a symbol mediating the identity of institutionally-situated subjects.

The institutionally-situated subject and institutional language are contemporaneous such that they build each other up in tandem. The institutionally-situated subject both forms and is formed by the wide variety of symbols that shape the institution's "world." The institutionally-situated subject comes to find his or her identity mediated by institutional language. Returning to the pericope of the road to Emmaus, just as the disciples let go of the desire to see/touch/find the body of Jesus in order to go forth and share his presence with the world, so too does the institutionally-situated subject let go of the desire to see, touch, find the communion of the charismatic institutional community in order to share that communion with the world. So, when we speak of charism-centered missional identity, we speak in terms of institutional symbols, such as mission statements, because they mediate institutional identity.

Institutional symbols are not isolated elements but belong to the vast structural network that is the symbolic order. This symbolic order demarcates the space that the institution inhabits, indicates the institution's temporal significance, and situates the institution in the world in a way that bears signification. The symbolic order places the institution in communion with other persons and institutions and through it emerges as a subject, that is, as one being-in-community.

The symbolic order comprises a vast array of religious, philosophic, economic, social, ethical, and ideological cultural elements. Though this symbolic order is vast and diverse involving the many complex populations of stakeholders with whom the

institution interacts, U.S. Catholic higher education institutions are particularly engaged in two distinguishable, though certainly not unrelated, symbolic orders, one being responsibility to the Church and the other being civic responsibility. These domains of symbols inform and structure institutional identity. For example, academic excellence is prized as a symbol of civic virtue in that a well-educated populace is more adept in participating in a democratic form of governance, while academic excellence is also prized by the Church as a process of pursuing divine wisdom. "Academic excellence" and its pursuit then unites academic institutions and gives them a place as a subject in the civic community while also uniting Catholic institutions of higher education with the Church.

3.2.2. Characteristics of Institutional Identity Mediated by Symbols

Charism-centered mission expression exhibits each of the characteristics of symbol as described by Chauvet ("fitting together," "crystallization," "recognition," and "submission to the communal Other"), which gives one an interesting rubric, so-to-speak, through which to analyze charism-centered mission. Though all symbols must exhibit all characteristics of symbol if they also enact symbolic recognition, examples that particularly exemplify one or another characteristic are useful in describing the terrain upon which one encounters institutional elements functioning symbolically.

In order to symbolize institutional identity, institutional symbols must "fit together." That is the element must form a relationship with other elements in order to function symbolically. The material value in quantity or quality of the element is irrelevant to its capacity for "fitting together." One example of "fitting together" in the higher education context is the missional core curricular element. Many institutions of

higher education in America, as part of their civic accreditation, require undergraduate students to complete a core curriculum, or, general education program. At Catholic colleges and universities, in addition to typical types of courses such as English, Math, and the Sciences, countless examples of these programs include a missional core curricular element. This element is intended to provide a common intellectual experience inculcating in students the institutional mission and, especially, its charism. For some institutions, this missional element includes courses in theology and philosophy. In others, it may include a "common first year experience" in which students read common texts relevant to the institutional charism and mission. In still others, it may take an entirely different form altogether. These missional curricular elements have learning outcomes that in some fashion seek to initiate the student into the spiritual character of the institutional community. For institutions with charism-centered missions this particularly means introducing students to the charism, that is, the being-together of the institutional community in the Holy Spirit.

While funding and material support for such curricular elements might be a *sine qua non* condition for their existence, their capacity for "fitting together" is not particularly bound to the material resources attached to these elements as much as their capacity for forming being-in-community. One way to conceptualize and symbolize "fitting together" is to use the measure of mission "consistency," which must be a measure of absence as much as of presence.

If a philanthropist offered to financially back a curricular element or program, a building construction or improvement project, or even a work of art but that element does not "fit together" with the mission of the institution, the element no longer functions

symbolically but imaginarily. For example, as the funding of departments and colleges of Liberal Arts erodes, Catholic Liberal Arts institutions of higher education must answer tough and controversial questions when expensive athletics programs are developed and funded at the same time as more clearly mission-relevant symbols such as the funding of academic programs and instructors diminishes. Here, it is not so much the specific fiscal numbers supporting these decisions that matters, not the specific cost of funding one initiative over another, as much as the *symbolic* value of higher education institutions turning away from the heart of their missions to engage in the rat race of trying to best other colleges and universities in attracting students that is tearing apart the U.S. higher education system. Whether or not this is a fair assessment by faculty is a matter for fair debate, and the answer may vary from institution to institution. Nevertheless, the point is that these perceptions may interrupt the being-in-community of the institutional community. To say this another way, oftentimes when institutions of higher education fund initiatives that detract from the heart of their missions, that do not "fit together," the skewing of priorities causes intense disaffection with the institution and divisions amongst institutional stakeholders.

Though "consistency" is not the end of the story when speaking of institutional symbols, consistency is a necessary part of the picture. Inconsistencies raise questions as to whether elements truly function symbolically by "fitting together." An element may be inconsistent because the manner in which it "fits together" is not yet clear, that is, the being-in-community of the institutional community may still be in some nascent form. This is the case for new and diverse expressions of charism-centered mission. However,

an element also may be inconsistent in the sense that it does not "fit together" thereby functioning imaginarily.

One example of this tangled web of inconsistencies is the case of the institutional identity of students, administrators, faculty, and staff experiencing same sex attraction. On the one hand, individuals experiencing same sex attraction may feel ostracized from Catholic institutional identity due to the Church's teaching on same-sex attraction. That is, one, in other ways experiencing being-in-community, might validly experience an absence of being-in-community to the extent that his or her actions separate him or her from the institutional community. Nevertheless, an overzealous application of Church teaching at Catholic institutions of higher education both can and has led to violations of human dignity where the individual experiencing same sex attraction is not treated according to his or her human dignity. That is, one being-in-community, one who "fits together," though in an admittedly unclear way, is treated as not being-in-community, which causes divisions in and stress on the being-in-community of the institutional community. Regardless of where one stands on LGBTQ+ issues, the heart-felt and conscience-driven divisions among Catholics on the role and place of same sex attraction identities suggests that the inconsistencies between applications of Catholic teaching and Catholic LGBTQ+ existential experiences have not yet been resolved enough to clarify well the line between inchoate forms of being-in-community and times when claims about LGBTQ+ experience, be they conservative or liberal, may devolve into the imaginary. This is a complex, embodied theological issue with real-world consequences for institutional stakeholders. What are the rights and fair treatment of students, of faculty, of staff, and of administrators whose identities are bound up with same sex

attraction? The symbolic orders of the Catholic faith and LGBTQ+ identities may have convergences and divergences that extend or attenuate being-in-community, as the Congregation for Catholic Education argues, but administrators, faculty, staff, and students still have to make concrete decisions about how to handle this particular form of diversity.[90] It is not the purpose of this present analysis to resolve the inconsistencies inherent in this example but to use this example to clarify that inconsistency is not necessarily the enemy of "fitting together" and that treating all forms of inconsistencies as not "fitting together" can result in institutional violence through offenses against human dignity. Inconsistency may indicate either a present absence, which is healthy for a charismatic institution, or the imaginary, which is not healthy. Once, by the power of the Spirit through history, theological and pastoral issues regarding the identity and appropriate treatment of individuals who experience same sex attraction are more settled, questions about the being-in-community of individuals experiencing same sex attraction may lay more clearly on the side of the "consistent" than the "inconsistent," but until then, it is inappropriate to vilify and institutionally exclude all inconsistencies, regardless of whether the inconsistency is more conservative or more liberal.[91] That is, institutional

[90] Congregation for Catholic Education, *"Male and Female He Created Them": Towards a Path of Dialogue on the Question of* Gender *Theory in Education*.

[91] I have been asked to comment on my position regarding the hiring of LGBTQ+ persons at institutions of Catholic higher education. This comment comes at a time when Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School is currently appealing the decision of Archbishop Charles Thompson of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to no longer recognize the school as a Catholic one due to the school's refusal to fire a teacher married to a same-sex partner. This appeal is being made to the Congregation for Catholic Education. This incident has come about because the informed consciences of the school leadership and of episcopal leadership, that is people of good conscience and good will, differ in interpreting the Catholic faith. The path forward must be one of dialogue between those of diverse consciences. Francis in his apostolic constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* argues that "dialogue" and a "culture of encounter" must characterize the "renewal and revival of the contribution of the contributions of ecclesiastical studies to the to a church of missionary outreach" (no.4) and later comments at a meeting on the theme "Theology After Veritatis Gaudium in the Context of the Mediterranean" that "dialogue can be lived as a theological hermeneutic in a specific time and place." While this dialogue continues, we must remember that the dialogue is yet unfinished and that the right to employment is a human right, not a right enjoyed exclusively by chaste persons. It would be unacceptable,

decision-makers and stakeholders must proceed with a radical humility that acknowledges that Christian identity is present absence, that being-in-community with the divine is not subject to human conceptions and reifications. In fact, there both will and should be something to the identity of individuals experiencing same sex attraction that is mysterious and "inconsistent," just as should be the case for the identity of individuals experiencing opposite sex attractions, simply because the quantity or the quality of the symbolic element is never the reality of the being-in-community of the institutional community. There is always something of a mismatch, a matter of absence, between image, which is here the identity, and that of which it is an image. Identity is symbolic to the extent that it enacts being-in-community but enters the imaginary when being-in-community is set aside in an attempt to force identity into presence. That is, when the image, the identity, is mistaken with the reality of being-in-communion it no longer functions symbolically, but imaginarily.

Institutional elements must also enact "crystallization" in order to symbolize institutional identity. An institutional element exhibits "crystallization" when it makes present the whole of the symbolic orders in which the institution participates, including

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for similar reasons, to fire or refuse to hire one who has been divorced and remarried without an annulment. One who has an LGBTQ+ identity can participate symbolically according to his or her human dignity in the institutional community without being able to fully participate due to the separation, or distinction, in identities between the Catholic faith and the faith of one who lives in an unchaste manner. Thus, as this important dialogue continues, I suggest that Catholic institutions of higher education should be willing to hire faculty regardless of sexual identity, though not *because* of identities that are diverse in this specific way. Or to say this another way, at this time institutions should not hire specifically for gender identity diversity, but also should not shield itself from persons of gender diversity, lest we miss Jesus knocking at the door. See Bill Verbryke, "Update from Brebeuf Jesuit President, Fr. Bill Verbryke, S.J.," Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School, September 23, 2019, https://brebeuf.org/update-from-brebeuf-jesuit-president-fr-bill-verbryke-s-j-2/; Francis, *Apostolic Constitution* Veritatis Gaudium *on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties*, Vatican, January 29, 2018, https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2018/01/29/180129c.html; idem, "Address of His Holiness Pope Francis," Vatican, June 21, 2019, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2019/june/documents/papa-francesco_20190621_teologia-napoli.html.

the symbolic order centered on institutional identity itself. One example of "crystallization" is the case of relics. The example that Chauvet gives, that of the Berlin Wall, is a civic relic. It makes present, symbolically and in its absence, the totalitarian and communist regimes that it symbolizes. Likewise, Catholics "make present" symbolically and in their absence the saints of the Church through veneration of their relics. Though a shard of bone from Francis of Assisi's right index finger might not be "really" Francis in the sense that the entirety of who Francis is and was is not equivalent to a fragment of his body it still *is* Francis in his entirety symbolically. The relic is, nevertheless, "most real" in that it effects being-in-communion with the entirely of who Francis is and was. The relic of Francis represents Francis in his full reality by placing that reality at a distance in order to make the reality that is Francis present under a new mode. Just as there are civic and ecclesial relics, so too for institutions of higher education are there institutional relics. These include institution-specific elements such as gathering halls and meeting rooms decorated in such a way as to honor an institutionally-respected personage such as a founder or religious saint. A variety of historically significant institutional artifacts may also be considered institutional relics. Many Catholic colleges and universities also house in their libraries mission-relevant special collections.

Institutional relics have the tendency to "gather dust" over time, not just physically but metaphorically, which impacts their ability to serve as institutional symbols. In that institutional relics are images of institutional identity they capture institutional identity and make it present. When institutional images such as relics function symbolically the wholeness of that institutional identity is set at a distance, made

absent by the presence of the symbolically functioning image, and when that distance is lost, such as if institutional identity becomes too closely associated with a specific relic, they function imaginarily. When institutional relics "gather dust" they become disconnected with the being-in-community of the institutional community. Returning to the example of naming the child and developing self-identity through the present absence of that name (i.e., image), humans often change names over time as self-identity changes, such as when a person becomes married and takes his or her spouses name or when one earns a degree such as a doctorate and becomes addressed as "Dr So and So." As the institution grows and develops over time so too does institutional identity grow and change, which means that images formerly functioning symbolically may begin to function more imaginarily as images no longer represent the being-in-community of the institutional community. This is not to say that all relics must "gather dust" but that to avoid gathering dust institutional relics must represent the institution's active being-in-community, its institutional liturgy.

A second example of "crystallization" is the case of institutional virtues. Many institutions, including both those of religious and secular identities, identify with specific virtues. For example, "truth," or in its Latin form "*veritas*," is a popular virtue for institutions of higher education to identify themselves with. Another example might be some virtue related to "ethical conduct" or "social concern." These virtues are often expressed in expectations for being-in-community such as academic integrity policies and human resource policy. Charismatic institutions often identify with specific virtues drawn from their charisms. For example, they may emphasize virtues like "hospitality" or "social justice" in line with their missions. Thus, when they design a strategic planning

initiative or determine programming priorities according to these virtues, one can say that the initiative or programming priority *is* the institution.

Just as relics "gather dust," losing their symbolic efficacy, so too can institutional virtues lose their symbolic efficacy over time by no longer representing the being-in-community of the institutional community. As institutional virtues lose their symbolic efficacy they begin to function more imaginarily than symbolically. Stakeholder conceptualizations of institutional virtues are images and so can function symbolically or imaginarily depending on whether the image is allowed to represent the being-in-community of the institution in present absence. For example, as an institution grows or shrinks its identification with certain virtues often becomes hazy as it stretches to rediscover what those virtues mean in its new form. Though tools such as this present study can assist an institution in rediscovering its identity, if the college or university merely allows its identity, its being-in-community, to weaken without effective measures to renew it, such institutional virtues can become effectively empty and meaningless.

While institutional virtues run the risk of growing hazy over time, they also run the risk of becoming overly specified and reified. For example, just as a Catholic college or university can lose its identity over time by allowing its being-in-community to slip into secularism so too can a college or university become so "Catholic" by living and demanding others to live under one narrow, specific interpretation of Catholic teaching that it ceases to retain its being-in-community internally among stakeholders such as its faculty, staff, students who may have differences of conscience as well as externally with respect to being-in-communion with external stakeholders such as other Catholic institutions.

Also, in order to symbolize institutional identity, institutional elements must enact "recognition," or "identification." Institutional symbols enable institutional persons to situate themselves as subjects in their relationship with other institutional and non-institutional subjects and the worlds of those other subjects. Institutional elements function symbolically when they metaphorically enact the joining of the *sym-ballein* on the institutional level. This may sound obscure, but recognition has pressing "real world" consequences. These consequences can particularly be seen by the way in which non-Catholic and/or non-Christian stakeholders enter into the institutional symbolic order of Catholic institutions of higher education.

While Catholic institutions of higher education can be fully Catholic and distinctively charismatic, one must acknowledge that they are unique in how persons-in-community is accomplished and, therefore, express charismatic identity in a unique way. Catholic institutions of higher education are in an interesting position. They are "born from the heart of the church," yet they also go out to the world and accompany stakeholders who do not necessarily share in Christian baptism or whose religious identity is not Catholic or Christian.[92] These are not only students but also faculty, staff, and administrators. Nevertheless, we have testimonials from non-Christian stakeholders participating in charism, and we have non-Christian stakeholders enacting and nurturing the charism-centered mission of Catholic universities. These individuals are truly members of the institutional community but are not members of the visible church. If institutional charism is not available to all institutional members, regardless of baptism status, it is not an institutional charism. These circumstances have led some Catholic

[92] John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, 1

institutions of higher education to emphasize charismatic identity over Catholic identity, as if the two can be separated. Catholic institutions often feel to be in a tension between what Michael Barnes terms "faithfulness" to what Christians claim to be universal truth and "openness" to accepting the claims of others and allowing the other to be his or her unique self.[93]

Here the characteristic of "recognition" or "identification" can help. It is generally accepted that being-in-community across religious beliefs and with those of no belief is possible with respect to what Chauvet refers to as sign because, as the Vatican II document *Nostra Aetate* proclaims, "all persons form but one community" because each comes from God and returns to God.[94] Human persons have goodness and dignity through their creation, and the Church is bound not only to "reject nothing of what is true and holy in [other] religions" but also to not reject the human dignity of any person regardless of faith adherence.[95] However, "recognition" or "identification," as Chauvet argues, is not on the order of knowledge but the order of relationship. One can agree with or know a significant amount of information about a Catholic institution of higher education without necessarily having a relationship with that institution – that is, without being "recognized" or "identified" as a stakeholder of the institution. Nevertheless, one can know very little about an institution or disagree with that institution yet still be "recognized" or "identified" as a stakeholder of and/or member of the institution, as is the

[93] Michael Barnes, "Catholic Schools in the World of Many Faiths: Church Teaching and Theological Perspectives" in *The Contemporary Catholic School: Context, Identity, and Diversity*, edited by Terence H. McLaughlin, Joseph O'Keefe, and Bernadette O'Keeffe (Washington, D.C.: Falmer Press, 1996), 232-8.
[94] Vatican II, *Nostra Aetate*, 1
[95] Ibid., 2; idem, 5.

case of many students attending Catholic colleges and universities. What matters is whether being-in-community is enacted.

Being-in-community across religious beliefs and with those of no belief is possible with respect to symbol because institutional identity both unites and separates the subject from him or herself. It unites the subject by saying something about the subject but excludes the subject by only containing a reflection of the subject. Thus, while institutional identity is both present and absent to the institutionally-situated subject, so too is the subject present and absent in institutional identity. That is, the subject is present and absent to being institutionally-situated. The mission statement, for example, says something about the institutionally-situated subject as a subject, yet the subjectivity of the subject is not reducible to being institutionally-situated as the being-in-community of the institutionally-situated subject is broader than the symbolic order as it enacts the institution. In this sense, the subject enacts the life of the charismatic institution without that life becoming totalizing of the subject who is institutionally situated. This leaves room for institutionally-situated subject to share in the charismatic institutional identity while expressing other diverse expressions of being-in-community such as a person's being-in-community with respect to his or her church parish or other celebrating religious body.

Faith, for Chauvet, "belongs more to the relational than the rational order."[96] He argues that it is not so much adherence to certain ideas or a matter of intellectual reasoning, regardless of how "beautiful and generous" such ideas may be, but rather a matter of relationship.[97] Thus, the institutional subject can be in relation with other

[96] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, ix.
[97] Ibid.

institutional subjects by sharing in the faith of the institution particularly as it touches on the common good. This is perhaps why in circumstances of diversity institutions often tend to lean towards emphasizing their charisms, their institution-specific manner of being-in-community, over their affiliation with the institutional Church. Persons capable of being institutionally situated with respect to the being-in-community of the institution of higher education according to charismatic symbols might not be institutionally-situated with respect to the institutional Church. That is, they may share the identity of the being-in-community of the institution of higher education without sharing in the identity of the visible Church. The common fear, nevertheless, is that a stance emphasizing charismatic symbols, especially those drawn from the common good, over symbols layered with the trappings of the institutional church endangers the Catholicity of the institution. This is the type of reasoning that leads to foolish conclusions such as that one must maintain a faculty that is fifty percent or more Catholic in order to maintain the Catholicity of the institution. Really, what is needed is a faculty willing to participate in the being-in-community of the Catholic higher education institution, the institutional liturgy. And, as long as the symbols uniting the being-in-community of the institutional community are essentially Catholic symbols, that is as long as they participate in the being-in-community of the institutional Church, the being-in-community of the higher education institution is essentially Catholic. To say this another way, one should not assume that just because a Catholic institution draws primarily from symbols associated with the common good that the institution is less Catholic, because then one places the common good outside of the being-in-community of the visible Church.

Willingness to participate in the being-in-community of the institution of higher education requires willingness to participate in the final characteristic of symbol "submission to the communal Other." Just as the institutional church precedes the believing subject so too does the charismatic higher education institution precede its institutionally-situated subjects. Even the institution's founding persons or founding religious order drew from an already-present symbolic order in order to discover new meaning and enact new institutionally-situated subjects. Submission to the communal other means submission to the symbolic order of the institution's being-in-community. To be Catholic, even if symbols pertaining to the common good are emphasized, this symbolic order should participate in the symbolic order of the visible Church. Nevertheless, the symbolic order of the visible Church is generally not identical to the symbolic order of the institution of higher education in that the charism of the institution of higher education is specific to its educational context. The accredited American Catholic institution of higher education must discern its vocation in responsibility to both the visible Church and to its civic context.

For example, Catholic institutions of higher education are called to discern new directions in charism expression. Employing a distinction between "normative" and "exploratory" symbols might help here. What Cook refers to as "normative culture" in his *Charism and Culture* – that is, "commonly accepted forms of behavior and ways of doing things that include customs, habits, routines, and rules" – one might refer to in this context as normative symbols.[98] This includes such symbols as mission statements, handbooks, and codes of conduct, human resource policies, but also symbols such as

[98] Cook, *Charism and Culture*, 31.

mission-centered curricular elements and institutional customs. These symbols enact an "Other," a kind of law, to which institutional persons bind themselves. To these symbols can be added types of symbols to which Cook refers as "symbolic culture" such as statues, crucifixes, etc. These symbols also function in a very real sense as "normative symbols" such that they are also "commonly accepted" expressions of the being-in-community of the institutional community. In contrast to "normative symbols" one might place the example of "exploratory symbols" these are symbols of the institution's being-in-community for one or more subjects, but that are not, or at least are not yet, "commonly accepted" as symbols of the institutional being-in-community. They may be commonly accepted among a group of institutionally-situated persons, while not yet commonly recognized as representing the institution as such. New directions are more effectively described as proffering to the institutional community "exploratory symbols." This is particularly where charism-centered mission usurpation raises friction, when institutional stakeholders use their institutional authority to treat exploratory symbols – whether they are exploratory in conservative or liberal directions – as normative symbols, they lose their symbolic efficacy and devolve into the imaginary.

3.2.3. The Act of Institutional Symbolization

This final section on charismatic identity formation examines an example of the act of symbolization as it occurs in the higher education context. This example will draw from the missional core curricular element and examine that 1) symbolization is an act, not an idea; 2) each of the elements is relevant in its relationship to the others; 3) the

value of the symbol does not matter to its performance; 4) the act of symbolization is both, simultaneously, "revealer" and "agent."[99]

The act of symbolization as encountered in the missional curricular element is not an idea but an act. Students participating in a missional core curricular element might learn many things *about* the charism of a college or university through such a curricular element; nevertheless, symbolization occurs not depending on the amount (i.e., value) of the knowledge but depending on the initiation of the student into the institutional charism-centered mission. The act, the joining of the student to the academic community, is the purpose of such curricular elements and not necessarily the amount or type of information learned. Only student differences can be symbolized in this way. If, for example, the charismatic mission of a college or university emphasizes "social justice," it is only through unique perspectives and experiences of social justice that students come to the experience of an institutional appropriation of social justice. Students may not entirely agree with the *signs* through which the symbol is presented through the curricular element, such as a non-Christian offering an alternative perspective on what "social justice" means, but they may still join with the college or university in its pursuit of the symbol of social justice. Further, each curricular missional element is only relevant in relation to the other symbols forming the institution's symbolic order. Thus, the curricular element only symbolizes in its relationship to other institutional symbols such as the mission statement. If the missional curricular element does not form identification with the mission itself, the missional curricular element enters into the imaginary. For example, if the "social justice" of the curricular element has no relationship with the

[99] See Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 84-5.

"social justice" reflected in the mission, the image of social justice attached to the curricular element enters into the imaginary. Again, though "consistency" is a useful measure, "inconsistency" can also highlight inchoate ways of being-in-community. Though institutions of higher education might need to present a core curricular element in such a way as to appeal to student values in order to "sell" the element, it is not the value (whether commercial, use, aesthetic, cognitive, or even emotional) that forms being-in-community but rather the fitting together of the academic community through the curricular element. Finally, the missional curricular element is both "revealer" of being-in-community by, for example, revealing a shared pursuit for social justice, but also an "agent" of being-in-community by simultaneously enacting that being-in-community.

Chapter Four

Institutional Charism as Sacramental and Liturgical

Chauvet can apply the characteristics of symbol to sacramental life because "what is valid for human subjects in general is of course valid for Christian subjects."[1] Likewise, as Chapter 3 shows, one can make a similar argument of the being-in-community of the higher education institution. This is the reason that this argument relies heavily upon the philosophical foundations of theology. It allows one to speak of Christian identity and Christian community in the context of higher education, a context not uniformly Catholic or even Christian in profession, while still using a proper ecclesiology – that is, a proper account of being a member of the Church. It also allows for the examination of points of intersection between the being-in-community of the charism-centered missional institution and the process of assessment. This chapter we will continue along these lines by examining Chauvet's account of "symbolic exchange." This chapter will specify more distinctively the manner of ecclesial participation that the being-in-community of charismatic institution of higher education has. It will argue 1) that institutional symbols function liturgically as sacramentals through the process of symbolic exchange and 2) that assessing institutional liturgies via assessing the symbolic efficacy of institutional symbols is an entry point into assessing the efficacy of charism-centered institutional mission.

4.1. The Sacramentality of Charism-Centered Mission Identity

Sacramentals have traditionally been distinguished from the seven sacraments (baptism, reconciliation, Eucharist, confirmation, matrimony, holy orders, and anointing

[1] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 17.

of the sick). Sacramentals are like the sacraments in that they both function "sacramentally" – that is, they in their own way symbolically mediate the present absence of God. However, while the sacraments are instituted by Christ and institute a gracious and gratuitous being-in-communion of themselves, sacramentals are instituted by the Church and depend for their being-in-communion more on the disposition of the one participating in the sacramental. According to the metaphysical language of causality, sacraments "confer grace" *ex opere operanto*, while sacramentals "confer grace" *ex opere operantis Ecclesiae*. Every sacramental is symbolic, but not every symbol is sacramental. According to Chauvet, sacramentality, that which the sacraments and the sacramentals share, encompasses "the various forms of celebration which the church performs in memory of Jesus' death and resurrection" and "everything that pertains to the thankfulness which the church expresses to God."[2] Symbols, as we have seen, enact being-in-communion. Those symbols that function sacramentally enact being-in-communion with God and his church.

Institutional missions guide relationships among institutional stakeholders and shape institutional culture. That is, they form being-in-community, and similarly are composed of and expressed through symbolic elements. The symbols of higher education institutions expressed by and aligned with institutional mission form a distinct kind of being-in-communion and bear with them a distinct identity. For example, many colleges and universities, both secular and religiously affiliated, use their institutional mascot to symbolize the institutional community. These symbols are rallying points bringing

[2] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 29, 30.

stakeholders together. Students of the Louisiana State University are known as "Tigers," while Notre Dame students are known as the "Fighting Irish."

While all institutional missions guide institutional relationships, charism-centered missions particularly focus on developing community relationships, what here is termed being-in-communion. As discussed in Chapter 1, charisms are about building up community, namely, the body of Christ, the Church, and, consequently, participation in charism-centered mission is participation in the sacramental life of the church. This is not to say that all persons participating in an institutional charism are Christians, but that they participate in a kind of Christian identity, precisely a *charism-centered institutional missional identity*, by virtue of their engagement with the institutional mission. Thus, what Chauvet's account of being-in-community through symbol allows us to do is to speak of charism-centered institutional identity as an ecclesial structure that is neither separate from the body of Christ, the church, nor necessarily identical to the visible institutional Church. In that the whole of creation itself is sacramental giving all that is creaturely the potentiality for mediating being-in-communion with the divine, this essential sacramentality is in part how and why, as addressed in Chapter 3, Catholic Christians recognize truth and goodness in other religions. It is also how those of other religions or of no religion at all can come to recognize truth and goodness in sacramental expressions. As Chapter 3 argues, the "circle" of the church is not closed but opens out to the reign of Christ, which is wider than the visible church. [3]

[3] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 29.

4.2 The Liturgical Expression of Charism-Centered Mission

Institutional stakeholders participate in those institutional symbols that are sacramental – which are, among others, charism-centered institutional symbols – through liturgy. 'Liturgy,' from *leitourgia*, means "public work" and celebrates the identity of the people coming together.[4] For example, persons participating in the ancient Roman grain dole participated in "liturgy" by receiving grain not according to their need but according to their status as Roman citizens, thereby, celebrating their identity as Roman citizens. Christian liturgies by contrast celebrate Christian identity by celebrating the coming of the person of Christ to his people, the Church. Thus, even though, in the Catholic higher education context, 'liturgy' is often, and at times rightfully can be, associated or equated with liturgies such as the liturgy of the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours, institutional liturgies celebrated by institutions of higher education form a broader category in which both Catholic and non-Catholic stakeholders can participate. Celebrating the charism of a higher education institution constitutes a form of liturgy, one that, as argued above, arises from the charism-centered Catholic institution of higher education as its own unique ecclesial structure that is neither separate from nor necessarily quite identical to that of the visible institutional Church. Thus, for example, when a student participates in a charism-centered curricular element, the student participates in the institutional liturgy of the college or university. The student is, by extension, participating in the Christian identity of the institution and therefore by extension also participating in the body of Christ without necessarily also being an adherent of the visible institutional Church.

[4] See "*Leitourgia* and the Poor in the Early Christian World" in Susan R. Holman, *The Hungry are Dying: Beggars and Bishops in Roman Cappadocia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Chauvet, drawing from the examples of ancient and modern gift-based economies such as the Roman patronage system, coins the model that he uses to describe liturgical action as "symbolic exchange." Chauvet proposes this model in direct contradistinction to models that may end up treating the liturgy as more of a "market exchange" due to an emphasis on value, such as the value of "grace" for "producing" sanctification. Whereas "market exchange" is based on the value of that which is exchanged (e.g., worship is exchanged for sanctification or divine merit), "symbolic exchange" is based on the exchange's signification of givers and recipients as members of a community (e.g., I give and receive the good things of God's creation and am thereby indicated as a member of the People of God). In symbolic exchange that which subjects exchange is not so much objects of value but their very selves.[5] In symbolic exchange, each member of the community gives freely and without counting, making the act of giving "gratuitous" and "gracious."[6] Consequently, "the important thing is less what one gives or receives than *the very fact of exchanging* and thus, through the objects exchanged, to be *recognized as a subject*, *as a full member of the group*."[7] Symbolic exchange forms identity in that through it one is accepted into and accepts the identity of the community by participating in its being-in-community.

Taking up the example of the seven sacraments, it is by participation in these sacraments, particularly those of Baptism and Eucharist, that one is designated a member of the body of Christ and the visible institutional Church. Each sacrament is initiated by God who "gratuitously," not necessitated by any other and of God's own initiative, and

[5] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 119.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

"graciously," proffered without counting the cost, gives his very self and so initiates the recipient into being-in-communion with the body of Christ, the Church.[8] Unlike gift-giving models frequently encountered in the United States, that which is given in symbolic exchange is not an isolated instance between one giver and one recipient but belongs to a community action. A gives to B, who in turn gives to C, and so on and so forth.[9] The gift of divine self-hood, the being-in-communion of God with his Church, is not an isolated gift but one which the People of God give to each other. They give themselves and, in turn, share God's self with one another. While giving and receiving in the process of symbolic exchange is voluntary, it is also "obligatory" in the sense that refusing to give or to receive "is to place oneself socially and symbolically outside the group" and "incur excommunication by the group" by "mak[ing] it impossible for oneself to live in it as a subject."[10] Thus, those who, for whatever reason of conscience, choose to refrain from participating in the sacraments of the visible institutional Church do not participate fully in that ecclesial structure.

Nevertheless, while this model necessarily excludes non-Christian persons from Christian identity out of respect for their wishes, it also offers a unique place for non-Christians to participate in the ecclesial context enacted by the college or university. In that charism-centered missions promulgate the charisms upon which the college or university is founded, participation in those institutional charisms is participation in the liturgy of the college or university which thereby demarcates institutional persons as accepting the identity of that college or university. By participating in college or

[8] Ibid.
[9] Chauvet, *Sacraments*, 119.
[10] Ibid., 118.

university charisms, institutional stakeholders participate in the being-in-community of the academic institution of higher education.

For example, the charism of Duquesne University is a Spiritan charism, inspired by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. This charism as it is appropriated by Duquesne particularly emphasizes matters of social justice especially as "walking with those on the margins." The Spiritan congregation is a missionary congregation, and, being so inspired, Duquesne missionally emphasizes programs reaching out to the poor and marginalized. Both persons who are Catholic and non-Catholic participate in this liturgical symbol of the University and so take on the University's institutional identity. Because "social justice" is a divine gift to creation, persons who are Christian and non-Christians can recognize its goodness and so desire to participate in an institutional liturgy that enacts social justice through a wide variety of institutional programs and elements. Refusal to participate in the symbol of "social justice," which is frequently expressed through Duquesne University programs and charism-centered elements, is a refusal to participate fully in the institutional being-in-community. Thus, as addressed above, participation in sacramentals is, in part, a matter of disposition.

Insofar as Christ is the fullness of creation and all creation discovers its dignity in and through him, to desire the good things of creation insofar as they are promoted through institutional mission– such as, for example, desiring and assisting a particular academic institution in promoting social justice – is to desire being-in-communion with Christ and his church, not necessarily as a member of the visible institutional Church, but as a member of the ecclesial structure, the ecclesial being-in-community, formed by the academic institution.

For colleges and universities whose charisms center specifically on the act of adherence to the visible institutional Church, - perhaps, one might call it the charism of obedience or piety, this may mean that fewer non-Catholics may feel comfortable participating in and desiring institutional symbols, whereas a more missionary orientation of colleges and universities may be welcoming to persons of greater diversity.[11] While it is good for some colleges and universities to center their missions specifically on charisms emphasizing adherence to the visible institutional Church, it reflects better the nature of charism itself to have a diversity of charisms such that some colleges and universities are more open to the diverse ways in which Christ and the Spirit are made manifest in the world.

4.3 Liturgical Present Absence in the Institutional Community

Maintaining a balance between welcoming and engaging persons of diversity according to their diversity while also maintaining being-in-communion with the visible institutional Church is a matter of pastoral responsibility. An overly rigid adherence to the images attached to institutional symbols results in a lesser openness to new forms of diversity. Though the visible institutional Church itself may be open to a wide variety of diverse instantiations of charismatic identity, this does not mean that members of Catholic institutions of higher education are open to a similar variety of diversity due to what their personal images of the university community may be. For example, though a college or university stakeholder may not be self-consciously or intentionally against multi-cultural expressions of the faith, rightly believing that Christ came for all, such a

[11] This is a matter that can sometimes lead to the circumstances, mentioned in Chapter 3 and addressed again above, where Catholic institutions of higher education may be tempted to emphasize their charisms as if they were separable from the visible institutional church.

stakeholder could still act in such a way as to be unconsciously or even unintentionally against multi-cultural expressions of the faith if the person's image of a Catholic institution of higher education excludes multi-cultural expressions of the charism. Further, overly rigid adherence to the images attached to institutional symbols can result in those symbols no longer functioning symbolically but imaginarily in that they exclude persons from the being-in-community of the institutional community who positively contribute to the diversity of the community and who, according to justice, should be welcomed in the ecclesial community formed by the institution.

However, if institutional images are too vague or too loosely adhered to, the institution risks losing its charismatic institutional identity. One example of this in sore contention is the adjunct crisis. With certain notable exceptions, many Catholic colleges and universities with charism-centered missions in American higher education context have acceded to pressures to continue to grossly underpay and underrepresent adjunct instructors while at the same time insisting that those same instructors remain faithful to Catholic teaching as represented in the institutional mission. These circumstances are further exacerbated when Catholic institutions work to increase the national and global growth of wealth inequality by paying other college or university employees, such as administrators and athletics personnel, exorbitant salaries. Such institutional dissonance tears apart college and university being-in-community in that the identity of the college or university becomes a matter of convenience rather than of institutional commitment. In such situations of institutional dissonance, the symbols of institutional identity recede into the imaginary and function more as idols because the commitment of the college or university becomes one of market exchange rather than symbolic exchange. Institutional

wealth, power, and position, whether these are posed in secular or religious terms, become elevated above the being-in-community of the charism-centered missional institution. The image of the institution and its preservation becomes a god in itself, rather than being-in-community of the institutional community being treated a locus where the divine indwells in present absence. When this happens the institution effectively abandons its charismatic identity because authentic charismatic identity is about developing being-in-communion.

What is at stake here is cooperating with the present absence of the divine. An overly rigid adherence to symbolic elements rejects divine absence by rendering symbolic elements too present which results in them devolving into the imaginary. God becomes grasped so tightly, pulled into such presence, that God is abandoned in favor of some lesser god. Overly vague symbolic elements reject divine presence either by rendering the charism-centered mission devoid of content or by rejecting the inescapability of metaphysics. When symbolic elements are rendered devoid of content, they are unable to render present absence through the characteristics of "fitting together," "crystallization," "recognition," and "submission to the communal Other." For symbols, the similarities through which they call together persons-in-communion are necessary in order to indicate difference. Removing the "presence" part of the present absence equation disallows for being-in-communion. Intelligible content is necessary in order to locate the commonality over which institutional stakeholders are differentiated.

Rendering symbolic elements too vague also leaves open the possibility of rejecting the inescapability of metaphysics. Those symbolic elements from which being-in-communion-making symbols arise inescapably give some image of God, and allowing

symbolic elements to remain too vague ignores that such images have metaphysical consequences. These metaphysical consequences will inevitably clash, with the likelihood of partiality being given to the metaphysical preferences of those in power and authority, and lead to conflict within the institutional community. To say this otherwise, when charism-centered mission is so vague that "we all agree," clashes occur because all institutional stakeholders bring difference, i.e., diversity, to the table.

Though we speak here in terms of "vagueness," a manner of speaking that we criticized Locklin for in Chapter 1, as one pole of a gradation between overly rigid and overly vague content, this contrast of rigidity and vagueness is not intended to render the being-in-community of the institutional community itself vague, but rather to the manner in which we come to understand it and speak of it as "community," that is, as a unified, metaphysical whole. Instead of rendering the being-in-community of the charismatic institution vague, this contrast intentionally allows for the liturgical *praxis* of being-in-community to work itself out.

Because symbols unify only through difference, those differences associated with sacred symbols are also sacred. Differences (e.g., of race, religion, culture, gender, and even of such types of diversity as differences of academic opinion) play themselves out in the being-in-communion of the institutional community through communicative processes that express difference such as agreement and disagreement. Through symbol, differences are not divisive but reflect diverse ways of being-together. This is why diversity in this sense is not equivalent to the toleration of differences. Toleration is a kind of "letting be" that involves allowing the other to be other amidst retaining division among differences. Symbolic difference does not result in a "letting be" of otherness but

an appreciation for otherness. Therefore, through the unity of symbol, diversity is not something to be eschewed but appreciated.

Differences become liturgically significant for the institutional community in that they have to do with the being-in-communion of the institutional community. In that they are an essential part of symbols, they are also an essential part of the process of symbolic exchange. When A gives to B in being-in-communion his or her very self, the person gives according to his or her otherness. Self-gift would lose its sacredness through redundancy. There can be no being-in-communion without difference. Even in the example of the Trinitarian mystery otherness is indispensable for unity: the person of the Father generates the person of the Son, in and through the person of the Spirit. The Father is neither the Son nor the Spirit, yet all are one. This play of otherness and unity is perhaps one reason why market exchange is so liturgically pernicious. In market exchange the other is already seized or grasped, made in the image of the self. In market exchange, I "give" worship for something I already know, something that is Same to me, my image of what I value, sanctification. Or, as in the example from the higher education institutional context, I "give" administrative services in exchange for something I have already identified as mine, an income. In symbolic exchange, I give and receive according to my unique, individual gifts and am thereby indicated as one who is being-in-communion with the institutional community.

Just as institutional identity is present but absent so too are identities associate with various types of diversity. Otherness is not graspable but is itself other. Thus, there is no one example of what it means to be a black Islamic American female faculty member of a Catholic institution of higher education. These are all identities to be

celebrated and appreciated, but no identity, no image, is graspable in and of itself lest it become an idol. There is no essence that demarcates this culture or that culture, this race or that race, this religion or that religion, this role or that role, etc. Thus, symbolic exchange only functions appropriately with the expression of humility. This is a humility that recognizes that the shared identity of the institution is not necessarily as one imagines it to be and that recognizes that differences are not necessarily as one imagines them to be.

4.4 Pastorally Negotiating Symbols

Chapter 3 addressed four characteristics of symbol – "fitting together," "crystallization," "recognition," and "submission to the communal Other" – as a potential rubric for evaluating symbolic efficacy. Because, as Chauvet argues, symbolic efficacy can be analyzed through the process of symbolic exchange, these four characteristics of symbol may also be useful in pastorally negotiating the tension between overly rigid and overly vague institutional symbolic elements. However, if, as discussed in Chapter 3, inconsistency, which is one form of difference, is not a great measure of "fitting together" as a characteristic of being-in-community, then "what is?" and, as it is frequently put, "who decides?" How do institutional decision-makers arrive at decisions that are just and promote the common good? Who decides what constitutes charism-centered mission fidelity?

In that the process of pastoral negotiation is ultimately one of discernment, discerning the work of the Spirit in forming institutional being-in-communion must function as a critical centerpiece for institutional decision-making. This is where the institutional assessment of charism-centered mission, as a process of discernment, can

help. A praxis of assessing the symbolic efficacy of institutional symbols via the process of symbolic exchange – that is, assessing institutional sacramentals as they are encountered in the institutional liturgy – can guide the institutional community in advancing its charism, as well as, assisting it in evaluating new directions in charism. Theologically, a theory of assessment for charism-centered mission should have the capabilities of addressing the locus of discernment ("Who decides?") and offering a path for institutional conversion ("How does one measure charismatic fidelity?").

First, the locus of discernment of charism-centered mission must be the People of God, the community of faith, the liturgical Body of Christ – that is, the being-in-community of the charism-centered missional institution. All institutional stakeholders, by virtue of their being-in-communion with the charismatic institutional community, are also institutional decision-makers, who in various roles and capacities, participate in the forward progress of institutional identity. Some stakeholder roles and capacities, such as administrators, the local bishop, and too often even the uninformed public, will likely, and almost inevitably, exercise more power on the direction of a college or university in its Catholic and Christian identity. Nevertheless, power and authority belong to the being-in-communion of the charismatic community, its being-in-relation. Thus, the responsibility and authority borne by individual roles and capacities is unique to and determined by the being-in-community of the institution. For example, in the visible institutional Church one can point to the authority of the apostolic succession but one can also point to the authority of the *sensus fidelium* according to which all who share a Christian identity, regardless of ordination status, share in directing the development of the Church in the world via their baptismal sharing in Christ's priesthood, prophetic

mission, and kingship. Thus, the purpose of this argument is not to take sides among those embroiled in institutional power struggles, but to argue that the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community, the unifying power of the Spirit bringing into communion diversity, is the locus of power and authority for the charismatic institution of higher education. This means that, for example, when institutional decision-makers sow problematic inconsistencies by tolerating and promoting institutional injustices, such as the exploitation of adjunct labor, the being-in-community of the charismatic community, the efficacy of its symbolic elements, fails to hold and both those individuals who exercise power and authority are weakened in that power and authority as is the community itself weakened in its power and authority.

Assessment addresses this locus in that, from an assessment standpoint, all stakeholder voices matter. Institutional assessment listens to the voices of all stakeholders and, thereby, listens to the Spirit as the Spirit is made manifest in the lives of a diverse population of individuals. Though assessment done poorly can be carried out in an oppressive and silencing manner that favors hierarchical valuations, assessment done well is a democratizing process that speaks to the health of the institution's being-in-community. For example, Jennifer Bain in her piece "Integrating Student Voice: Assessment for Empowerment" examines how dialogical forms of assessment empower students to take responsibility for their own learning by treating learners and educators both as subjects, in contradistinction to models that treat learners as objects according to what Paulo Freire calls a 'banking concept of education.'[12] Listening to stakeholders

[12] Jennifer Bain, "Integrating Student Voice: Assessment for Empowerment," *Practitioner Research in Higher Education* 4, no. 1 (2010): 14-29. See also Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. M. Bergman Ramos (London: Penguin, 1970).

from the margins through the process of assessment, empowers those same stakeholders to have a voice in the advancement of the charism-centered mission. It treats stakeholders as subjects worthy of human dignity and as participants in the eschatological workings of divine providence through the charism-centered mission of the institution.

Second, assessing institutional symbolic efficacy must functions as a kind of institutional examination of conscience. Placing the conception of a metric side-by-side with that of charism-centered mission fidelity should raise those ineffability questions, discussed in Chapter 2, regarding how any metric can be appropriate to the event that is the Holy Spirit uniting the People of God through their diversity. However, as the foregoing alludes to, that which one seeks in assessment is not to discover what is the perfect expression of charism-centered mission – that is, it is not to discover some positive solution to the question – but to learn how institutions can develop in expressing their charism. The symbols are beyond grasping if they are to remain symbolic, but this does not mean that institutional stakeholders cannot listen to challenges and frictions as the symbolic devolves into the imaginary. From the ecclesiological standpoint outlined here, challenges and frictions raised by diverse members of the institutional community and discovered through the process of assessment are opportunities for members of the institutional community to evaluate inconsistencies and in doing so to re-evaluate the images associated with institutional symbols so that institutional symbols are able to function more symbolically rather than imaginarily.

For example, that which "fits together" will, in practice, ultimately depend on the ability of the institutional community to bear inconsistencies and ambiguities in a spirit of generosity. While sorting among types of inconsistencies can, at times, be difficult to

impossible, which requires institutional patience and generosity, there is, as Chauvet himself argues, room and the need to set boundaries, using the metaphysical methodologies of presence, to determine at what point the inconsistencies become too inconsistent for the being-in-community of the institutional community to bear and still retain its symbolic elements.[13] This return to metaphysics, however, cannot be the end of the story. The Sameness that metaphysics offers must be continuously challenged by Otherness. Thus, the symbolic elements of being-in-community should change over time as the being-in-community of the institutional community develops. For example, the symbolic element, the image associate with the symbol, may need to change in order to function more symbolically than imaginarily. Even though there are still great strides yet to be made, racist and sexist images representing the being-in-community of institutional communities of higher education have over time become more culturally eschewed as higher education institutions have become more integrated. When inconsistencies between how the identities of persons of color and women are treated as being-in-community in light of renewed understandings of the Church's teachings on human dignity are resolved into consistencies, elements of race and sex function more symbolically than imaginarily.

Because the institutional assessment of charism-centered mission has the theological significance of serving as a functional examination of conscience for the institutional community, assessment prepares members of the institutional community to engage with the institutional liturgy and, in a similar manner to the sacrament of confession, thereby has liturgical significance. Assessment of charism-centered mission

[13] See Chauvet, "The Liturgy in its Symbolic Space," 36.

assists in setting aside person and community for participation in being-in-community by challenging metaphysical presuppositions inhibiting being-in-community.

Looking toward assessment as a method for assessing the institutional liturgy prepares institutions to discern the difference between functioning according to market exchange and according to symbolic exchange. In choosing to pursue symbolic exchange, the institution 1) listens to the Spirit acting in the People of God, which prepares the institution to employ decision-making that places the being-in-communion of the institutional community first above any idols of power and prestige that might tempt it and 2) empowers institutional stakeholders to participate in institutional discernment.

Chapter Five

Applications of the Foregoing Ecclesiology

Now that this argument has sketched a theoretical framework for charism-centered institutional mission and its assessment, attention can be turned more concretely towards principles and methods of assessing charism-centered mission. This chapter is structured according to the closed-loop assessment cycle discussed in Chapter 2: 1) relevant stakeholders determine desired outcomes; 2) activities and experiences are aligned with outcomes; 3) activities and experiences are enacted and evidence is collected; 4) evidence is analyzed, shared, and meanings, or significations, are drawn; 5) changes are implemented based on the evidence gathered; and 6) the cycle restarts with fresh eyes in defining desired outcomes, determining useful assessment measures, and assessing impacts of evidence-based changes. Each of these assessment cycle stages is needed to develop a comprehensive charism-centered mission assessment strategy. However, the purpose of this chapter is not to examine fully the process of institutional assessment but to sketch some consequences of the foregoing ecclesiology for the process of assessment. Each unit of discourse will also be accompanied by an "ecclesiological perspectives" section reflecting on how the foregoing ecclesiology is applied. Further, the ecclesiological perspectives reflected on here will be exemplified through the following applied example:

Duquesne University is a Roman Catholic higher education institution of roughly 9,500 students. I have chosen Duquesne because, as a student, I am a stakeholder in the institution and, thereby, a participant in its institutional charism. The assessment goal I

have set for this exercise is assessing the institution's mission statement with respect to the student stakeholder population. The statement reads:

> Duquesne University of the Holy Spirit is a Catholic university founded by members of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, the Spiritans, and sustained through a partnership of laity and religious. Duquesne serves God by serving students through: commitment to excellence in liberal and professional education; profound concern for moral and spiritual values; maintaining an ecumenical atmosphere open to diversity; [and] service to the Church, the community, the nation, and the world."[1]

This example will be imperfect because I alone do not constitute the being-in-community of the institutional community. Assessment well done is an *institutional* process that is irreducible to any one stakeholder. However, some example is necessary here in order to provide a concrete example of the consequences of the ecclesiology addressed here.

5.1 Determining Relevant Stakeholder Populations and Desired Outcomes

The first stage of the assessment cycle has two phases. First the assessing community must functionally define relevant stakeholder populations. Then, it must determine desired outcomes. However, as a consequence of the foregoing ecclesiology, one should add a third stage, identifying institutional symbols and symbolic elements. This institutional mission assessment must be founded in epistemic humility and requires an interweaving of the metaphysically founded methodologies associated with signs and a respect for present absence associated with symbols.

[1] Duquesne University. "Duquesne University Mission Statement," accessed November 22, 2020, https://www.duq.edu/about/mission-and-identity/mission-statement.

5.1.1 Determining Relevant Stakeholder Populations

Prior to determining desired institutional outcomes, institutions should begin by determining relevant stakeholder populations. Determining relevant stakeholder communities for the Catholic institution of higher education requires making some determination as to the populations with whom the institution has being-in-communion. Thus, stakeholder populations are easily identified with students, faculty, administrators, staff, and alumni. However, the being-in-communion of the Catholic institution with civic life as well as the life of the visible institutional church means that Catholic institutions also have civic and ecclesial stakeholder populations. Civic stakeholders include local, national, and international populations, as institutions are citizens of their locality as well as citizens of the world, and these are represented, generally speaking, by various accrediting and other regulatory bodies. Ecclesial stakeholders include the People of God, the church, who are represented, generally speaking, by the local bishop. Nevertheless, being-in-communion is not reducible to any representation or representative, which means that, though these representative bodies, both civic and ecclesial, are key places to start in what otherwise could be a daunting process of trying to assess everyone as they participate in the common good to which the college or university contributes, they cannot be the final word on the institution's accountability to its being-in-communion, its charism. This is not to say that these do not hold a special kind of authority for the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community, but to say that such a being-in-community is not reducible to their authority.

While practical determinations identifying relevant stakeholders still must be made and those most proximal to that which is being assessed, the being-in-community

of the institutional community, are particularly relevant, one must methodically incorporate the fact that populations of relevant stakeholders are in, many respects, ethereal. Populations of relevant stakeholders should shift over time as the institution develops, and over time the institution must continually discover who these populations are because the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community is not itself graspable, or, definable. Thus, determining relevant stakeholders must be a continual process of discovery.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. Returning to the illustration of the child before the mirror, one's idea of the ecclesiological community and, thereby, one's ideas of those individuals constituting its membership, is not equivalent to, does not grasp or contain within itself, the being-in-communion of the community itself. Just as the Church of Christ is not reducible to its visible membership, so too is the membership of the charism-centered missional institution irreducible to those whom evidently participate in the institutional community. This means that the being-in-community of the institutional community is to some extent indefinable. Further, the symbolic reach of institutional symbols extends beyond the insularity of the immediate institutional community to the common good itself, making all persons as participants in the common good to some extent relevant partakers in the being-in-community of the institutional community. This suggests that the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community is to some extent expansive and, thereby, generous. Or, in Chauvet's language, it is gracious and gratuitous.

Certain individuals and groups, through their roles and duties, have a responsibility for exercising a mature form of authority over the charism-centered

missional institution. As a charismatic institution, the college or university participates in the Body of Christ, the Church, institutional decision-makers have a responsibility for cooperating with legitimate sources of authority. However, as that authority arises from the being-in-community of the ecclesial community itself, the locus of charism-centered discernment must be the being-in-community of the institutional community itself, which includes but is not reducible to the decision-making of any one person or group. Thus, the pastoral negotiation of symbols in discerning the work of the Spirit is necessary even in terms of determining who counts as a relevant institutional stakeholder.

Applied Example: In the case of Duquesne, institutional stakeholders include students, faculty, staff, and alumni. It also includes the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (i.e., the Spiritans) as the founding charismatic heritage of the institution, the bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh as the representative of the local church, the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education as representative of the interests of state-wide and national stakeholders, the City of Pittsburgh as representing the interests of local stakeholders. Duquesne's relationship to its stakeholders should be an exercise of increasing discovery which might include discovering an existing stakeholder population in a new way – for example, developing more effective relationships (i.e., being-in-community) with students, as is the goal of the present example – or which might include discovering new stakeholders altogether such as discovering fellow Catholic institutions of higher education as collaborators rather than competitors.

5.1.2 Identifying Charism-Centered Institutional Symbols

While desired outcomes should be determined by those identified as relevant stakeholders according to the charism-centered mission of the college or university, according to the ecclesiology laid out here, what must be delineated first, prior to determining outcomes, are the charism-centered institutional symbols, which, if the mission is well crafted, also express the charisms of the college or university. One process that might be used to go about this involves 1) identifying "normative" symbols and their symbolic elements, 2) scaffolding symbolic elements, and 3) diversifying assessment-integrated symbolic elements.

Identify "normative" symbols, and their symbolic elements. Though all institutional symbols are to some extent "exploratory" as defined in Chapter 3, the institutional community should come together to determine a core group of "normative" symbols that best enact their being-in-community. This defining of symbols uses the signs, which the symbolic elements also have, to set metaphysical limits on the being-in-community of the institutional community. However, since signs are not equivalent to symbols, the symbolic elements must always be in question, must always be "exploratory" on some level, lest the institution risk over-presencing its symbols by confusing them with symbolic elements.[2]

[2] For example, Chapter 3 gave examples of several "normative" symbols that institutions tend to have such as mission statements, human resource policy, strategic planning, student and faculty handbook policies, academic integrity policies, programming priorities, events, etc. and referred to these as symbols. However, it also made a distinction between a mission statement, which is a symbolic element, and the mission itself, which is the being-in-community of the academic community. We must remember that language, for Chauvet, is a medium through which subject and language build each other up, not a tool. So, in this respect mission statements are symbols. However, all language, for Chauvet, functions both under the principle of sign, that is, language as a

Ecclesiological Perspectives. The term 'normative' in "normative symbols" particularly relates to the characteristic of symbol that Chauvet describes as "submission to the communal Other." It refers to the manner in which the otherness of the institutional being-in-community is accepted by institutional members through the symbol. The symbol is not itself grasped through the symbolic element but remains other in such a way as to bind the being-in-community of the institutional community together. 'Normative' is here contrasted with 'exploratory' in order to emphasize the non-graspable nature of institutional symbols. The terminology of "normativity" might bring to mind the a conceptual framework founded in rigidity, but, given that this is far from the intention of the ecclesiology developed here, it is useful to set it in relief with a conceptual framework surrounding exploration.

Applied Example: Though the range of symbols at Duquesne is broad one particularly relevant symbol to this applied example is the institutional mission as expressed through the symbolic element of the mission statement. The institutional mission, as a charismatic mission, is believed to have been given by God, through the working of the Holy Spirit, to the People of God and especially to Duquesne University and all its stakeholders. As a charismatic mission, it brings together persons-in-community in the Spirit. It is thereby a "normative" symbol. However, even though the charism-centered mission of the institution brings persons together in community through the Spirit, no one idea, image, or conception of the mission is equivalent to that working

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tool, as metaphysical, and according to the principle of symbol. Thus, as signs, mission statements do not mediate the being-in-community of the institutional community. "Symbolic elements," therefore, are capable of giving rise both to being-in-community and to signs. It is only as "symbols" that we speak particularly of the being-in-community of the academic community.

in the Holy Spirit. The "image" of Duquesne expressed through the mission statement is united to the mission only insofar as it is rigorously separated from it. The mission statement, a symbolic element of the mission, is "exploratory" in the sense that it must be developed around discernment of the symbol that is the mission. Further, in that the symbol of the mission itself is "exploratory," the institutional being-in-community must discern its development, its path forward, as incarnationally participating in the work of the Spirit.

For the sake of the present example, one might say that the mission is "normative" with respect to identifying a location for its students in the mission by indicating certain virtues it desires to impart to its students. However, it is "exploratory" insofar as the being-in-community of the institutional community comes to grapple with the meaning of the location of its students within the mission statement. One critique of the mission that can be investigated and explored is the sense in which the mission assumes that students are the *recipients* of the mission rather than *equal participants* in the mission. The fact that this portion of the mission is found unsatisfactory highlights how it is "exploratory" because it does not seem, from my perspective as a student stakeholder, to recognize students as being equal stakeholders in effecting the institutional mission. Returning to the expression of symbol as a liturgical and sacramental action, as addressed in Chapter 4, it is important to remember the liturgical adage "Lex orandi, Lex credenda," which literally means "the law of prayer is the law of belief" and which indicates the closeness between that which is liturgically expressed (i.e, "prayed") and that which is given theological significance (i.e., believed). Thus, I suggest

that there may be concrete institutional consequences of the mission not treating students as equal stakeholders.

Scaffold symbolic elements. When assessing institutional charism-centered mission, it is useful to scaffold different types of symbolic elements in order to determine priorities in assessment. This is a metaphysical practice, a practice of presence, done for the sake of utility in assessment. It is important to remember, though, that symbols as mediations are not somehow inherently scaffolded. Thus, the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community is not analyzable through the scaffold itself. For example, some persons may experience the present absence of the being-in-communion primarily through one or more "charisms" when understood as themes, whereas others may experience this primarily through the mission statement, or through a particular aesthetic structure or institutional initiative.

Tier One in this scaffold is a summation of the charism-centered mission in its most simplified concepts and is composed of "charisms" understood as institutional themes. For example, "academic excellence," "social justice," "virtue," "hospitality," and "piety" are all charisms that a college or university might claim as themes. Since these are symbolic elements, they are in some sense signs and in another sense symbols, which is why there should be hesitation in equating these themes too closely with being-in-community effected by charism. The practical consequences of this is that, for example, one's image of "virtue" arises from "virtue" as a sign, meaning that one should not be overly institutionally attached to one specific conception of virtue. Yet, "virtue" as symbol, that is as mediation, still effects a special manner of being-in-communion in the institutional community.

Tier Two is the expression of those themes in symbolic elements that are essential and "normative" such as mission statements, strategic plans, academic and student life policies, etc. Insofar as these are symbolic elements, they should further express – i.e., be "aligned with" in assessment terminology – Tier One symbolic elements as they pertain to the institution's unique context.

Tier Three includes symbolic elements that are elective but also "normative." These include such symbols as those expressed in aesthetic structures such as statues, room design, and other forms of art. They also include such features as institutional programming or initiatives, institution-based institutes, and special collections in libraries. This group includes those "normative" features that must be aligned with Tier One and Tier Two.

Finally, not given as a tier in itself because it includes symbolic elements that may fit in all tiers, is the collection of those symbolic elements insofar as they are "exploratory." Thus, reevaluations of institutional charisms (Tier One), of essential elements such as policies and procedures (Tier Two), and of elective elements (Tier Three) all fit in this grouping. For example, this is the category a revised mission statement can go in before it is approved and accepted by the institutional community.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. Though scaffolding symbolic elements is a metaphysical practice, it is not contrary to but rather complements the ecclesiology presented here in that Chauvet's ecclesiology does not attempt to negate metaphysics but to work with the inevitability of metaphysics. The necessity for metaphysics in the process of assessment underscores the importance of the ecclesiology presented here, in

that the ecclesiology presented here serves as a counterbalance to that metaphysical necessity.

Applied Example: One might draw out the following symbols/symbolic elements from the Duquesne mission statement: a commitment to academic excellence, a "concern for moral and spiritual values," and a focus on respecting diversity and serving local, national, and international contexts. In particular these symbols are encapsulated by the overarching Tier One symbols/symbolic elements of "social justice" and "diversity," especially as expressed by the phrase "walking with persons on the margins." Tier Two symbols include, of course, the Duquesne mission statement itself along with documents such as the Strategic Plan. Tier Three symbols include the many ways in which the mission is expressed through its programs. For example, Duquesne's commitment to social justice and diversity is in part expressed through the Tier Three symbol of its Office of Diversity and Inclusion, as well as through the Tier Three symbols of diversity and inclusion initiatives and efforts effected through its various institutional offices, organizations, and programs. Two examples of this are the inclusion of themes of "social justice" and "diversity" in many aspects of its curriculum and the inclusion of these themes in faculty research. An example of active student engagement in the mission includes the organized efforts of student groups on behalf of social justice and diversity, both directed within the proximate University (as when the Black Student Union called for an administrative response to racism on campus) and directed towards more distal stakeholders, such as acts on behalf of social justice performed in communion with the local Pittsburgh community (as when students from the

St. Vincent DePaul Society work with local underprivileged citizens).

Diversify assessment-integrated symbolic elements. In that diversity is a key characteristic of charism, it is particularly appropriate for colleges and universities to choose a diverse array of symbolic elements to reflect their unified charism. This allows diverse persons to participate in diverse ways in institutional charism, while still being united to one charism. To say this another way, a variety of symbols provides a variety of entry points into the being-in-community of the charismatic institution, and assessing the resulting variety in symbolic elements assists the institution in discerning how its symbolic elements may need to be adjusted or negotiated in order to meet the needs of the institutional community.

While to some extent this diversity should be sought through identifying a diverse array of symbolic elements across the three tiers that are internally consistent, diversity should also be mediated by certain chosen symbolic elements that are "exploratory" – which might or might not be evidently internally consistent – in order to foster new directions in charism. "Exploratory" symbolic elements might be controversial in that their consistency with other institutional symbols is still inchoate. However, because Catholic academic institutions participate in the pursuit of holiness and progress, as an academic community, towards eschatological redemption, Catholic institutions are vocationally called to pursue excellence, which means that a controversial symbol should not be shied away from just because it is controversial. Assessment aids in listening to diverse stakeholders and assists in discerning the path forward that is more just and, ultimately, healthier, for the being-in-community of the institutional community.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. As argued in Chapter 1, charisms bring together persons-in-community in a manner not only respecting of but enhancing diversity. The

theological concept of charism is critical for this ecclesiology in that charism is a spiritual grace that binds together the Body of Christ, the Church. Enacting charisms, especially in their diversity, incarnationally participates in the co-creation of and eschatological establishment of the Kingdom of God. Thus, it is fitting to extend the establishment of diversity into the discernment process that is the institutional assessment of charism-centered mission.

Applied Example: Duquesne University, to some extent, recognizes a diverse plurality of institutional symbols through its overarching focus on "diversity" and "social justice." However, these symbols alone are ineffective without an accompanying array of actually diverse symbols.

One example of a symbol Duquesne uses to express its commitment to diversity is through the symbol of "wellbeing." The institution looks at wellbeing in a comprehensive way drawing together physical, spiritual, and psychological wellbeing to look at the whole human person. Additionally, the institution's holistic approach reaches out to populations who are often underrepresented on college campuses such as students of color, LGBTQ+ students, and graduate students. In addition to reaching out specifically to students of color in providing a safe space for addressing the wounds of racism, the institution's "Coniunctio" support group sponsored by the Counseling and Wellbeing Center works to bring together students of all races to help support a dialogue on race and feelings about race relations in order to help students respect the human dignity of every person.

A second example of a symbol used to further express Duquesne's commitment to diversity and social justice is its emphasis on "civil discourse." The U.S. national

diversity on political opinions, often as problematically reduced to the difference between the Republican and Democrat political parties, requires dialogue for effective national unity. This is felt keenly at Catholic institutions of higher education as many Catholics in the highly polarized national culture align themselves closely with one political party or the other, when in fact neither political party reflects well on Catholic teaching. The symbol of "civil discourse" attempts to break through this political idolatry in order to bring together persons-in-community.

Nevertheless, having a self-image that aligns with diversity and actively fostering a being-in-community characterized by diversity and social justice are not equivalent, because, as argued, the conception, or image, of the institutional community is not and cannot be equivalent to the actual being-in-community of the institutional community. Therefore, the pursuit of "diversity" and "social justice" through assessment must be a process, a journey, more than a destination. "Wellbeing" and "civil discourse," while sought by the institution, are never fully obtained or expressed. With respect to the specific goal of evaluating the mission statement for its treatment of student stakeholders, one can see the process of enacting the symbols of "diversity" and "social justice" is a journey in motion. Though the institutional mission statement has clearly begun to grapple with the significance of its students to its mission, it has not yet come to grapple with students as equal participants in effecting the mission. Because the student population has characteristics indicating its diversity within the institution, it is the case that students might participate in effecting the mission in ways that are different from individuals, for example, who hold the role of "employee." This does not mean that

students do not participate in effecting the mission, only that their participation in living out the institutional mission might look different.

5.1.3 Determining Desired Institutional Outcomes

Once a working set of institutional symbols are identified, desired institutional outcomes can be chosen. A well composed outcome should: draw from institutional symbolic elements; be determined through collaborative participation; be appropriate to education; be realistic and clearly defined; and be assessible through some form of evidence-based methodology.

Draw from and enact institutional symbolic elements, primarily from those elements categorized in Tiers One and Two. Though symbolic elements drawn from Tier Three may sometimes be appropriate for institution-level outcomes depending on the weight of the Tier Three symbolic element for the institutional being-in-community, in general those symbolic elements categorized in Tiers One and Two are those elements most appropriate for incorporating into institution-level outcomes.

Symbolic elements should be integrated within institutional outcomes such that their expression as symbols shines through and is not lost. Symbols shine through when they perform the act of institutional symbolization as described in Chapter 3. That is, they enact being-in-communion, are relevant in relation to one another, are not primarily relevant in relation to their value, or, market exchange, but rather in their place in symbolic exchange, and function as both "revealer" and "agent" of being-in-communion. Symbolic elements lose their expressions as symbols when they become used as tools rather than elements of mediation. Preventing this requires collaborative participation,

developing outcomes appropriate to education, and developing outcomes that are realistic and clearly defined, discussed below.[3]

Ecclesiological Perspectives. This particular element of determining desired outcomes draws from the foregoing ecclesiology in several ways. First, as noted above, though the assessment process requires some metaphysical decisions to be made, setting these decisions within the larger framework of an ecclesiology that is not bound by metaphysics enables the value of this ecclesiology to perdure even amidst the assessment cycle. Secondly, this element highlights the pathway by which the integrity of symbols can be maintained throughout the process of assessment.

Applied Example: Duquesne University might choose as an institutional outcome re-evaluating the role and place of Duquesne University students in expressing and effecting the institution's charism-centered mission. For example, "Students will both inform and be formed by Duquesne's charismatic values of 'social justice' and 'respect for diversity.'"

Determine outcomes through collaborative stakeholder participation. Determining outcomes through collaborative stakeholder participation enables the community as a whole to discern the forward trajectory of the being-in-community of the institution and avoids the usurpation of the institution's direction by one group of stakeholders. The practice itself of coming together to determine outcomes is symbolic to the extent that the practice mediates the being-in-community of the institutional community and thereby strengthens it. While one should hesitate to speak of any stakeholder group "taking ownership" of the institution's trajectory, the general sentiment

[3] Informed by Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Standard 1, https://www.msche.org/

meant by this phrase holds true in the sense that stakeholder groups begin to develop a sense of authentic participation in the institutional mission. Collaborative participation enables diverse perspectives on the incorporation of symbolic elements to be represented such that diverse stakeholders can have entry points into supporting institutional progress towards outcomes.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. This element of determining desired outcomes draws from the foregoing ecclesiology by highlighting the correspondence between the being-in-community established by institutional symbols and the collaborative nature of the ideal assessment protocol. In this particular matter of stakeholder participation, the assessment process is able to cohere with the hopes and expectations of the foregoing ecclesiology.

Applied Example: Inviting Duquesne University students into a conversation about their role in the institutional mission, and thereby the institutional mission statement, is critical to effectively re-evaluating the role of students in the expression of the mission. Without their perspectives a key stakeholder group is lost. Nevertheless, such a conversation must involve other stakeholders such as faculty and staff. Excluding stakeholder populations from the discussion neglects institutional perspectives that might add depth to the conversation, while including diverse stakeholder populations helps prepare stakeholders for institutional growth. In enabling participation by less proximate sources of stakeholder populations, such as, for example, representatives from the City of Pittsburgh community, this conversation might be developed even further. For example, through collaboration with local communities it might be learned that curricular and

extra-curricular efforts might need to be refocused away from models of charity towards those who may be less fortunate and turned more towards models of accompaniment.

Choose outcomes that are appropriate to education, specifically those that are appropriate to the particular educational context of the college or university. Though colleges and universities can accomplish many great things in response to the needs and desires of their stakeholder communities, there is one clear definable purpose, one special symbol, that unites all institutions of higher education, education. Though what counts as "education," how this symbol is expressed, will be different and unique to each higher education institution and will be, therefore, quite vast in scope, this symbol ultimately places limits on the kinds of goals that are appropriate for higher education institutions to pursue. What does not promote the being-in-community of the higher education institution, what does not essentially flow from its mission as an educational institution should not be included amidst the goals of the college or university, regardless of what impacts goals would have on the wealth, fame, power, or other idols of spiritual or worldly success.

One particularly should be wary of the idol of high enrollment numbers. The effectiveness of an institutional mission is not tied to its enrollment numbers. While enrollment is a *sine qua non*, a without which nothing, condition for the existence of the institutional being-in-community, pursuing high enrollment numbers above the being-in-community of the institutional community is to prefer market exchange over symbolic exchange. It is a violation of the institutional liturgy. This is not to say that colleges and universities should not change and adapt so as to attract new students, but that this should be a secondary priority to a primary priority of strengthening the being-in-community of

the institutional community. Institutional outcomes should be written so as to first of all strengthen the being-in-community of the institutional community with the secondary result that the institution might thereby increase its enrollment. If institutions are not obtaining the enrollment numbers they need, it is a signal that there may be some illness in the being-in-communion of the institutional community. There is an element of faith implied here. It is the faith that strengthening institutional charism-centered mission will ultimately strengthen the institution itself. If one really believes that there is a divine element guiding the institution, that the work of the institution is directed and guided by the Holy Spirit, then all that is needed is to strengthen cooperation with the Spirit by strengthening the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community, such that the institution submits itself fully into the hands of divine providence. Failing to do so, by pursuing spiritual and worldly idols, can only be detrimental to the ultimate survival of the institution, at the very least as a charism-centered missional organization but potentially also as an existential reality. Thus, while it may be tempting to redirect institutional outcomes to invite higher enrollment outcomes, symbolic exchange should be preferred to market exchange, outcomes pursuing the symbol of education should be chosen over outcomes that merely expand the institution.

Not only should institutional outcomes be appropriate for education, they should also be appropriate for the specific educational context that the college or university inhabits. Though each college and university shares in the symbol of "education," that symbol will be specified by other symbols associated with its charism-centered mission. While all colleges and universities should strive for excellence and distinction in all educational avenues that they pursue, each college and university will tend to specialize

according to their talents, the needs of their student stakeholder populations, and the needs of their local, national, and global contexts. This specialization among higher education institutions is good because it brings diverse educational perspectives to the table. Further, these circumstances are not only good for all colleges and universities in general, but particularly for institutions of higher education with charism-centered missions because students are able to bring diverse ways of being-in-community to the table.

The specificity of educational context is why benchmarking institutional outcomes can at times be problematic. Though benchmarking is an excellent evaluative practice that assists colleges and universities in assessing their relationships to other institutions of higher education, not all benchmarks are appropriate for all institutions to seek. The indiscriminate use of benchmarks can lead to great injustices within the academic community. Benchmarks must be relevant to institutional symbols and strengthen the being-in-community of the institutional community. Some benchmarks might be inconsistent with institutional mission due to having inchoate relevance, but these must be discerned in contradistinction to those that are inconsistent so as to have no relevance or whose relevance needs to be attenuated to meet the needs of the being-in-community of the institutional community. Cultivating a healthy relationship to benchmarks can ease stress on the institutional community by seeking the well-being of the being-in-community of the institutional community through discerning appropriate outcomes.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. This argument that outcomes should be appropriate to the symbol of education draws from the foregoing ecclesiology by identifying one

particular symbol that ought to be overarching for effecting the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community that is focused on higher education.

Applied Example: Formation of students in Duquesne's charismatic institutional mission is significant for appropriate education in Duquesne's institutional context. The relationship that exists between a higher education institution and a student is not one of merely obtaining profession-relevant content, but one of forming persons to engage in society. Further, as recognized in the efforts of Duquesne's Office of Alumni Engagement, the relationship of a student to the institution, the being-in-community that the institution shares with graduates, extends beyond the date of graduation. Thus, forming students in the mission 1) prepares students to participate in the mission even after graduation and 2) enables students to contribute to the institution's academic life by in turn forming the mission.

Choose outcomes that are realistic and clearly defined. Outcomes that are realistic use symbols in such a way as not to attempt to grasp or control them. They respect the present absence of the symbol. Outcomes should be written so as to look for indications for discerning whether a symbol is functioning well within the being-in-communion of the institutional community; they should not be used in such a way to expect the symbol to be completed or made perfect, or even in such a way as to expect the symbol to be measured in and of itself. The symbol is a mediating reality of the work of the Holy Spirit in the institutional community, not a tool which to try to get beyond to reach the Spirit directly.

Outcomes that are clearly defined are transparent in their meaning and set definite expectations as to how the outcome, but *not* the symbol, can be measured as having been

fulfilled. Outcomes are transparent in their meaning when they reflect the working institutional consensus in such a way that is accessible to all stakeholders. For exploratory symbols, outcomes reflect the working consensus in so far as it is a *working* consensus and are explicitly indicated as being exploratory within the institutional community. Though outcomes are clearly defined, they are not to be taken over-seriously in the sense that alternative interpretations are immediately excluded from the community. There should be room left for disagreement and for some level of vagueness. Disagreement can be good insofar as it shows how the symbols are appropriated differently by different people. Nevertheless, this room for disagreement and vagueness does not and should not preclude the outcome being clearly defined. It is important to clarify to stakeholders the reasons why the outcome chosen is believed to reflect the working consensus, as well as clarifying how and why alternative uses of the symbol are welcome within the academic community.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. Choosing outcomes that are realistic and clearly defined, as described here, enacts the foregoing ecclesiology by drawing from its critique of metaphysics so as to place symbols within their appropriate theological and philosophical context.

Applied Example: The example outcome proposed for Duquesne – "Students will both inform and be formed by Duquesne's charismatic values of 'social justice' and 'respect for diversity'" – should be realistic and clearly defined. Duquesne need not and should not attempt to definitively spell out, or definitively define, its charism, lest its attempt to do so results in the foreclosure of the charism by turning it into an idol.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that the symbol cannot be tentatively defined using the present negotiated consensus.

A well composed outcome should be assessible, which is meant here as being able to be evaluated through some form of evidence-based methodology. Institutional outcomes should be composed to be assessible through at least one, though preferably several, forms of evidence-based methodologies. Though one should start with the outcome, not with the method of assessment, the outcome should still be written so as to give an expectation as to when it is fulfilled, which means that it should be written such that its fulfillment can be evaluated based on evidence.

Typically, assessment-based methodologies prefer measurability, especially as obtained through quantitative methods. Though quantitative methods have their drawbacks with respect to evaluating learning and, even more so, with respect to evaluating such divinely inspired realities as charism, they do have a place alongside other forms of evidence-based methodologies. Like all other empirical methodologies, quantitative methods attempt, though fail, to capture, grasp, that reality towards which they are aimed by attempting to measure what is beyond measure. The epistemology of quantitative methods is one of language as signs by which it attempts to grasp directly some reality behind the mediation of symbolic elements. Nevertheless, like other evidence-based methodologies, quantitative methodologies provide a body of language potentially capable of mediating the being-in-community of the institutional community. For example, a numerical evaluation of an institution's integration of its charism into its educational activities using a method of calculative reasoning, may yield numerically based conclusions according to metaphysical methodologies which provide valid

information *as signs*. However, as symbol, those same results can be used to mediate the institution's identity. This interplay in assessment between signs and symbols, and their significance for discerning being-in-community, will be discussed further in section 5.4 below.

In addition to methodologies privileging calculative reasoning, there are methodologies privileging linguistic rather than numerical characterizations, especially as obtained through qualitative methods. Just as with numerical characterizations, linguistic characterizes, *as signs*, attempt and fail to grasp the reality at which they are aimed. This is, not to say that they are "useless," as, in terms of use value, they provide valid information that might be used in a more metaphysical treating of charism. Nevertheless, these same results, as symbols, can be supportive of being-in-community insofar as they are used to mediate institutional identity.

While bodies of assessment research tend to prefer Cartesian methodologies of discernment, "evidence-based methodologies" is intended here to include non-Cartesian methodologies of discernment. One particularly relevant methodology for discerning institutional charism is prayer. However, how such methodologies are employed must be carefully directed. Without such care, prayer just as any other method, Cartesian or not, can be used metaphysically in an oppressive, unjust fashion to cut off being-in-community. Thus, what is meant by prayer here is not personal prayer, which may be accomplished even through specific groups of stakeholders such as when board members or administrators meet. Rather, "prayer" here refers to the liturgical prayer of the academic community as being-in-community. As argued in Chapter 4, to enact institutional charisms is to participate in institutional liturgy. Thus, discernment of the

institutional liturgy must be accomplished as an institution, not as individual supplicants or groups of supplicants before God. Institutional stakeholders developing a personal prayer life could assist in learning methodologies for discerning prayer as an institution, but it is the liturgical prayer of the institution that is particularly relevant for evaluating being-in-community.

When judging the suitability of non-Cartesian methodologies of discernment for institutional assessment, it is critical that they rely on communities of judgement representative of the institutional community as a whole and include both majority and minority populations. The Catholic Social Principle of "preferential option for the poor" particularly highlights that special care should be given to minority populations when selecting assessment methodologies. Additionally, in selecting non-Cartesian methodologies, it is important to remember that even non-Cartesian methodologies are methodologies, meaning that they also have this potentiality for crushing being-in-community. When it comes to evaluating institutional effectiveness for institutions of higher education, no method, including such pious methods as prayer, could be perfect because being-in-community is not itself graspable. The work of the Spirit in the institutional community is not subject to control.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. In arguing that institutional outcomes should be able to be evaluated through some form of evidence-based assessment, this argument has sought to respect but also to expand that which counts as evidence for traditional assessment methodologies. Though, as has been shown in Chapter 2, Banta and others defend that evidence is not useful in itself but only as applied to improving learning, this does not go far enough in defending against metaphysically-charged performances of

assessment that seek to reify assessment whether through numerical or other means. Thus, the foregoing ecclesiology is necessary for expanding the range of what ought to count as evidence in order to respect symbols that instantiate institutional charisms.

Applied Example: Assessing the example outcome for Duquesne University being investigated here – "Students will both inform and be formed by Duquesne's charismatic values of 'social justice' and 'respect for diversity'" – would require collecting evidence of whether students both are formed by these values – such as whether they can identify, apply, and evaluate principles related to these values – and whether students in turn inform the Duquesne's institutional identity, for example, by creating a personal and communal vision (i.e., in dialogue with institutional, local, national, and global contexts) of what it means to "walk with those on the margins" and respect expressions of diversity that impacts the beliefs and actions of Duquesne as an institution.

Quantitative and qualitative evidence might include evaluations of student assessments requiring students to identify, apply, and evaluate principles of social justice and respect for diversity. For example, this might be done through the core curriculum or through discipline specific learning objectives crafted to assess institutional symbolic elements. It also might involve an analysis of systemic channels through which students are enabled to participate in the institution's charismatic self-understanding.

Evidence from prayer might include a survey of institutional persons as to their participation in the institutional liturgy, such as opportunities for structured communal reflection on the institution's charisms. Duquesne University, through its Center for Catholic Faith and Culture in collaboration with its Center for Teaching Excellence, institutionally offers days of reflection on the institutional charism as it applies to

institutional pedagogy. These are known as the Spiritan Pedagogy luncheons. Assessing institutional liturgy in this form might look something like evaluating artifacts developed through the reflections or evaluating the faculty's experience of being welcome at these events regardless of factors such as religious or disciplinary affiliations. Evaluations of *student* participation in the institutional liturgy might include institutionally sponsoring reflections by students on how their work in and through the institution. This is done at Duquesne to some extent through celebrations of university history and founders. However, without a strong curricular element, and especially without a locus for student participation in the institutional mission, institutional efforts to form students and be formed by students in its charisms fall to the periphery.

5.2 Aligning Experiences and Activities with Outcomes

Once relevant stakeholder populations have been identified and desired outcomes have been chosen, the second stage involves aligning activities and experiences with outcomes.

5.2.1 Aligning Tier Three Symbols

Though symbolic elements in Tiers One and Two may on some occasions be appropriate to align with institutional outcomes such as when the college or university reevaluates its charisms or its necessary documents such as its mission or strategic plan based on its institutional outcomes, generally the symbols that will be aligned here are Tier Three symbols, both normative and exploratory. Aligning Tier Three symbolic elements with institutional outcomes helps to specify the concrete application of institutional outcomes within the organizational structure of the institution. It also provides a more targeted locus for assessment. That is, when outcomes expressing

institutional symbols are scaffolded, outcomes "lower" on the scaffold become means by which to assess outcomes "higher" on the scaffold.

Nevertheless, this stage particularly highlights a limitation in the metaphysical practice of scaffolding symbolic elements. As argued above, symbols are not inherently scaffolded. One person may participate in being-in-community far more effectively with a Tier Three symbol than with a Tier One and Two symbol. Nevertheless, from a metaphysical perspective, Tier Three symbols are "non-essential" and could be done away with entirely to make space for new symbolic elements. For example, one mission-oriented initiative may be set aside for the pursuit of a new mission initiative. Discarding charism-centered missional initiatives willy-nilly does a certain kind of violence to the being-in-community of the institutional community and can be a source not just of disagreement, which is not of itself problematic as it reflects diversity, but also of division within the institutional community such that institutional participants are no longer able to participate in the institutional liturgy, the institutional symbolic exchange. Institutional stakeholders who participate in the institutional liturgy, particularly when predominantly through Tier Three symbols, may come to feel that the college or university has abandoned its mission when it abandons a Tier Three symbol. Further, while the charism is more the interrelationships enacted by the symbols rather than any one symbolic element, when a symbolic element is set aside there is a true loss of symbol, of the being-in-community of the institutional community.

Thus, it is critical when aligning symbolic elements with outcomes that symbols are not discarded but transformed. This may mean replacing one initiative with another of higher quality so that it more effectively symbolizes the being-in-community of the

institutional community. It may mean erecting some symbol of tribute to the former symbol so that it is retained within institutional memory and relevance. It may mean extending different or new symbolic elements capable of symbolizing the institutional community so that while there may be a genuine grief among one or more stakeholders over the loss of one Tier Three symbolic element, the institution still maintains being-in-community with the stakeholders in question. The ways to transform symbols are as countless as there are ways for being-in-community. The respect shown for former symbols is a form of reverence not only for the sacredness of being-in-community, but also for the One who forms being-in-community.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. The process of aligning Tier Three symbols enacts the foregoing ecclesiology by using it to caution against turning the institutional symbol into a metaphysical idol. Though such a tiered system of institutional symbols is needed in order to discern institutional charism through the process of assessment, reducing those institutional symbols to the assessment process as a metaphysical exercise can put stress on the being-in-community of the institutional community by attempting to grasp and control institutional charism as effected through symbol.

Applied Example: Returning to the potential institutional outcome investigated here – "students will both inform and be formed by Duquesne's charismatic values of 'social justice' and 'respect for diversity'" – this outcome can be further specified through Tier Three elements such as curricular elements, extracurricular and student life activities, wellbeing initiatives, etc. One example of this presently demonstrated by Duquesne is by aligning specific Wellbeing initiatives, as addressed above, with its Tier Two symbols.

5.2.2 Diversifying Experiences and Activities

When aligning Tier Three symbols with symbols from Tiers One and Two, it is important that this alignment be diverse such that it reaches all stakeholders. This is part of that diversification of symbol addressed in 5.1.2. Thus, for example, an alignment that only deals with activities and experiences benefitting those with administrative authority is inadequate for aligning experiences and activities with charism-centered mission. Reaching diverse populations of stakeholders requires diverse entry points into charism that should be comprehensive of all institutional stakeholders.

Targeting specific diverse populations amidst the process of aligning experiences and activities with outcomes, and especially populations that are a minority with respect to the populations the institution tends to serve, can benefit the being-in-community of the institution as long as the institution's connection with its diverse populations remains symbolic such that diverse populations are not stereotyped or shoehorned according to a specific image. This means that embedded within aligned activities and experiences must be processes for ongoing learning and listening, such as assessment processes. One must allow for the absence so that it is acknowledged that symbol cannot capture, grasp, or contain target populations.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. Diversifying experiences and activities likewise draws from the foregoing ecclesiology by keeping in mind the theological consequences of charism as respecting and fostering diversity.

Applied Example: In that awareness of one specific stakeholder population that is currently overlooked by the Duquesne institutional mission, students, is part of the aim of this exercise in applying the charism-centered assessment strategies investigated here,

this investigation aims at including a stakeholder population presently excluded, at least in certain key respects, from the being-in-community of the institutional community. In this sense, this applied example strives at diversifying activities and experiences welcoming stakeholders into the institutional mission.

5.3 Enacting Activities and Experiences and Collecting Evidence

The third stage of the assessment cycle involves enacting aligned activities and experiences and collecting evidence of their effectiveness.

5.3.1 Enacting Activities and Experiences

Though the enactment of activities and experiences will depend on the nature of the activities and experiences themselves, there is one strategy that is particularly beneficial for building being-in-community through enacted activities and experience. This is to celebrate enacted activities and experiences as expressing the charism of the institution, celebrating the expression of the symbol as symbol. Celebrating activities and experiences as expressing institutional charism demarcates them within the lived-world experience of institutional stakeholders as significant with respect to charism.

This is especially useful for diverse charism-centered missional priorities as it helps stakeholders to see that the religious and spiritual commitment of the institution extends beyond those activities stereotypically associated with "being religious." For example, celebrating an initiative undertaken on behalf of racial justice as a charism-centered initiative demonstrates to institutional stakeholders that the charismatic commitment of the institution extends to racial justice. Celebrating diverse missional priorities as chrism-centered missional priorities contributes to the process of initiating

students into participation in the institutional charism and gives non-Catholic faculty and staff an attainable entry point into participating in charism.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. Enacting activities and experiences that are aligned with institutional outcomes effects the charism of the institution through enacting the symbols expressed through the aligned symbolic elements.

Applied Example: Though Duquesne University's core curriculum is informed, to some extent, by its charism, because these symbolic elements are not self-reflectively, on the part of students, part of student participation in institutional mission, they often become overlooked within the self-consciousness of the student body as being elements participating in the institutional charism-centered mission. Thus, because the student body does not self-reflectively participate in the institutional Catholic charism-centered mission, that mission can become easily associate with and isolated to symbols such as "going to church" rather than the fullness of their expression in institutional life. Additionally, while some specific academic programs within Duquesne have thoughtfully and conscientiously included student formation in the institutional mission, this has been isolated to those certain programs rather than being a collective effort of the institutional being-in-community.

5.3.2 Collecting Evidence

Evidence should be collected according to a planned institutional assessment strategy. Though a variety of evidence types can be used as indicators of the health of the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community, evidence pertaining to the characteristics of symbol ("fitting together," "crystallization," "recognition," and "submission to the communal Other") is particularly useful in discerning whether

elements are effectively symbolic. Evidence of performing the act of institutional symbolization is likewise especially valuable. Questions valuable for asking might include contextualized versions of the following questions:

Do institutional symbols fit together? Are they consistent and congruent? If they are inconsistent, are they nascent symbols within the being-in-communion of the institutional community? Do populations, especially minority ones, within the institution see a path for their congruence?

Do institutional symbols crystallize? Do the symbols make present the whole of the institution? Are symbols allowed to be "absent," in the sense that the crystallizing institutional symbol is allowed to be beyond the immediate grasp and control of institutional stakeholders?

Do institutional symbols enact recognition? Are stakeholders able to recognize one another as members of the institutional community through the symbolic element?

Do institutional symbols enable submission to the communal Other? Does institutional identity persist amidst disagreement? Are multiple, differing viewpoints on the same charism valued? Do stakeholders exhibit appreciation, or at least respect, for inchoate institutional symbols? Are stakeholders open to reevaluating existing institutional structures and systems to better reflect the diversity of the institutional being-in-community?

Do institutional symbolic elements function more as acts than ideas? Is institutional identity identifiable in institutional action? Is the charism expressed through the decisions of institutional stakeholders? Are ideas about the nature of institutional identity reevaluated regularly, especially in light of the needs of minority communities?

Is each symbolic element relevant in its relationship to the others? Are symbolic elements kept within the context of the whole of the institutional symbolic order? Do institutional stakeholders respect the complexity of the institutional identity? Are institutionally recognized symbols welcoming to diverse or inchoate symbolic elements?

Is the value of the symbol irrelevant for its performance? Is the monetary or commercial value of the symbol irrelevant for its ability to form being-in-community? Is the use value irrelevant for the functioning of the symbol? Is the symbolic element's aesthetic value irrelevant for its performance as symbol? Are the cognitive and emotional values of the symbolic element irrelevant for forming being-in-community?

Is the symbol, simultaneously, "revealer" and "agent"? Does the symbol both reveal and enact the being-in-community of the institutional community? Are diverse populations of institutional stakeholders able to formulate some sense of what the institutional charism means for them? Do diverse populations experience communion with institutional symbols?

Ecclesial Perspectives. This draws from the foregoing ecclesiology by drawing from the characteristics of symbol that were discussed by Chauvet, related in Chapter 3, and employed in this ecclesiological account of charism as it occurs in the context of the institution of higher education.

Applied Example: Any exercise of application at this point is challenging due to the absence of a formal assessment process conducted by the Duquesne University itself. Nevertheless, I can still comment according to my own perspective as an institutional stakeholder in the role of a student. Though I would typically recommend posing these questions in assessments in such a manner that a non-expert can respond easily and well

to them, in order to show some of the reasoning processes that might be involved in collecting evidence, I will respond according to the language developed here. In order to abbreviate the evidence I will provide on the topic of student representation in the institutional mission, I will address three questions, one drawn from the characteristics of symbol and two drawn from the process of symbolization: "Does the institutional mission statement accurately represent student learning goals?" (i.e., do the symbols expressed by the institutional mission "fit together" with symbols expressed in curricula, such as the core curriculum?); "Does the institutional mission statement sufficiently characterize the institutional community? (i.e., do the symbols expressed by the institutional mission statement "reveal" being-in-community?); and "Does the institutional mission statement enact institutional community?" (i.e., do the symbols expressed by the institutional mission statement "enact" being-in-community?).

When asking whether institutional symbols "fit together," there does seem to be an incongruence between the symbolic element of the institutional mission, in which students are recipients of the mission rather than active participants, and core curriculum objectives, which aim at including student participation in the mission: "Formed within Duquesne's Catholic and Spiritan environment, Duquesne students, like our founders, extend our mission across the globe."[4] Thus, the symbolic element that is the institutional mission statement does not seem to "fit together" with the symbolic element that is the institutional core curriculum. One can ask whether this is an incongruence of a nascent symbol with a normative symbol within the being-in-community of the institution, or whether they are properly inconsistent. The answer, which I believe is evident in this

[4] Duquesne University, "Bridges Learning Outcomes," accessed December 15, 2020, https://www.duq.edu/academics/bridges-learning-outcomes.

case, is that the symbolic element that is the core curriculum expresses a nascent symbol of student active participation in the mission. This is a preferable resolution of this inconsistency than to say that enacting the mission is the domain of only employee stakeholders. However, to resolve the dilemma in this way must involve students as active participants in the being-in-communion of the institutional community. That is, students would need to themselves inform the institutional symbolic order. Institutional symbols must include symbols significant for students.

Regarding whether the institutional mission statement "reveals" or, "characterizes" the being-in-community of the institutional community, what it reveals or characterizes is a student body population that is a passive recipient of the institutional mission. In revealing or characterizing the student body population in this way, the institutional mission statement "enacts" passivity within its being-in-community. The institutional mission statement, therefore, does perform the processes of an institutional symbol, it just performs those processes poorly in revealing and enacting a community of passive recipients of the mission.

5.4 Analyzing and Sharing Evidence and Drawing Meanings, or Significations

Once activities have been enacted and evidence collected, in the fourth stage of the assessment cycle, evidence is analyzed and shared, and meanings and significations are drawn.

5.4.1 Analyzing Evidence

Working with assessment methodologies, particularly empirical ones, raises questions for the process of analyzing evidence pertaining to charism-centered mission. The cornerstone critique of onto-theology, which this dissertation has taken on, is to

decry metaphysical presumptions especially to conceptual knowledge of the world and of the divine workings in the world (*oikonomia*). Yet, precisely what assessment methodologies generally seek is a form of conceptual knowledge, even if that conceptual knowledge is "estimated" as in the case of statistical analysis. How this dissertation proposes to work with the inescapable reality of metaphysics is to use the interplay of signs and symbols via Chauvet's account of symbolic exchange. From the ecclesiology developed here one can ascertain guideposts for analyzing charism-centered evidence.

Symbolic elements as signs establish intelligible content useful for empirical assessment. Empirical assessment methodologies thrive in the dimension of signs. As signs, symbolic elements incorporated into assessment analyses set metaphysical limits on the institutional charism. Because metaphysics attempts to grasp that which is beyond grasp, these limits must always be tentatively held and constantly challenged.

With respect to symbolic elements as signs, empirically-informed assessment methodologies function "normally" according to their methodological principles. Assessment results as signs are useful for challenging existing conceptions about the charismatic institutional community. They accomplish this by offering alternative conceptions (signs) of the community and by signaling their own incapacity as signs to grasp or seize the institutional community.

Applied Example: According to the evidence I provided above in section 5.3.2, I suggested that the passivity of student participation in the Duquesne mission as expressed by the institutional mission statement is problematic in that it is incongruent with the expectation of students as active promoters of the mission. I suggested that students

should actively participate themselves in forming the mission, just as they are formed by it.

It might be easy, then, if an administrator were in agreement with this stance, to take up the concept of "active participation" and apply it to the mission statement by specifying what "active participation" on the part of students looks like. In this sense "active participation" offers an alternative conception to the current "passivity" model. Nevertheless, there is no conception of student participation in the mission that is not fraught with problems in that it fails to grasp the being-in-community of the institutional community. In fact, when concepts of student "activity" or "passivity" are applied too rigidly they can become oppressive of the healthy functioning of the being-in-community of the institutional community. This is one reason why assessment must move beyond the range of signs.

A second aspect of the conceptual dichotomy between "active" and "passive" student participation in the mission is that it can be disagreed with through an alternative interpretation. One might argue that students are indeed rendered "active" participants according to the mission statement, but this is only after they have undergone the learning process of receiving the mission through their academic programs. I disagree with this perspective as it seems that the mission is treated as some reified object, i.e., that exists independently of time and other interpretive factors, that can be passed from one person to another. However, part of continuously questioning assessment results is not holding one's own positions so dear that diversity of interpretation is foreclosed. There is indeed something stable about the mission when viewed in a metaphysical sense, and what the

mission statement may be appreciating might just be a metaphysical standpoint, which, albeit problematic, has some claim to legitimacy in its inevitability.

Symbolic elements as symbols model being-in-communion. Integrating symbolic elements into assessment strategies enables the possibility of enacting symbolic space. Through symbol, symbolic space is enacted amidst the process of assessment. Symbolic elements thereby become placeholders for symbols as mediating identity. As placeholders, symbolic elements as symbols can perdure through the process of analyzing assessment evidence. As symbols, they are not analyzed *per se* by empirical assessment methodologies. Nevertheless, through each stage of analyzing evidence they can be discerned.

In the ability of symbols to be discerned amidst the process of analyzing evidence, persons-in-community can discern and attest to their being-in-relation to the symbolic elements. Analyzing these attestations still does not directly shine a light on, or grasp, being-in-relation because, as one can recall from Lacan's mirror stage, one's self-understanding is never identical to the depth and mystery of the self. Still, the human subject can discern indications of mediation by the symbol. Referring to this experience of discernment as "indications" is not to suggest a partial knowledge of being-in-communion, but to indicate an evaluation of one's sense of alliance with the symbolic element, a sense that the Otherness of the symbol somehow mediates the selfhood of the individual. This is not knowledge in the sense that a subject knows an object, but a kind of non-knowledge that allows the self to be mediated by the symbol. To say this otherwise. Symbolic elements according to their symbolic mediation act something like

indices for discerning being-in-communion. They are points of contact with being-in-relation without having the ability to grasp or know being-in-communion in and of itself.

With respect to symbolic elements as symbols, assessment methodologies must focus on discernment. One type of discernment needed is the evaluation of the individual of his or her ability to participate in the institutional symbolic exchange. For example, can each institutional stakeholder freely give of and receive by the institutional symbols? In the experience of each institutional stakeholder do symbols, "fit together," "crystallize," "enact recognition," etc.? Is each stakeholder able, despite disagreements, to continue to identify as a member of the institutional community? These are the types of questions that need to be addressed to the institutional community through empirical methodologies. Questions that combine discernment on the part of the individual of his or her participation in the symbolic order of the institution with calculative elements. In analyzing such assessment results, it is important to look for absence as much as presence. While high percentages of discerned institutional identity speak favorably of institutional symbols, what is more important is to look for those who, despite their desire to share in institutional identity, are unable to do so. This means analyzing not just discernments as to whether a person is able to participate in the institutional liturgy, but also discernments as to why one is not able to enter into the institutional liturgy. Thus, discernment by individual institutional stakeholders must give way to discernment by the institutional community. The institutional community must discern whether its being-in-community can change in such a way as to welcome the diversity of those struggling with forming identity, and the stakeholders struggling with forming identity must discern the extent to which each as an individual is able to give up his or her held ideas of what the

institution is or is not in order to allow the self to be mediated by the otherness of the institutional symbolic order.

As iterated in Chapter 2, assessment is more a process than a series of fulfillments. It is about learning to address stakeholder needs more competently. Thus, asking both the institution and the stakeholder to reconsider the images is not a process of adulterating institutional identity, as if institutional identity somehow exists in some purity outside of human finitude, but rather it is a process of learning to live more authentically by discovering the ways in which the college or university has failed to meet the needs of its stakeholders. Though assessment is focused in many ways on absence, on the inability of signs to represent the being-in-community of the institutional community, the message of assessment should not be one of failure but of hope, hope for the eschatological unity of all human persons in the body of Christ.

Applied Example: Distinguishing between "active" and "passive" participation in the mission according to the Duquesne institutional mission statement can function as signs for the purpose of assessment, as addressed above, but they can also function as a placeholder for symbolic exchange. The process of assessment can be a process of symbolic exchange when, for example, the institutional community comes together to reflect on their being-in-community by reflecting on student participation in the mission as expressed through the institutional mission statement. There is a kind of coming-together over assessment that occurs. Being-in-communion is developed through the process of assessment itself. Just by holding the institutional discussion on the role of students in the mission statement can develop being-in-community. It can, however, also cause divisions, divisions which might have been the case, but may not

Members of the institutional community must decide whether student passivity in mission reception is something the institutional community wants to retain in its mission statement or whether students should have an active role in forming and being formed by the institutional mission, at least according to the institutional mission statement. Regardless of what the solution is on the level of signs, whether an active or passive route is chosen, members of the institutional community must decide whether this is a community with which they can retain being-in-communion in spite of the inherent imperfections within the institutional mission statement. Even if the mission statement were "improved" by incorporating student active participation in the mission, it is still only "present" (i.e., descriptive of the being-in-communion of the institutional community) in its "absence" (i.e. it's inability to grasp the being-in-community of the institutional community).

Ecclesiological Perspectives. Section 5.4.1 also draws from the foregoing ecclesiology by relying on Chauvet's distinction between sign and symbol to help tease out the manner in which assessment can say anything about the being-in-community of the charismatic institutional community.

5.4.2 Sharing Evidence

Though assessment evidence is likely to paint the institution in a less than perfect, i.e., less than idealized, light, evidence of charism-centered mission effectiveness should be shared with stakeholders using appropriate forms and channels of communication. Though communicating assessment results to different audiences requires adjustments in how the evidence is presented depending on the capacities of the stakeholder audience in question, assessment evidence should be well-shared. Among other benefits, this places

the institution in a position of authenticity with respect to acknowledging its shortcomings and provides the institution with an opportunity to dialogue with detractors, especially with those detractors who desire to but who are unable to participate in the being-in-communion of the institutional community. Sharing assessment evidence concerning the being-in-communion of the academic institution gives the institution an opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to improving its authentic relationship to charism and its willingness to listen to the Spirit. It also enables diverse stakeholders to participate in the process of drawing meanings and significations from assessment evidence.

Applied Example: Sharing assessment results with stakeholders regarding Duquesne University's mission statement's characterization of student participation in the mission gives these stakeholders an opportunity to respond this information an continue the assessment dialogue. For students and alumni, sharing such assessment results could give these populations that opportunity to respond as to what their role in the mission is and how they might enact it. For employees, sharing such data might provide a new perspective on how they might interact better with students.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. Sharing evidence with diverse stakeholders enacts the foregoing ecclesiology by again instantiating the diversity that is proper to the being-in-community of the charismatic higher education institution.

5.4.3 Drawing Meanings and Significations from Assessment Evidence

Though every stage of the assessment process exemplifies being-in-community, drawing meanings and significations from assessment evidence particularly exemplifies being-in-community in that the institution as a community discerns who it is and where it

is going. From assessment evidence as signs, the institutional community interprets its metaphysical boundaries and contemplates its inability to capture or grasp itself as being-in-community. From assessment evidence as symbols, the institutional community contemplates and interprets its being-together in such a way that it discovers the need to continuously re-interpret itself so as to be welcoming to persons of diversity while maintaining its fundamental relationship as a charismatic community, that is, a fundamental relationship to its institutional symbols. The experience of drawing meanings and significations from assessment evidence should be transformational. Assessment evidence can be used to challenge preconceptions and assumptions about the institutional community and raise dialogue about the nature of human dignity and the just treatment of institutional stakeholders.

Conflicting meanings and significations will inevitably arise, especially in such an environment as polarized as the contemporary United States. The goal is not to eliminate all conflicting interpretations but to evaluate the capacity of institutional identity, the institution's account of being-in-community, to perdure amidst conflict and difference. One of the purposes for evaluating institutional assessment results is to determine whether and how, through what symbolic elements, being-in-community is maintained and fostered. While there is a certain extent to which the institution will and must use metaphysical boundaries to delimit what it is and is not, these should be used sparingly, especially with respect to populations at particular risk for marginalization and dehumanization. Instead the institution, when possible, should use the much gentler approach of symbolic negotiation related in Chapter 4.

Spiritual and intellectual maturity are needed, and needing to be encouraged, on the part of institutional stakeholders hailing from all stakeholder populations. Appreciating those differences united in one charism, without merely tolerating them or actively fighting against them, requires maturity. The movement away from immaturity towards maturity is itself part of the process of assessing charism-centered mission. It challenges idols of belief in order to illuminate a path forward towards a deeper sense of being-together, a further way to discover the present absence of the divine made manifest in the believing community.

Applied Example: If the Duquesne University institutional community were to reflect on assessment results regarding student role characterization in the institutional mission statement, it might draw the conversation such that the dialogue explores a wide variety of instances where students are treated as passive participants rather than active actors. It may lead to a discussion of what students want and need in order to participate in the institutional mission and may lead to an ultimately stronger academic community.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. As addressed above, drawing meanings and significations from assessment evidence particularly applies the foregoing ecclesiology as an effort of theological discernment, as addressed in Chapter 2, regarding the progress of institutional charism across time and circumstances.

5.5 Changes are Implemented Based on the Evidence Gathered

The process of assessment can be lengthy, costly, and all for naught if changes are not made to how the institution functions. Hearing the voices of stakeholders through the process of assessment in such a way as to make institutional changes validates the felt needs of stakeholders. While institutional changes made will never go "far enough," in

that stakeholders having differing idealizations of what the institution ought to be will never be satisfied, using assessment evidence to make changes takes a dialogical approach to fostering institutional change. This methodology is a sharp contrast from top-down approaches where institutional administrators and other stakeholders of power and authority make unilateral decisions without having supporting evidence from their institutional community to back up their decisions. Assessment is also a remedy to a kind of reactionary leadership whereby outcries against one or more institutional symbols win the day simply by virtue of their volume rather than their benefit for the being-in-community of the institutional community.[5]

In making changes to institutional symbols, all parties must be treated with respect and dignity. In that diverse persons form associations with diverse symbols, care must be taken to transform, rather than simply negate or change, institutional symbols. Sharing assessment results with stakeholders and working together to draw meanings and significations from them helps to prepare stakeholders for elements of institutional change by giving them agency in the institutional change process.

Applied Example: After drawing meanings and significations from assessments of Duquesne University student participation in the mission as characterized by the institutional mission statement, the institution must determine 1) whether or not to make changes to the mission statement and 2) based on assessment evidence, what those changes should be. However, if changes are made, they should be made in such a way as to be respectful of all stakeholders and made in such a way as to preserve institutional history.

[5] This is not to say that outcries should be ignored, but that they indicate loci where assessment might be needed in order to hear the voices of the community in a balanced, integrated fashion.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. This section applies the foregoing ecclesiology by respecting the nature of charismatic institutional symbols as something sacred and connects this sacredness to the dignity of the human person. Further, it again emphasizes the quality of diversity relevant to the theological term that is charism.

5.6 The Assessment Cycle Restarts with Fresh Eyes

Restarting the cycle with fresh eyes concludes the final stage of one circulation of the assessment cycle. The process of restarting the assessment process is key to institutional learning. It again sets the institution on a footing to (re-)view institutional symbolic elements and reinterpret its institutional location amidst the symbolic orders in which it participates.

Applied Example: If the Duquesne University mission statement were to be recast so as to include a more active role on the part of students, those changes would need to be subsequently reevaluated in order to continue the dialogue process on the role of students in advancing the institutional mission.

Ecclesiological Perspectives. This section applies the foregoing ecclesiology by comparing the hermeneutical nature of the ecclesiology with the hermeneutical nature of the process of assessment. In this matter of the hermeneutic circle, both the ecclesiology and the assessment process coincide.

5.7 Concluding Remarks

In concluding this study, it is useful to return to the initial challenges posed that this account is attempting to address, the first two of which are developing a model for assessing charism-centered mission that is cross-institutionally relevant and developing a

model that can address the growing need for applying charism-centered mission within contexts of ever-increasing diversity.

This model achieves cross-institutional relevance by providing an account of charism-centered mission assessment that can be adapted to diverse and unique institutional charisms. Further, in that symbolic elements act as place holders amidst the assessment process for symbols, it may be possible to compare the results of assessments of symbolic elements cross-institutionally. Symbolic Element A at one institution might be meaningfully benchmarked against Symbolic Element B at another institution by standardizing the context in which the symbolic element is assessed. Thus, the CIMA assessment tool, addressed in Chapter 1, is useful insofar as it standardizes the context in which students are asked about their progress on various institutional symbolic elements posed as themes. The meaning-making and discernment undertaken from such a tool must be accomplished by an actual institutional community and not by the instrument itself, whether the community is a single academic institution or a collective of institutional communities insofar as they are joined through a single charism (e.g., a Jesuit association or the visible institutional Church). However, as long as the items on such assessments are taken as symbolic elements and not symbols cross-institutional relevance may be possible on the level of particular assessments.

This model also assists in navigating various forms of diversity by theologically linking charism-centered mission to the being-in-communion of the institutional community and by moderating the communal encounter of charism through the mediation of symbols, which are expressed through symbolic elements. Assessment here is used as a tool for listening and discerning the forward trajectory of the institutional

community so as to remain true to its authentic institutional being-in-community while revealing ways in which that authentic being-in-community might be (re-)visioned so as to enable persons of greater diversity to participate in institutional charism. Though further work is needed to effectively apply Louis-Marie Chauvet's account of symbol to the institutional context in order to model institutional being-in-relation such that effective institutional assessment is possible, this account outlines a starting point for this endeavor.

The benefits of employing this ecclesiology for assessment can be found in 1) strengthening the alignment of institutional mission with divine will as discerned by institutional stakeholders; 2) strengthening the being-in-communion of the institutional community which in turn reduces institutionally-caused stress on individual members of the institutional community; and 3) assists institutional decision-makers in discerning whether current and new trajectories in fact express and align with institutional charism.

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