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Theology of Work: A Working Life Retreat

A PROJECT IN MINISTRY

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By
Julie V. Burkey, M.A.P.M.

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A Working Life Retreat

Julie V. Burkey, M.A.P.M., D.Min.

Director: Donald J. Heet, O.S.F.S., D.Min.

The US Bishops address the importance of helping Catholics to make a connection between their faith and work lives in the 1986 Pastoral Letter, *Economic Justice for All*: “The road to holiness for most of us lies in our secular vocations. We need a spirituality that calls forth and supports lay initiative and witness not just in our Churches but also in business, in the labor movement, in the professions, in education, and in public life.” This project presents a practical format for parishes to meet this pastoral challenge. “A Working Life Retreat” is a multi-session team formation process which culminates in an all-day retreat where team members give talks that reflect their personal experience of finding God in the work, paid and unpaid, that they do on a daily basis.

The team formation sessions are preparation for the retreat; team members reflect on scripture, significant individuals and traditions, and church teaching pertinent to the development of a theology of work, while meditation, journaling, and confidential discussion assist team members in making the connection to their own life experiences which, in turn, become fruit for the retreat talks. The writings of Pope John Paul II, especially his 1981 encyclical *Laborem Exercens (On Human Work)*, and the documents of the Second Vatican Council, as well as the contribution of several earlier theologians, namely St. Francis de Sales, are shown to be particularly relevant to understanding the connection between work and faith.

It should be noted that not all team members are required to give a talk at the retreat; there are numerous other roles that to be fulfilled for the retreat, i.e., prayer leader, music, and hospitality.

“A Working Life Retreat” is a full-day retreat open to all parishioners, perhaps other parishes as well, and provides a similar, though much more condensed, opportunity for those attending the retreat to also reflect on the intersection of faith and work in their lives. The talks given by the team members are coupled with prayer, music/song, and small group discussion.

This project in ministry by Julie V. Burkey fulfills the project in ministry requirement for the doctoral degree in theology approved by Donald J. Heet, O.S.F.S., M.A., D.Min., as Director and by Dianne M. Traflet, J.D., S.T.D., and James A. Wiseman, O.S.B., S.T.D., as Reader

Donald J. Heet, O.S.F.S., M.A., D.Min., Director

Dianne M. Traflet, J.D., S.T.D., Reader

James A. Wiseman, O.S.B., S.T.D., Reader

DEDICATION

With thanks for his inspiration and teaching, this project is dedicated to the late

Deacon William J. Toth, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Christian Ethics,

Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology, Seton Hall University,

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Reverend Michael A. Saporito I learned much about parish life. While serving on his staff as a Pastoral Associate for Stewardship and Evangelization I experienced first-hand how a parish can be transformed by translating a dynamic vision into a concrete reality. My sincere gratitude goes to both of them.

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This small expression of my gratitude does not adequately express how much I appreciate all who have influenced me on my journey to this point. One way I can express my thanks is to keep them in my prayers; this I can do.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Identification of an Issue in Ministry

“The road to holiness for most of us lies in our secular vocations. We need a spirituality that calls forth and supports lay initiative and witness not just in our churches but also in business, in the labor movement, in the professions, in education, and in public life.”¹ The US Bishops address the issue of helping Catholics to make a connection between their faith and their work lives in the 1986 Pastoral Letter, *Economic Justice for All*. They go on to say: “Our faith is not just a weekend obligation....It is a pervasive reality to be practiced every day in homes, offices, factories, schools and businesses across our land. We cannot separate what we believe from how we act in the marketplace.”² *Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II’s *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church*, promulgated some twenty-two years before the US Bishops’ statement, also speaks directly to this mandate, “They (the faithful) must assist each other to live holier lives even in their daily occupations.”³ While this need and responsibility is clearly articulated in a number of church documents, there has been little offered in the way of practical, pastoral application.

¹ The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (hereafter referred to as USCCB), *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* (Washington DC: USCCB, 1986), 25.

² Ibid.

³ Vatican II. *Lumen Gentium* (Vatican: Vatican Press, 1964), 31.

This project takes on that challenge by (1) articulating the defining elements of a Theology of Work and (2) suggesting a way to translate that theology into a ministerial format by creating and implementing a retreat process that focuses on issues of faith and work, one which can be readily utilized in adult catechesis and spiritual formation.

The “road to holiness” that our US Bishops speak of above is indeed a life-long quest for the faithful Christian person. Far too many words to count have been written in countless books about how to help Christians approach this goal. Historically, from the days of the desert Fathers and the birth of monasticism until the 20th century, the prevailing view has been that to achieve holiness, indeed, even to strive to be holy, one must get away from the hustle and bustle of the world with its myriad distractions. This notion was naturally coupled with the sentiment that only those who dedicated their lives to “holy work,” that is, the work of the Church, could be thought of as “holy.” Consequently, this was a rather exclusive segment of the population, namely the ordained and religious (or the martyrs who gave of their very lives). Our bishops suggest that “for most of us” the road to holiness can be found *in* the world, and more specifically, in our worldly or “secular vocations.” They then proceed to spell out exactly what they mean by secular vocations, that is, the world of “...business...the labor movement...the professions...education, and ...public life.” They are referring to work, the work in which we engage in our daily occupations: offices, factories, schools and businesses; it is while we are engaged in these daily occupations that we must “assist each other to live holier lives.”

This prescription for leading a holy life may be a new one for many; in truth, it is and it isn't. The idea that through one's work one can perform acts of service, charity, and even sacrifice is not a new one, although in earlier centuries emphasis on the intrinsic value of work was most often professed from the confines of a monastery (i.e., Benedict of Nursia in the 6th century). It was really not until Francis de Sales (early 17th century) voiced the idea that devotion and the spiritual life can be actively lived out by those who "are obliged to lead exteriorly an ordinary life," that the quest for holiness was not relegated to "persons wholly retired from commerce with the world, or at the very least, they have taught a kind of devotion leading to such retirement."¹ It would not be until the 20th century that Francis' pronouncements would come to be realized by the Church as a whole, first in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, and later in the century in the writings of Pope John Paul II, most notably his 1981 encyclical, *Laborem Exercens* (*On Human Work*), both of which have much to say on the subject of daily activities, especially work, as a means of achieving personal holiness, as will be illustrated in the next chapter of this paper. For the time being, let us say that this sentiment is stated nowhere as clearly as in *Lumen Gentium's* Chapter V, "The Universal Call to Holiness in the Church": "In this, then, their daily work they (the laity) should climb to the heights of holiness and apostolic activity."²

¹ St. Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life: 400th Anniversary Edition*. (Point Roberts, WA: Eremitical Press, 2009), 11.

² Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, 41.

Defining Terminologies

The US Bishops' statement calls specifically for a "spirituality" that "supports lay initiative and witness" in the workplace. Perhaps a brief discussion of what is meant by spirituality will benefit at this time. In *Spirituality and Mysticism*, the Reverend James Wiseman goes directly to the root of the term, the Latin verb *spirare*, meaning "to 'breathe,' while the corresponding adjective *spiritualis* means 'of or belonging to breathing or to air.'"³ The very act of breathing air is essential to life and must be done at every moment and every place we find ourselves. It is a worthwhile thought for contemplating our work life, as we must not be stifled, become someone who we are not, someone who lives (and breathes!) differently at work and at home. We must continue to breathe while working, just as we do in the other parts of our life; this thought infers an integration of body and soul in all human activity. Fr. Wiseman adds another dimension: "When used by Christians, the terms are normally related to that original Pauline sense [in 1Cor 2:13] of living according to the promptings of God's Spirit."⁴ Putting the two meanings together tells us that a Christian spirituality calls us to live our life according to our faith (the promptings of the Holy Spirit) in all areas of life.

Fr. Wiseman also addresses the notion of "secular spirituality," as, for example, it is referred to by Sandra Schneiders ("...the experience of consciously striving to integrate one's life in terms not of isolation and self-absorption but of self-transcendence toward

³ James A. Wiseman, O.S.B., *Spirituality and Mysticism: A Global View* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2006), 1.

⁴Wiseman, 3.

the ultimate value one perceives”)⁵ and Peter Van Ness from his Introduction in *Spirituality and the Secular Quest* (“...realizing one’s truest self in the context of reality...the quest for attaining an optimal relationship between what one truly is and everything that is”).⁶ Both of these “secular” definitions of spirituality stand sympathetically with the Christian meaning and point to the very human need to be who we are, practicing what we believe, in all the differing facets of our lives. David Miller, Director of Princeton University’s Faith & Work Initiative, addresses this issue in *God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement*: “Workers and professionals of all kinds no longer want to live bifurcated lives, where work and spiritual identity are compartmentalized into disconnected and unrelated spheres.”⁷ Marianne Roche agrees: we “chop up our lives into compartments in which we believe we function and live differently... This dualism is at the root of the slogan, ‘TGIF—Thank God It’s Friday.’”⁸

Dr. Miller describes what he refers to the Faith at Work Movement as a movement “organized around a quest to integrate one’s personal faith teachings with one’s professional work responsibilities.”⁹ Again, as stated in the opening introduction,

⁵ Sandra M. Schneiders, I.H.M., “Spirituality in the Academy,” *Theological Studies* 50 (1989), 684.

⁶ Peter H. Van Ness, “Introduction” in *Spirituality and the Secular Quest*, World Spirituality 22 (New York: Crossroad, 1996), 5.

⁷ David W. Miller, *God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 6.

⁸ Marianne E. Roche, *On-the-Job Spirituality: Finding God at Work* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger, 2002), 23.

⁹ Miller, 6.

our US Bishops agree: “It (work) is a pervasive reality to be practiced every day in homes, offices, factories, schools and businesses across our land. We cannot separate what we believe from how we act in the marketplace.”¹⁰ The strongest statement regarding this split between work and faith comes from *Gaudium et Spes*: “One of the gravest errors of our time is the dichotomy between the faith which many profess and the practice of their daily lives...”¹¹ So it is, that we need a spirituality that addresses how we can live according to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in all of life, including while at work.

Before further discussion on the subject of work it is necessary to clarify the meaning of work as it will be referred to in this paper. There are a myriad of definitions for work, some of which speak of work exclusively as activity done outside of the home and specifically for financial remuneration. My preference is for a definition that is more inclusive, such as the one formulated by students who attended the Theology of Work course taught at Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology in 2009: *work is an activity or series of activities requiring effort, either mental or physical, paid or unpaid, and directed toward an end or purpose.* This definition pretty much covers it all, and is meant to do just that: we engage in many forms of work: paid work, volunteer work for ourselves and others, such as study and work around the house, including the raising of children. Dr. Miller also presents a definition that fits with this concept: *work is any human activity that has both intrinsic and extrinsic value.*¹² The combination of

¹⁰ USCCB, *Economic Justice for All*, 43.

¹¹ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes* (Vatican: Vatican Press, 1965), 43.

¹² Miller, 42.

these two definitions encompasses the meaning of work for the purposes of this paper: the implication being that all work, paid or unpaid, has meaning that is both internal and external. In other words, all the work that we do is done in order to provide something that is required by our world (including our family and ourselves), but also has meaning that is spiritual, that is, it is done in response to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and is, therefore, also an opportunity to grow in one's relationship with God. The US Bishops reiterate this meaning more comprehensively in *Economic Justice for All*:

All work has a threefold moral significance. First, it is a principal way that people exercise the distinctive human capacity for self-expression and self-realization. Second, it is the ordinary way for human beings to fulfill their material needs. Finally, work enables people to contribute to the well-being of the larger community. Work is not only for one's self. It is for one's family, for the nation, and indeed for the benefit of the entire human family.¹³

Having discussed what is meant by spirituality and work, a word regarding the chosen title for this paper, Theology of Work, is also in order. The subject of this paper could indeed be referred to by a host of differing names: "Spirituality of Work," "Work-Life Ministry," "Faith at Work," and so forth. Each of these has certain limitations: while spirituality is an appropriate terminology, it has become much-overused and often times has secular connotations, as already discussed; work-life attempts to make a connection, but one that is too limited; and, faith at work would seem to indicate too narrow a confine of place. I have chosen the name Theology of Work as a more encompassing indicator of the scope of study.

¹³ USCCB, *Economic Justice for All*, 97.

Theology of Work as Pastoral Theology: Relationship to Ministry and Apostolate

The classic definition for theology as “faith seeking understanding” rightly applies to Theology of Work; many individuals in today’s culture (though not limited to today’s culture) seek to understand and establish some connection between lives lived with faith and family on Sunday, and the often referred to “real world” of Monday morning. Even the most secular of individuals similarly seek to find some meaning in the work that consumes so much time, focus and energy Monday through Friday, and often through much of the weekend as well. The task here is, indeed, theological in nature, in that it requires reflecting upon the many Christian theological writings regarding the subject of work, and determining how best to translate into a format for teaching the faithful these riches that can, in turn, be applied to daily life.

Theology of Work perhaps is most appropriately referred to as pastoral theology in that it is, as Karl Rahner defines pastoral theology: “theology that engages concrete circumstances.”¹⁴ Heinz Schuster expresses this more succinctly, that pastoral theology is “that branch of theology which deals with the Church’s self-fulfillment in the ever contemporary situation.”¹⁵ Peter Stravinskas also contributes to this line of thought:

The whole of theology is seen as potentially pastoral, in that the knowledge it seeks to cultivate is precisely the knowledge of salvation. In order to be effective, this knowledge must be linked with the experience of those who are to appropriate it. Modern pastoral theology thus...strives to develop a sense of the

¹⁴ Karl Rahner, “The New Claims Which Pastoral Theology Makes Upon Theology as a Whole,” *Theological Investigations*, vol. xi, (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), 115-136.

¹⁵ Heinz Schuster, “The Nature and Function of Pastoral Theology” in *The Pastoral Mission of the Church. Concilium*, vol.3, (Glen Rock, NJ: Pilgrim Reader Books, 1965), 4-9.

needs of those who are to be the object of the Church's mission of evangelization and sanctification.¹⁶

These theologians tell us that for theology to be "pastoral," it must address the needs of a people living in a particular time and place; it must look to help people find God and the means for salvation in the midst of their daily lives within the context of the current culture. A Theology of Work strives to make contribution to those ends by assisting people to find meaning and sanctification amidst the stresses and dichotomies of the work that occupies daily life, both at home and in the modern workplace. And, in so doing, the object is not only the sanctification of their work and family life, but also holds the possibility of transforming their various places of work.

Both Rahner and David Jenson take these defining statements regarding pastoral theology a step farther in expressing what flows from them: "While pastoral theology (every contemporary situation viewed as God's 'ineluctable call to the Church'), is theoretical, solid theory must be balanced by solid practice, in essence, then, it becomes 'practical theology.'"¹⁷ Rahner's thought is complemented by David Jenson: "The genre of practical theology -- summons theological resources to address dilemmas and realities of daily life."¹⁸

Both of these gentlemen are referring to the "practice" of pastoral theology; in essence, we can say that theological concepts, when rightly taught and understood, will

¹⁶ Peter M.J. Stravinskis, ed., *Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic Encyclopedia* (Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor, 1991), s.v. "Pastoral Theology"

¹⁷ Karl Rahner, "Observations on Episcopacy in the Light of Vatican II" in *The Pastoral Mission of the Church. Concilium*, vol.3, (Glen Rock, NJ: Pilgrim Reader Books, 1965), 10-14.

¹⁸ David H. Jenson, *Responsive Labor: A Theology of Work* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 45.

serve to influence the practice, or conduct, of Christian life. This is how theory is put into practice; solid theological and pastoral precepts are translated into a ministerial format to best communicate these truths. Regarding the truths of a Theology of Work the theologian constructing that ministerial format has the central task of “evoking a sense of God’s call and reminding Christians that God calls them into their homes, neighborhoods, workplaces, ad civic and political commitments to serve God and neighbor.”¹⁹

In the document *Co-Workers in the Vineyard* the US Bishops’ definition of ministry speaks to this: “In its broadest sense, ministry is to be understood as service (diakonia) and is the means for accomplishing mission in the communion of the Church. It is a participation in and expression of Christ’s ministry.”²⁰ The last point is a very important one for Theology of Work and is expressed in the ministry of Christ Himself, remembering that Christ’s ministry was one that took place out in the world, as well as the times he taught in the Temple. This fact parallels the daily life of the Christian in our own society; it is primarily a life lived out in the world, and includes social time spent with family and friends, as well as in the workplace, often among people who are not Christian, as well s non-believers. While Theology of Work is not active in those places, its ministry is one intended to equip individuals not just to recognize the larger spiritual meaning of work for their own enlightenment, but to be salt and light to others when in these secular environments. Thomas O’Meara makes two important points that relate

¹⁹ Douglas J. Schuurman, *Vocation: Discerning Our Callings in Life* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), xii.

²⁰ USCCB, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry* (Washington DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005), 20.

specifically to this purpose. He tells us that “the very context of ministry is contemporary life,”²¹ and that “ministry is more than the day to day life of a Christian, the daily life of every Christian can be ministerial”²² in that the Christian strives to live out those precepts.

The good news conclusion here is that Theology of Work is both a ministry and *ministerial*; in other words, Theology of Work is a theology with solid scriptural, theological, and historical content (topics explored in depth in Chapter 2) that can be shared with individuals at the parish, diocesan, and academic levels to equip them to participate fully in the mission of the church in the normal activities of daily life, including in the workplace.

The realization that the life of the Christian can and should be ministerial in all the contexts of daily life brings to mind the Vatican II document *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, Apostolicam Actuositatem*, which states:

The Church was founded for the purpose of spreading the kingdom of Christ throughout the earth for the glory of God the Father, to enable all men to share in His saving redemption,(1) and that through them the whole world might enter into a relationship with Christ. **All activity of the Mystical Body directed to the attainment of this goal is called the apostolate, which the Church carries on in various ways through all her members** (emphasis is mine).²³

As stated throughout this document, all Christian people are called to the apostolate of the laity. A significant phrase for Theology of Work is “...which the Church carries on in various ways through her members,” that is, the living out of one’s

²¹ Thomas F. O’Meara, OP, *Theology of Ministry*, rev.ed. (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1999), 33.

²² O’Meara, 186.

²³ Vatican II, *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Vatican, Vatican Press, 1965), 2.

faith in various ways and places...and which none of life's activities are to be excluded.

This is how a Theology of Work is an apostolate.

Apostolicam Actuositatem speaks also of the necessity of formation, so that the fruit of this formation becomes nothing less than the apostolate of the laity active in the world. Chapter VI, "Formation for the Apostolate," states this plainly:

In regard to the Christian renewal of the temporal order, the laity should be instructed in the true meaning and value of temporal things, both in themselves and in relation to all the aims of the human person (emphasis mine). They should be trained in the right use of things and the organization of institutions, attentive always to the common good in line with the principles of the moral and social teaching of the Church. Laymen should above all learn the principles and conclusions of the social doctrine so as to become capable of working for the development of this doctrine to the best of their ability and of rightly applying these same principles and conclusions to individual cases.²⁴

This is how Theology of Work supports a ministry that offers spiritual, theological and moral formation for the ordained and laity. The *goal* of this ministry is to assist men and women to recognize and understand the sacred nature of their work. For the laity, this will mean the living out of that understanding in all aspects and kinds of work.

While the apostolate lives out the various charisms of a Theology of Work in relationships, at work, and in the world, the apostolate are, at the same time, a sign of the Kingdom, giving witness by their attitudes and conduct to a deep and abiding faith that shapes and governs everyday lives. This is the spiritual fruit of ministry, present in the individual and a gift to the world.

²⁴ Vatican II, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 6.

Identification of the Need for a Theology of Work Ministry

There can be no more explicit call for the need for a Theology of Work than the US Bishops statement from *Economic Justice for All* that began this chapter, in particular: “We need a spirituality that calls forth and supports lay initiative and witness not just in our Churches but also in business, in the labor movement, in the professions, in education, and in public life.” This, coupled with the following from John Paul II, points to the task before us:

The church considers it her duty to speak out on work... she sees it as her particular duty to form a spirituality of work which will help all people to come closer, through work, to God, the creator and redeemer, to participate in his salvific plan for man and the world and to deepen their friendship with Christ in their lives by accepting, through faith, a living participation in his threefold mission as priest, prophet and king....²⁵

The overriding question is: how do we help our Christian faithful to recognize these truths regarding faith and work. Curiously, as David Miller reflects in regard to the Faith at Work and other such movements: they have “arisen largely outside the church” and address “a host of issues, including identity, meaning, purpose, calling, discipleship, ethics, responsibility, witness, evangelization and transformation...”²⁶ The irony is that it would seem that religious institutions would be the best place to address those topics, as well as to help people live lives that are integrated and connected to their faith beliefs. This may be especially true with regard to the Catholic Church with its many documents on the subject of work, calling, vocation, and the like; yet, indications are that this is not

²⁵John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens* (Vatican: Vatican Press, 1981), 24.

²⁶ Miller, 10, 11.

the case. There are very few programs at the parish or diocesan level that attempt to provide such assistance.

The scarcity of work-faith programs at the local church is most certainly an ecumenical issue, as testified to by William E. Diehl, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and author of *Christianity and Real Life*: “In the almost 30 years of my professional career, my church has never once suggested that there be any type of accounting of my on-the-job ministry to others...In short, I must conclude that my church really doesn’t have the least interest in whether or how I minister in my daily work.”²⁷

This is a good opportunity to clarify that, while this paper is largely focused on the subject of a Theology of Work within the Roman Catholic tradition, the project proposed here is ecumenical in nature, and is appropriate for implementation in churches of all Christian denominations. Indeed, John Paul II expressed the necessity to share the fruits of our Christian faith in *Laborem Exercens*: “Christian spirituality of work should be a heritage shared by all.”²⁸

Dr. Miller proposes that a large part of the reason for this “Sunday-Monday gap” is an insufficient theology.²⁹ He further suggests that this insufficient theology is largely a result of the lack of theological training or attention to the subject of work; the fact is that most clergy have not studied or developed a theology of work as part of their overall

²⁷ William E. Diehl, *Christianity and Real Life* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), v-vi.

²⁸ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 25.

²⁹ Miller, 89.

systematic training. Dr. Miller is careful to add that “the problem is not in the theology of Christianity. Rather it lies in the interpretation of Christian theology as manifested in ecclesiological experience and practice.”³⁰

Beyond the issue of theological training is the simple fact that today’s economic climate has left many of the individuals sitting in the pews each Sunday without work or working in jobs that are substandard, either financially or professionally. Failure to address these real-life issues can leave some in a serious crisis of faith, to say nothing of negative feelings of self-worth and dignity. David Jensen put it directly: “If Christian theology avoids the topic of work, then it suggests that the bulk of the Christian life—time spent working—is peripheral to the heart of the faith.”³¹

Gregory F.A. Pierce, author of *Spirituality at Work: 10 Ways to Balance Your Life on the Job*, asks some poignant questions to contemplate when considering the relevance of helping the faithful to recognize a work-faith connection in their lives; one of these questions is: why would we want to look for God in our work? His answer is simple common sense: “most of us spend so much of our time working that it would be a shame if we couldn’t find God there.”³² He goes on to ask another question worthy of contemplation: “Doesn’t the doctrine of the Incarnation mean that the entire material world has been infused with divine life?”³³ I believe that the answer to this latter question

³⁰ Miller, 175.

³¹ Jensen, 2.

³² Gregory F.A. Pierce, *Spirituality at Work: 10 Ways to Balance Your Life on the Job* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2001), xi.

³³ Pierce, 5.

points us in only one direction, that is, toward the God who created man and woman in His own image, and calls each of us to work, in whatever capacity we are called, to make Christ present in our own place and time. *Lumen Gentium* confirms this: we are “to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God.”³⁴

There is also the issue of relevance to our present day: in other words, why this topic now? In our present day we see evidence to suggest that the quest for holiness (integration, connectedness, wholeness are some of the secular terminologies) in the ordinary circumstances, of life, but especially the workplace, is alive and well. New books on the topic of workplace spirituality and ethical (or unethical) conduct in the workplace are hot titles increasingly featured in bookstores and on the internet. Business publications frequently publish articles on the dilemma of how to influence business to do the right thing, as well as how to teach ethical conduct in our business schools. The workplace scandals of the past decade have left many at a loss to find a remedy for such behavior. These are turbulent times, and in such times, “we look within,” claims Patricia Aburdene, author of *Megatrends 2010: The Rise of Conscious Capitalism*. She predicts: “Spirituality in business, having quietly blossomed for decades, is an established trend that’s about to morph into a megatrend.”³⁵ If we take Ms. Aburdene at her word, surely it will be important to influence this trend toward a Christ-centered spirituality. Clearly, as

³⁴ Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, 31.

³⁵ Patricia Aburdene, *Megatrends 2010: The Rise of Conscious Capitalism* (Charlottesville: Hampton Roads, 2005), xxi.

stated in the beginning of this paper, the US Bishops realize that there is this spiritual void that needs to be filled; they know, too, that only God can fill the void.

This project was created with the intention of helping to fill this gap, albeit in a small way, one that is hopefully a beginning. It is an effort to provide the parish with a format for a team formation process leading to a retreat that focuses on issues of work and faith with particular emphasis on the intersection of both. It is designed to incorporate the theological, as well as the practical aspects of living out one's faith in the midst of work. Details of this retreat will be addressed in later chapters of this paper. First, it is appropriate to discuss the theological warrants for a Theology of Work.

Chapter 2

Theological Warrants for a Theology of Work

This chapter will discuss the rationale and warrants for the establishment of Theology of Work as an area of theological import and scholarly study within the Roman Catholic Church by illustrating how it is related to the following areas of Catholic/Christian theology: 1) biblical narratives, both in the Old and New Testaments; (2) various historical periods and traditions within the development of Christian spirituality; and (3) the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Discussion of each of these areas will focus on its relationship to Theology of Work, as opposed to a full rendering of the subject.

Biblical Warrants for Theology of Work

It seems most appropriate to begin this discussion of biblical narratives pertaining to work with an observation of God at work:

Biblical narratives overflow with work. Between the opening lines of Genesis, which portray God as worker, and the closing chapter of Revelation, with its vision of a new creation, God labors. One of the distinguishing characteristics of biblical faith is that God does not sit enthroned in heaven removed from work, willing things into existence by divine fiat. God molds humans in God's image, establishes covenant with a displaced people, laments when covenant is broken, strives to reestablish covenant with that people, and becomes incarnate to labor, suffer, die, and be raised for the whole world. The Bible takes pains to demonstrate that God's purposes are not achieved automatically and effortlessly. God's work is the labor of extending grace to all creation, work that gives creation all that it needs.¹

¹ Jensen, 22.

God the Father models work; most importantly, we see that God's great love for humankind is the motivation for God's work. The work of creation is a demonstration of that love; this is what God asks us to model. So important is this story to the Christian concept of work that Pope John Paul II began his encyclical *Laborem Exercens* with a discussion of the creation narratives.

Then God said, Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. (Gen 1:26-27)¹

God is asking that man and woman to be like Him in a particular way; they are to have dominion over the creatures of God made. A variation of this is found in Genesis, Chapter 2, when puts Adam in the garden in order "to till it and keep it." (Gen 2:15) Here we find a Creator-God who creates, produces, works, in a word, takes dominion. While "dominion" is a term that has a negative connotation in our contemporary world, the original meaning is far from negative, as illustrated by the US Bishops:

Men and women are also to share in the creative activity of God. They are to be fruitful, to care for the earth (Gen 2:15), and to have "dominion" over it (Gen 1:28), which means they are "to govern the world in holiness and justice and to render judgment in integrity of heart" (Wis 9:3). Creation is a gift; women and men are to be faithful stewards in caring for the earth. They can justly consider that by their labor they are unfolding the Creator's work.²

The mandate given by God to Adam and Eve to cultivate the garden and care for it tells us quite explicitly that man and woman are given work to do, and, in performing

¹ Hereafter all Scripture citations are taken from The New Revised Standard Version: Catholic Edition (Nashville: Catholic Bible Press, 1993).

² USCCB, *Economic Justice for All*, 1.

that work, they give honor and praise to their Creator God. This pre-Fall creation story forms the scriptural basis for a Theology of Work. In the creation story we find a creature, made in the image of this God, who, in turn, is given the dominion over what God has made. If symbol is to give rise to thought, then the thought that easily emerges here is that we are meant to take possession of our humanity and our world by bringing them to realization by what we make, do, work at, work on, and produce with the means God has put at our disposal, and, as we shape and do things, while exercising the unique gifts and talents that each person has been endowed with, we become more fully who we are called to be.³ This realization is a timeless truth, one that had meaning in the newness of creation and speaks to us even today:

When man develops the earth by the work of his hands or with the aid of technology, in order that it might bear fruit and become a dwelling worthy of the whole human family and when he consciously takes part in the life of social groups, he carries out the design of God manifested at the beginning of time, that he should subdue the earth, perfect creation and develop himself.⁴

However, let us not forget that after the Fall, with its taint of original sin, work becomes toil; this aspect is also succinctly expressed in Genesis: *By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground.* (Gen 3:19a) Now work is a struggle; more than that, it is a curse...an attitude that carries on to our present day. But, just as we struggle against sin, we struggle against the negative components of work: unfair work practices, unfair pay, discrimination, child labor...the list is quite long. While there is some merit in viewing human suffering as a means of sharing in the salvific

³ John C. Haughey, S.J., *Converting 9 to 5: Bringing Spirituality to Your Daily Work* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 32.

⁴ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 52.

mission of Jesus Christ, we strive to return work to the state God originally intended, to be an expression of our very selves as co-creators in the ongoing creation of this world. This dual character of work as both toil and struggle as well as a blessing goes to the very heart of what a Theology of Work ministry seeks to accomplish, that is to help individuals recognize and seek to restore work to its the original sacred nature.

In a talk given in Barcelona, Spain in 1982, Pope John Paul II confirms this mandate:

Work corresponds to God's design and will. The first pages of Genesis present creation to us as the work of God. God's labor. So to be like God, God calls on many to work. Hence, work is not something off on the side. Even less is it a curse from heaven. On the contrary, work is a primordial blessing from the Creator, an activity permitting people to realize themselves and to offer service to society. In addition, a worker will have a higher reward, for your toil is not in vain when it is done in the Lord.⁵

Pope John Paul II is telling us that we can lose the fuller meaning of God's intention in putting us in that garden if we do not reflect more closely. We might think that working and tending the garden is meant to be pure punishment and joyless, but another way to view the story is to see that God also intended work to be joyful, exciting, and satisfying. In Genesis God paused at each step of the Creation process to pronounce His work "good." (Gen 1:4, 10b, 12b, 17b, 21b, 25b, 31)

When we do experience difficulties in work, as invariably most people will, perhaps many times in their life, our toil is not in vain, but takes on a redemptive nature.

It (work) is an act of love and it turns into joy, the deep joy of giving oneself through work to one's own family and to others, the intimate joyousness of

⁵ William Droel, *Pope John Paul II's Gospel of Work* (New London: Twenty Third Publication, 2008). 17.

offering oneself to God and of serving humankind, even though such giving entails sacrifices. Thus Christian work has a paschal meaning.⁶

In this way... "By enduring the toil of work in union with Christ crucified for us, people in a way collaborate with the Son of God for the redemption of humanity."⁷ The late Dr. William Toth offers a way to do this in a very practical sense: "The celebration of the Eucharist offers each Catholic the opportunity to place his or her work with its triumphs and failures on the paten and offer it to God."⁸

We recognize that we are not alone in our work; God is a partner in the struggle to shape our world and maintain life. Psalm 127:1-2 illustrates this teaching:

Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who build it labor in vain.
Unless the Lord guards the city,
the guard keeps watch in vain.

It is in vain that you rise up early
and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil;
for he gives sleep to his beloved.

There is a grace present in the worker's effort, so that the mason of Psalm 127 cannot say it was he alone who builds the house.⁹

The Son of God became man and worked with human hands.¹⁰ Turning to the New Testament, we see that, as in all things, Jesus takes the human understanding of

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 27.

⁸ *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Work, Catholic Understanding Of."

⁹ Armand Larive, *After Sunday: A Theology of Work* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 11-12.

¹⁰ Droel, 17.

sacredness, turns it on its head and makes it a new creation. Embodying both humanity and divinity Jesus removed ministry from the Temple as an exclusive domain and put it right on the streets...and the mountain tops, and the dining table and yes, often in the midst of work, especially in fishing boats!

John Haughey, former senior research fellow with Georgetown University's Woodstock Theological Center, states quite clearly that Jesus' life is "a model for finding God at work in one's work situation," and that "Jesus' insight into God at work seems to have been the basis for his ministry."¹¹ His own ministry was fashioned on the work he saw God doing in the circumstances in which he found himself: *My Father is at work until now, and I am at work as well.* (Jn 5:17). John 5:19 also attests to this: *I solemnly assure you, the Son cannot do anything by himself—he can do only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise.*¹²

Jesus' life was one of a working man born into a working man's home. In parables Jesus constantly makes reference to human work; John Paul II reiterates this:

Jesus himself gave particular emphasis to this truth: that through work, people share in the activity of the Creator. For Jesus was himself a workingman, a craftsman like Joseph of Nazareth. Jesus clearly belonged to the working world. So did most of his disciples and listeners: ordinary fishermen, farmers, and workers. So when he speaks about the kingdom of God, Jesus constantly uses terms connected with human work: the work of the shepherd, the farmer, the doctor, the sower, the householder, the servant, the steward, the fisherman, the

¹¹ Haughey, 65.

¹² Haughey, 66.

merchant, the laborer. And he compares the building up of God's kingdom to the manual work of harvesters and fishermen.¹³

Jesus' ministry was one lived out in the world where the great command, "to love one another," is put to the test. A Theology of Work claims this as an early clue to the appropriateness and importance of the everyday living of faith in daily work and all activities of life.

It is not just Jesus himself who models work in the New Testament; the early disciples *worked*. At least four of Jesus' disciples are working fishermen, and their understanding of discipleship is significantly influenced by the craft of fishing. The disciples come to know that in Jesus' power, their work will produce abundant results.

John Paul II viewed the teachings of the apostle Paul as particularly relevant to a Theology of Work. Paul boasts of working at his trade, probably that of a tentmaker, and offers thanks that work which, even as an apostle, enabled him to earn his own bread.

"With toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not burden any of you."

(2 Thess 3:8b) Following are his instructions on the subject of work, written to the Thessalonians:

For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: anyone unwilling to work should not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right. (2 Thess 3:10-13)

One of the lessons from this passage is very clear: we are not any more spiritual by not engaging in work. Even though the thought at this time was that Jesus would shortly return—so why waste time working?—Paul knows that idleness will only lead to

¹³ Droel, 18.

sin and waste; the more fruitful way to achieve holiness is to continue with daily life and work responsibilities. This is what most pleases God.

Historical Development of a Christian Theology of Work

We turn now to a very important piece of the rationale for a Theology of Work, that is, the historical development of theology, focusing here on those periods which most impact our topic. Theology of Work is a clear example of Scripture coming together with the development of tradition (in this case, the Reformation leaders are included in that tradition), and more specifically, the development of a theology within that tradition. To illustrate this is to begin with a brief review of those primary historical periods within church tradition that have contributed to a Theology of Work.

Within the Christian monastic traditions, everyday acts were hallowed and considered to be as important as devotional rituals and community worship. This reverence for work as holy ground is especially evident in the Benedictine monastic tradition. St. Benedict of Nursia (c. 480 – 547) is known as the founder of Western Monasticism; his Rule, while written for monks, gives all Christians a model for envisioning nothing less than the integration of their whole life in the service of God. Human labor is modeled on God's labor, fruitful activity that flows forth from the essence of one's being. Our work here on earth is "co-creative," which means it is shared with the living God. Human work is meant to be a holy endeavor.¹⁴ Benedict's Rule

¹⁴ Norvene Vest, *Friend of the Soul: A Benedictine Spirituality of Work* (Cambridge: Cowley Publications, 1997), 3.

illuminates three basic principles about work enfolded in the context of prayer: vocation, being called to what we do; stewardship, taking care of what is given; and obedience, serving one another. St. Benedict reminds the monks that “work is the friend of the soul itself.”¹⁵

Benedict’s Rule codified many of the norms for subsequent monastic communities throughout Western Christendom, including the exhortations for work and the regulation of the hours of the day. Like St. Paul, Benedict warned against idleness: “Idleness is an enemy of the soul. Therefore, the brothers should have specified periods for manual labor as well as for prayerful reading.”¹⁶ *Ora et labora* (prayer and work) became the Benedictine motto that still endures today. However, rather than viewing Benedict’s Rule as a strict demarcation of time given to God only at designated times of the day, Dr. Toth offers this correction: “Several commentators on Benedictine spirituality have noted that the bells in the Benedictine monastery do not so much demarcate times for worship, manual labor, study, and recreation as they serve to call the monks to different forms of worship expressed by these activities.”¹⁷

Benedict also points to work as service, service done in the name of Christ. In the midst of a chapter on kitchen duty, he writes: “The brothers should wait on one another...On Saturday the brother who is completing his work will do the washing. He is to wash the towels which the brothers use to wipe their hands and feet. Both the one who

¹⁵ Vest, 6.

¹⁶ Timothy Fry, ed., *The Rule of St. Benedict in English* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1982), Rule 69. (Future notes will be indicated by Rule followed by the rule number.)

¹⁷ *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Work, Catholic Understanding Of.”

is ending his service and the one who is about to begin are to wash the feet of everyone.”¹⁸ The lesson here speaks loud and clear: small acts of supposedly menial work model John’s narrative of the Last Supper where Christ sets the example for us. Even the smallest acts of labor become tokens of our participation in Christ’s self-giving love.¹⁹ This is Benedict’s legacy for a Theology of Work.

Celtic Christianity (5th – 7th centuries) originated in the monasteries of Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It was in the monasteries that people learned to pray, so that just as Benedict had taught his monks, the Celtic peoples learned that praying and living were not separate and distinct activities.²⁰ The following is a prayer that was said while making one’s bed:

I make this bed
In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
In the name of the night we were conceived,
In the name of the night we were born,
In the name of the day we were baptized,
In the name of each night, each day,
Each angel that is in the heavens.²¹

Indeed, Celtic Christians sought to glorify God through household duties and work in the fields; they invited God to join them in the doing of their daily chores, believing that anywhere could become the place for an encounter with the Holy One. Truly, Emmanuel, God with us, became a reality; all spheres of life were under the umbrella of their Christian faith. There was a God truly present, alongside, behind,

¹⁸ Rule 58.

¹⁹ Jensen, 31.

²⁰ Esther De Waal, *The Celtic Way of Prayer: The Recovery of the Religious Imagination* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), xi.

²¹ De Waal, 78.

before, above, below, as aptly illustrated in by the following verses from St. Patrick's

Breastplate prayer:

Christ beside me, Christ before me;
 Christ behind me; Christ within me;
 Christ beneath me, Christ above me;
 Christ in my lying, my sitting, my rising;
 Christ in the heart of all who know me,
 Christ on the tongue of all who meet me,
 Christ in the eye of all who see me,
 Christ in the ear of all who hear me.²²

The next fruitful period in Catholic Tradition for a Theology of Work brings us to the 16th and 17th centuries and the lives of three men, including: the founder of the largest Catholic men's religious order; a bishop of Geneva known as a great preacher and spiritual director; and, a Carmelite lay brother whose personal experience of God gave him great spiritual insight despite his lowly position in life.

St. Ignatius Loyola (1491 – 1556) is best known for founding the Society of Jesus, and for his Spiritual Exercises in which individuals reflect on their experience of God; St. Ignatius found God in the everyday things and activities of life. The third point of the final meditation of the Exercises asks the individual to “consider how God works and labors for me in all creatures...that is, He conducts Himself as one who labors...”²³ Father John Haughey comments further: “This means not only that God is indwelling in

²² De Waal, 21.

²³ Louis J. Puhl, *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1951), No. 236.

all of the things God made but also that God is actively working in them...God has a motive in working in working, namely, God is working *for me*.”²⁴

Anthony De Mello refers to the understanding that we demonstrate our love of God in all actions as “contemplatives in action. This level of serving God is then typical, though not exclusively, of the contemplative who is called upon to sanctify the world through his or her activity and so finds God in action.”²⁵

One of Ignatius’ instructions to Jesuits in formation was that when they were in the midst of their studies, they were to shorten the time they spent in prayer and seek the presence of God in the midst of their studies: “...in seeking the presence of our Lord in all things, as for example in conversing with someone, in walking, looking, tasting, hearing, understanding, and in all that they do since it is true that His Divine Majesty is in all things by His presence, power and essence.”²⁶

Ignatius also indicates that finding God in the course of one’s daily work could be strengthened by a frequent offering of one’s work to God. He further instructs that the Jesuits “...exercise themselves by frequently offering to God Our Lord their studies and the effort they demand, seeing that they have undertaken them for His love to the sacrifice of personal tastes, so that to some extent at least we may be of service to His Divine Majesty by helping souls for whom He died.”²⁷

²⁴ Haughey, 61.

²⁵ Anthony De Mello, *Seek God Everywhere: Reflections on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* (New York: Doubleday Religion, 2010), 165-166.

²⁶ Haughey, 62.

²⁷ Ibid.

John Paul II echoes the spiritual value of this sacrificial aspect of human work: “The Christian finds in human work a small part of the cross of Christ and accepts it in the same spirit of redemption in which Christ accepted his cross for us.”²⁸

St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622), bishop of Geneva, mentor to St. Jane de Chantal, and the inspiration for numerous religious orders, including the order of the Visitation of Holy Mary and the Salesian order begun by St. John Bosco, as well as the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, and the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales. Francis might well be called the progenitor of the Catholic lay movement that would not come to full maturity until the 20th century. His *Introduction to the Devout Life* is based on a series of letters written with the intention to “instruct those who live in towns, in households, or at court, and who due to their situation are obliged to lead exteriorly an ordinary life.”²⁹ To realize the enormity of such an undertaking at this time in history, one needs only to recall, as discussed earlier, that from Christianity’s early centuries holiness was the domain of monks, nuns and those ordained; Francis’ recognition that even the lay person is, and should be, drawn to a “quest for ordinary holiness” was quite a revolutionary thought, at least in Catholic circles at the time. However, what is even more startling is that Francis suggests that even one’s daily work can be a means of service and devotion. He advises as part of a morning exercise:

Foresee in what business or conversation you will probably be engaged; what opportunities you will have to serve God; to what temptations of offending him you will be exposed, either by anger, by vanity, or any other irregularity; and

²⁸ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 27.

²⁹ Francis de Sales, 11.

prepare yourself by a firm resolution to make the best use of those means which shall be offered to serve God and advance in devotion.³⁰

Francis gives the ordinary person the ways and means to aspire to “true devotion.”

He tells us: “Devotion ought, then, to be not only practiced differently by the gentlemen, the tradesman, the servant, the prince, the widow, the maid, and the married woman, but its practice should also be adapted to the strength, employments, and obligations of each particular one.”³¹ His instructions are still valid (and much needed!) by today’s

Christians, all would do well to contemplate his most beautiful observation--that “true devotion ‘adorns and beautifies’ any vocation or employment.”³²

St. Ignatius’ comments on the presence of God in all things are echoed by Nicholas Herman of Lorraine, France, better known as Brother Lawrence (1614 – 1691). After being a footman and a soldier, he was admitted as a Lay Brother among the Discalced Carmelites in Paris in 1666. *The Practice of the Presence of God and the Spiritual Maxims* is a compilation of both the conversations and letters of Brother Lawrence written down by Cardinal de Noailles who knew him well. This poor brother who spent most of his time at kitchen duty teaches us that love of God can be the end of all of our actions, including the humdrum work of daily life. While he claims that understanding about God is not as important as simply loving God, he demonstrates an understanding far beyond his education and station in life. In fact, his reputation for this understanding and personal holiness brought many people, near and far, to him for

³⁰ Francis de Sales, 66.

³¹ Francis de Sales, 22.

³² Francis de Sales, 21.

counsel. Cardinal de Noailles reported that “in his business in the kitchen (to which he had naturally a great aversion), having accustomed himself to do everything there for the love of God, and with prayer, upon all occasions, for His grace to do his work well, he found everything easy, during fifteen years that he had been employed there.”³³ Brother Lawrence takes the Benedictine motto, prayer and work, and makes it prayer and work/work and prayer all at once! Prayer for Brother Lawrence was simply “nothing else but a sense of the presence of God.”³⁴

The following is from one of Brother Lawrence’s letters: “The time of business said he does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the Blessed Sacrament.”³⁵ Work and prayer become one in the same! Finally, some advice given to a friend:

That we need only to recognize God intimately present with us, to address ourselves to Him every moment, that we may beg His assistance for knowing His will in things doubtful, and for rightly performing those which we plainly see he requires of us, offering them to Him before we do them, and giving Him thanks when we have done.³⁶

In the effort to give continuity to Catholic tradition in the development of a Theology of Work, we skipped over the very important contribution of two Protestant Reformation thinkers of the 16th century, Martin Luther and John Calvin. They formulated a doctrine of vocation that endures and, in fact, has only recently been

³³ Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God and the Spiritual Maxims* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 8.

³⁴ Brother Lawrence, 13.

³⁵ Brother Lawrence, 16.

³⁶ Brother Lawrence, 12.

recognized by all Christian denominations, that is, that the power of vocation can infuse all of life with religious meaning and extend its range into all relational fields. According to this doctrine all spheres---domestic, economic, political, cultural---are religiously and morally meaningful as divinely given avenues through which persons respond obediently to the call of God to serve their neighbor in love. Human beings participate in God's provident care for creation through their activities as parents, artisans, farmers, business men and women, as well as preachers. "Faith active in love through one's calling" became the benchmark of Reformation ethics.³⁷ We hear this same notion of vocation echoed today by many Catholic theologians, such as Thomas O'Meara who agrees: "Vocation in the broadest sense is my taking part in God's plan for me."³⁸

With very few notable exceptions (to be discussed in the following section) it is fair to say that, from the time of the Reformation until our modern day, it is the Protestants who have best articulated the tenet that work is holy ground. This is well illustrated by the following history; Dr. David Miller sees the progress of what he chooses to call the Faith at Work Movement in three distinct historical periods:

- The Social Gospel Era (c. 1890's – 1945): this era represented the Protestant response to the growing individualism-communitarian debate going on in political, economic, philosophical, and religious circles. The Social Gospel sought theological legitimacy in and gave hermeneutical primacy to the doctrine of the Kingdom of God. These times spawned new movements and thinking, including CBMC (Connecting Business and the Marketplace to Christ), originally a group of Chicago businessmen who met regularly for prayer during the depression years, and now an international organization with the mission to "present Jesus Christ as

³⁷ Schuurman, 4,5.

³⁸ O'Meara, 208.

Savior and Lord to businessmen and professionals.”³⁹ Charles Sheldon’s *In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do?*, is a book still garnering interest into the 21st century. This was an era of new thinking on issues of economic justice, most notably Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (*The Condition of Labor*) in 1891. Pope Leo’s concerns in *Rerum Novarum* paralleled many theological assertions shared by Protestants, (e.g., special consideration must be given to the weak and the poor, the dignity and respect owed to all types of work and workers, and the payment of decent wages), while at the same time rejecting socialism and endorsing private ownership.⁴⁰

- The Ministry of the Laity Era (c. 1946 – 1985): two ecumenical conferences (Stockholm in 1925 and Oxford in 1937) paved the way for the founding of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948, resulting in the development of a theology of the laity; the Second WCC Assembly met in Evanston, Illinois in 1954 to discuss “The Laity: The Christian and His Vocation,” and issued a now famous declaration on the laity fighting “the real battles of the faith” in places of work. Ten years later the era of Vatican II and its similar pronouncements on the laity in the modern world changed the way Roman Catholics regarded their role within the church and in secular society as well.
- Faith at Work Era (c. 1985 – Present): changes in geopolitics, the law, and demographics, as well as changes in workplace and faith patterns, gave rise to and continue to sustain what Dr. Miller refers to as the Faith at Work movement. The driving characteristic of this current era is the quest for integration and balance in life and work. There is a shared view that faith and work are not meant to be separated or isolated from each other. Businesspeople and workers of all professions and levels of employment want the ability to bring their whole selves to work—mind, body, and soul—and are no longer satisfied with sacrificing their core identities. This quest for integration avoids the naivete’ of expecting the Kingdom of God to be realized here on earth, but also rejects the alternative extreme of despair and cynicism; it seeks to approximate wholeness and balance while recognizing the difficulty in attaining it.⁴¹

This brief summation is a historical narrative that may be lost on many Catholics; apparently, Protestants were decades ahead of Catholics in recognizing the dichotomy

³⁹ Miller, 33.

⁴⁰ Miller, 23-38

⁴¹ Miller, 63-78.

that existed between faith and work. However, it is a great oversight on Dr. Miller's part not to have included Pope John Paul II's encyclical *On Human Work* previously mentioned in this paper; this omission is particularly interesting since he spends a great deal of time on Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*. Given his method of chronology it would have appropriately fallen in the Ministry of the Laity timeframe.

Roman Catholic Teaching Relating to a Theology of Work

The importance of the Second Vatican Council to the eventual rise of a Theology of Work cannot be overestimated. We need only to look at some of the documents promulgated by the Council to recognize the explicit connection. Chapter IV of the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, speaks directly to the role of the laity in the world and in the church: "Upon all the laity, therefore, rests the noble duty of working to extend the divine plan of salvation to all men of each epoch and in every land. Consequently, may every opportunity be given them so that, according to their abilities and the needs of the times, they may zealously participate in the saving work of the Church."⁴²

From this same chapter we see statements that will be directly applicable to the establishment of a Theology of Work; the following comes from Chapter IV on the laity:

the laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God. They live in the world, that is, each and in all of the secular professions and occupations.... They are called there by God that by exercising their proper function and led by the spirit of the Gospel they may work for the sanctification of the world from within as leaven.⁴³

⁴² Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, 33.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 31.

Now the laity are called in a special way to make the Church present and operative in those places and circumstances where only through them can it become the salt of the earth.⁴⁴

The Council is directly challenging the laity to “prepare the field of the world for the seed of the Word of God.”⁴⁵ This is a call to evangelization; more specifically, it is a call to evangelize in the everyday circumstances of life, including the workplace. This is reiterated many times in the writings and homilies of John Paul II: “It is the specific vocation and mission [of lay people] to express the gospel as a leaven into the reality of the world in which they live and work. The great forces that shape the world—politics, the mass media, science, technology, culture, education, industry, and work—are precisely the areas where lay people are especially competent to exercise their mission.”⁴⁶

Theology of Work claims this as a major impetus for the establishment of a Theology of Work ministry. In order for this evangelization to take place, the laity first must understand this call; this can be accomplished by the presence of such a ministry in our parishes.

Another important Vatican II document relating to Theology of Work is *Gaudium et Spes* which takes a comprehensive look at “The Church in the Modern World.” Here, we find mention of one of the most pertinent sub-topics of Theology of Work, that of the compartmentalization, the separation of faith and daily life, so often practiced in our society today:

⁴⁴Ibid, 33.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 36.

⁴⁶ Droel, 30.

This split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age. Long since, the Prophets of the Old Testament fought vehemently against this scandal and even more so did Jesus Christ Himself in the New Testament threaten it with grave punishments.

Therefore, let there be no false opposition between professional and social activities on the one part, and religious life on the other. Christians who neglect their temporal duties, jeopardize their eternal salvation.⁴⁷

Most certainly, the Second Vatican Council was one of the great influences on John Paul II's theology in general and his Theology of Work specifically. In Catholic theology Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Laborem Exercens (On Human Work)* is considered to be the landmark foundational document for the development of a Theology of Work. It was written to commemorate the 90th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*. In *Laborem Exercens* John Paul addresses the biblical foundations for human work, the social and economic obligations of workers and employers, work and the family, the dignity of agricultural work, and the responsibility and dangers of an increasingly technological worldview. All the above springs from the essential tenet of the dignity of all human beings as *imago dei*, that is, persons made in the image and likeness of God. He explicit states: "The knowledge that by means of work man shares in the work of creation constitutes the most profound motive for undertaking it in various sectors."⁴⁸ He also makes it clear how this impacts our work:

Created in God's image, we were given the mandate to transform the earth. By their work people share in God's creating activity. Awareness that our work is a sharing in God's work ought to permeate...even the most ordinary daily activities.

⁴⁷ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 12.

⁴⁸ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 25.

By our labor we are unfolding the Creator's work and contributing to the realization of God's plan on earth. The Christian message does not stop us from building the world or make us neglect our fellow human beings. On the contrary, it binds us more firmly to do just that.⁴⁹

But it is not just theology that John Paul discusses here. He also lays the groundwork for a comprehensive spirituality of work: "Since work in its subjective aspect is always a personal action, an *actus personae*, it follows that the whole person, body and spirit, participates in it, whether it is manual or intellectual work. It is also to the whole person that the word of the living God is directed, the evangelical message of salvation in which we find many points which concern human work and which throw particular light on it."⁵⁰ *Laborem Exercens* is truly a remarkable document, one that will be frequently referred to in this paper.

One of the most beautifully written and perhaps the most comprehensive of documents regarding the laity's place in the world is John Paul II's post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles Laici (Christ's Faithful People)*. Here John Paul reiterates the Second Vatican Council's emphasis on the call to holiness that is rooted in Baptism and renewed in the Eucharist. He also speaks of a number of other topics, including the importance of encouraging the laity in ministerial activity that is based in the Church, but especially in the world: 'The unity of life of the lay faithful is of the greatest importance: indeed they must be sanctified in everyday professional and social life. Therefore, to respond to their vocation, the lay faithful must see their daily activities

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 24.

as an occasion to join themselves to God, fulfill his will, serve other people and lead them to communion with God in Christ.”⁵¹

Echoing *Gaudium et Spes*, he speaks of the danger of a separation between faith and daily life and calls for the living of an integrated life: “the so-called “spiritual” life, with its values and demands; and on the other, the so-called “secular” life, that is, life in a family, at work, in social relationships, in the responsibilities of public life and culture.”⁵²

The social teachings of the church since Leo XII have been concerned with labor, and more specifically with the laborer. The principles of Catholic social teaching include a statement for the dignity of the human person and human rights which is the bedrock principle for both the social teachings and a Theology of Work: “Belief in the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching. Human life is sacred, and the dignity of the human person is the starting point for a moral vision for society. This principle is grounded in the idea that the person is made in the image of God. The person is the clearest reflection of God among us.”⁵³ Once again, this basic tenet of *imago dei* serves to point to the dignity of humankind and the mandate to work.

The US Bishops continue to speak out on the numerous issues relating to this important tenet, as they did in their 1986 pastoral letter *Economic Justice for All*. Ten years later it was followed by another letter on economic life, *A Catholic Framework for Economic Life*, which listed ten principles drawn from Catholic social teaching; one of

⁵¹ John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici* (Vatican: Vatican Press, 1999), 17.

⁵² John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, 59.

⁵³ Catholic Social Teaching: Office of Social Justice, St. Paul and Minneapolis, “Major themes from Catholic Social Teaching,” http://www.osjspm.org/major_themes.aspx (accessed January 15, 2011).

these principles states: “All people have the right to economic initiative, to productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions....”, and another states: “All people, to the extent they are able, have a corresponding duty to work...”⁵⁴

Now, we turn to an important resource for Catholic doctrine and theology, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Here, we find numerous statements that support the need for a Theology of Work:

Human work proceeds directly from persons created in the image of God and called to prolong the work of creation by subduing the earth, both with and for one another. Hence work is a duty... Work honors the Creator’s gifts and the talents received from him. It can also be redemptive. By enduring the hardship of work in union with Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth and the one crucified on Calvary, man collaborates in a certain fashion with the Son of God in his redemptive work.⁵⁵

The *Catechism* begins where all logic for a Theology of Work begins...with Genesis and the creation of man in the image and likeness of God, and proceeds to Jesus of Nazareth as our model for work. We are encouraged to join our work to his, offering whatever hardships are entailed in that work as part of His redemptive work: “Everyone should be able to draw from work the means of providing for his life and that of his family, and of serving the human community.”⁵⁶

Here we are reminded we are not made for work, rather work is for man...to develop his talents, to contribute to society, and importantly, to provide for himself and his family, illustrating that work has both intrinsic and extrinsic value:

⁵⁴ James L. Nolan, *Doing the Right Thing at Work: A Catholic’s Guide to Faith, Business and Ethics* (Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger, 2006), 82-83.

⁵⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1977.), #2427.

⁵⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2428.

Everyone has the *right to economic initiative*; everyone should make legitimate use of his talents to contribute to the abundance that will benefit all and to harvest the just fruits of his labor.⁵⁷

Access to employment and to professions must be open to all without unjust discrimination...⁵⁸

A just wage is the legitimate fruit of work.⁵⁹

These statements speak to our God-given rights, as beings made in the image and likeness of our Creator; these are rights to be enjoyed by the entire human family, not a select race and social strata.

This brief sampling of theological warrants has served to illustrate that the basic precepts of a Theology of Work have been part of the Christian fabric since the beginning of time, still valid and meaningful in our present day, and perhaps more urgently needed today in a world of work that is often alienating and damaging to human dignity. Indeed, this project is entirely based upon that perceived need.

⁵⁷ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2429.

⁵⁸ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2433.

⁵⁹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2434.

Chapter 3

Implementation

Preliminary Planning

As the proposal for this project suggests, a way to “translate...theology into a ministerial format” is by creating and implementing a retreat process, in this case, one “that focuses on issues of faith and work, one which can be readily utilized in adult catechesis and spiritual formation.” Retreats are often the vehicles designed to provide just that. “When we look at the history of retreat as a spiritual practice we discover one fundamental reality: Retreats developed out of a need, a hunger. The hunger created a desire to move beyond what was known to something fuller.”¹ The “something fuller” that will be addressed in the proposed retreat is the realization of a connection between one’s work and faith lives; this realization tells us that God is present even in the work of our daily basis. However, the design of this project is more encompassing than a single retreat day in that it incorporates not only the parish retreat itself, but also the process of formation leading up to the retreat. In other words, the major portion of this project is the creation of a formation process for the individuals who will conduct the retreat consisting of a series of talks given by some of the team members--it will not be a requirement to give a talk--regarding their personal experience of work.

¹ Nicki Verploegen Vandergrift, *Planning and Implementing Retreats: A Parish Handbook* (Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 2001), 1.

This description of the “what” of the project readily points to the “where” as being the parish environment. Indeed, the parish is the place where most Catholics and Christians go to both practice and enrich their faith; it is where they come together as community to seek solace and direction during many of the hardships of life.

Having established at least in general terms the “what” and the “where” of this project, the question of “who” remains: who will compose the team to take part in the formation process and conduct the retreat? The answer was obvious: a group of parishioners at a particular parish; this is, in fact, the population that was targeted from the initial concept of this project. The decision as to which parish to work with on this project was more complex; the possibilities included the researcher’s home parish and several other parishes of the Archdiocese of Newark. However, it was a parish in the Diocese of Metuchen that was of particular interest: the researcher had worked with this parish numerous times presenting workshops and assisting a group of parishioners to establish a parish employment ministry. St. Matthias in Somerset, New Jersey, now has a thriving ministry, one that attracts both individuals who volunteer their services to the ministry and individuals who seek assistance during a career transition or any number of work-related difficulties. When approached, the leaders of St. Matthias’ employment ministry responded positively to the prospect of taking part in such a project.

Still, a secondary retreat team was required, as both project guidelines and the proposal called for two distinct groups. In previous discussions Dr. Dianne Traflet, Associate Dean/Professor at Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology (ICSST), and Co-Director for the Institute for Christian Spirituality, had voiced the

opinion that participation in such a project would be beneficial for students and alumni of ICSST. The counter balance of having a secondary team that was not parish based seemed appropriate as well. Certainly, given that many of ICSST students and alumni currently work or will work in the parish environment, it seemed particularly fitting, so that a second team was chosen.

However, before active recruiting of participants could commence, approval from Seton Hall's Institutional Review Board (IRB) which governs the conduct of any research involving human subjects, was required. This sometimes grueling reporting process involved providing detailed information on the conduct and content of each of the six team formation sessions. At the same time, the process was helpful in that it required the researcher to determine many of the specifics, including the name of the retreat—*A Working Life Retreat*—before communicating with potential participants. Most importantly, the IRB required assurance that the recruiting process was free of any coercion—even implied—and that the identity and privacy of all participants would be protected. Approval was sought in March of 2010, directly after the proposal was accepted by CUA; IRB approval was received at the end of May (Appendix 1). The timing seemed far from ideal, as individuals would be asked to volunteer six summer evenings in July and August, two hours each.

Methodology Guideline

Julius Eitington's *The Winning Trainer* presents nine differing training methods for application to six different training objectives.¹ "Changing attitudes" was by far the most appropriate description of what this project aimed to accomplish, as opposed to knowledge acquisition, problem-solving skills, interpersonal skills, participant acceptance, and knowledge retention, although all of these objectives would also come into play to a lesser degree. Still, a change in participants' attitudes toward a perceived connection between their Christian faith and daily work life was the major determiner for measuring the effectiveness of this project. Two studies, one by Linda L. Neider, University of Miami of 191 members of the American Society for Training and Development, and the other by Dr. John W. Newstrom, University of Minnesota, of 54 training directors working for the largest US firms, put sensitivity training, also referred to as laboratory or T-group training, and conference/discussion (along with role playing) as the most effective methodologies for effecting change in participants' attitudes.² This project focused primarily on the sensitivity/laboratory and conference/discussion methods to achieve its objective. Laboratory is a training method in which people learn primarily from their own behavior.³ "Vital concepts in such training include: introspection, openness, caring, sharing, intimacy, spontaneity, the world of the affect (feelings)...Most importantly, the laboratory experience should impact favorably on your growth as a

¹ Julius E. Eitington, *The Winning Trainer: Winning Ways to Involve People in Learning*, 4th ed. (Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2002), 485.

² Ibid.

³ Eitington, 524.

person....”⁴ This project utilized all of these concepts, while employing journaling as an important tool to especially foster introspection.⁵

In addition, meditation was extensively utilized, particularly as a pre-session tool to help participants transition from their daily routine. “Meditation, performed silently provides participants with an opportunity to experience a change of pace so as to regroup psychologically. It can help to renew one’s energies and get in touch with feelings that may be hard to reach while one is in an active, verbal state.”⁶

Group Format and Structure

Spiritual direction was the focus of the formation sessions, the critical qualifying elements being that the participants share “the intention to rely on God, to seek God, and to actively wait for God’s leading.”⁷ This is, of course, *group* spiritual direction, so that the participants, by nature of this common bond, become a spiritual community. Rose Mary Dougherty, S.S.N.D., makes this explicit in the following comments:

What draws people to spiritual direction is a reciprocity of desire. Having been touched by God’s desire, they want to make their desire for God the determining factor for all of their choices, and they recognize that they need some help to do this. This shared desire is the group’s cohesion. People share a commitment to be there for each other in their desire for God. In the group they make their shared desire explicit. They hold one another in the prayer of their desire.⁸

⁴ Eitington, 512.

⁵ Eitington, 139.

⁶ Eitington, 350.

⁷ Rose Mary Dougherty, *Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1995), 2.

⁸ Dougherty, 37.

This intention to form a spiritual community was communicated to each group of participants prior to the start of the first session. They were also asked to pray for all the members of their group (known and unknown), as well as the researcher (Appendix 3).

While spiritual direction was the ultimate goal of the formation sessions, it was necessary to also give considered attention to the practical aspects of the sessions. Nicki Verploegen Vandergrift's *Planning and Implementing Retreats: A Parish Handbook* provided the template for formatting the content of the sessions. Her five planning and design strategies included:

- Strategy One: Spiritual Need
- Strategy Two: Scriptural Grounding
- Strategy Three: Schedule and Format
- Strategy Four: Structural Design
- Strategy Five: Setup and Ambience⁹

The spiritual need for the formation sessions was identified early in this paper by the US Bishops when they spoke of the needs for a spirituality that assists the faithful to make a work-faith connection in their life. Scripture was integral to all sessions and was particularly utilized in a “shared praxis” model. This model...“developed by Thomas Groome, invites participants to have a conversation between a problem or challenge in their own life and a portion of scripture.”¹⁰

All six formation sessions were two hours in length with an additional half-hour prior to each session available for meditation and/or journaling; these pre-session

⁹ Vandergrift, 10.

¹⁰ Nancy Ferguson and Kevin Will, *The Retreat Leader's Manual: A Complete Guide to Organizing Meaningful Christian Retreats* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2006), 53.

meditations were voluntary and not included in the time commitment participants were asked to devote to the project.

The following components provided a guideline for the format and structure of each of the sessions:

- Pre-session meditation
- Welcome/comments as needed
- Opening prayer
- Scripture/Guided Meditation
- Group sharing
- Theology
- Personal & practical application (discussion questions)
- Journaling
- Freewill Sharing
- Closing prayer

Adherence to the above format was not absolute; flexibility was also a necessary component, especially in that last couple of sessions when it was necessary to devote more time to discussion of the practical aspects of the retreat; additionally, the fact that these were clearly “pilot” sessions necessitated the need for flexibility. The overriding concern in determining the structural components of the format was to provide a balanced experience of prayer, meditation, open discussion and sharing of experiences in the workplace, interjected with some learning: church teaching on work and aspects of retreat planning. These activities provided a balance, and sometimes a tension, between information and inspiration as sessions often weaved in and out of each. Nicki

Vandergrift addresses this dichotomy, but affirms that “formation can happen in the interface between information and inspiration.”¹¹

Naturally, the environment in which the sessions were held would go a long way in fostering all of the above. Discussion of the “where” for the formation sessions was indeed one of the first topics covered with representatives from each of the two groups. The meeting place for the ICSST group was easily resolved, thanks to the kindness of Msgr. Thomas P. Nydegger, then Vice Rector of the seminary. After I described the importance of an informal, comfortable environment, he offered use of the seminarian’s lounge, a large pleasant room that is sometimes but infrequently used for ICSST meetings. The comfortable couches and armchairs situated around a large cocktail table, the adjustable lighting, as well as the degree of privacy afforded, made this an ideal location. Of course, the seminarians had to be informed--by notice on the entrance door--that the room was in use for a time those six evenings. All of the ICSST participants will never forget their kind sacrifice!

The parish Deacon at St. Matthias, also a member of the formation team, was able to obtain one of the parish’s most pleasant meeting rooms: a private entrance led to a large newly-decorated, quite modern room with large windows and religious icons and symbols nicely placed. The chairs were comfortable and, despite the fact that all of the team would sit around a large table, the atmosphere was pleasant and informal.

¹¹ Vandergrift, 45.

In terms of room configuration Julius Eittington suggests a number of possibilities depending on the desired training objective; what he describes as *use of a circle without the tables* seemed most desirable for the sessions:

In this configuration the trainer joins with the group on a more- or- less peer basis. The assumption is that “we are all here to learn together.” This is the hallmark of advanced forms of experiential learning (T-groups, encounter group, team building). The atmosphere is totally informal, and as the group matures, it becomes warm, egalitarian, supportive, caring, spontaneous, and highly trusting...the tables are discarded...to accent informality, to eliminate the traditional classroom atmosphere, and to stimulate the freest possible flow of communication.¹²

Clearly, this configuration could be implemented at ICSST, but not at St.

Matthias, so that it was especially important that the ambiance and setup contributed to achieving the same. The room was always setup and ready for participants one half-hour before the start of a session. The researcher communicated with participants in both groups, advising them of the procedures for arriving early: silence was requested during this pre-session period; a resource of scripture and prayer was available for personal meditation; journaling and simply rest were also possibilities during this timeframe. Participants were also asked to refrain, if at all possible, from eating during the entire session, but were encouraged to bring their own beverage.

Each of the sessions had a particular theme (Appendix 4), so that opening and closing prayers, as well as worship aids were tied to the session’s theme.

¹² Eittington, 326.

Assessment Instruments

“Evaluation provides a way to find out whether you have achieved your purpose...” as well as “...what elements of the retreat made it meaningful to participants. The only way to reach that goal is to ask questions of those who attend.”¹³

Evaluation of this project was conducted at the participant reaction level (attitude or feeling regarding satisfaction-dissatisfaction);¹⁴ participant reactions will indicate how satisfied participants were with their experience, what they feel they learned, how the process might be improved, as well as how attitudes may have changed.¹⁵

Given that the training goal for the formation sessions was the changing of attitudes it was necessary to assess participant attitudes in understanding a work-faith connection in their life at the very start of the project. Participants were given assessment questionnaires at the beginning of the first session; these required participants to respond to open-ended questions, including a question regarding personal expectation(s) for the project, as well as a variety of statements regarding attitudes about work and faith. The latter instrument required the participant to indicate his or her agreement with a series of statements. Another instrument specifically designed to assess changes in attitudes was one of the opened-ended questions which asked participants to list their “top five reason/motives for working.”

¹³ Ferguson and Will, 121.

¹⁴ Eitington, 439.

¹⁵ Eitington, 455.

At the end of the last session team members were asked to respond to a different series of open-ended questions, including a question regarding their level of personal satisfaction that the expectation(s) originally stated as the first session was/were fulfilled; this was necessary to determine the Return on Expectation for the project.¹⁶ In addition, any change in attitudes regarding work and faith would be determined by participant agreement/disagreement to the same set of statements previously given, as well as their response to the question regarding their perceived reasons for working.

In addition to the above assessment instruments utilized for team participant feedback the standard assessment instrument developed by ICSST for use in determining individual's responses to workshops and retreats was utilized to assess the reaction of individuals who attended the retreat to the retreat itself (Appendix 17).

Recruitment Process

As previously indicated, the process of recruiting individuals to participate in the six team formation sessions in preparation for the retreat actively began after receiving Seton Hall University IRB approval in May. The staff and administration of ICSST were enormously supportive of the project and assisted with providing contact information for current matriculated students and alumni. ICSST's Lewis Hall was also offered as a location for the ICSST retreat and the date, September 18, 2010, chosen in accordance with space availability. The dates for the six formation sessions would certainly take place in July/ August and would be specifically determined after receiving feedback from

¹⁶ Eittington, 448.

the participants. The researcher proceeded to contact students and alumni with the prospect of being a part of this project; contact was made primarily through email and consisted of a personal letter from the researcher, along with an informational flyer (Appendix 2). In a very short time responses and queries were received. As anticipated, committing to six weeks of weekly meetings during the months of July and August was problematic for many who genuinely wanted to take part in the project. However, nine individuals came forward to make that commitment (understanding that a missed meeting or two at most could be made up one-on-one with the researcher), and specific session dates were determined (Appendix 4). One of the nine later withdrew from the project when starting a new job and position required her full attention, so that eight students and alumni formed the ICSST team.

The recruiting process moved quickly at St. Matthias, largely due to an earlier information session that was held at the parish. The parish Deacon had informed the parish, via parish bulletin and announcements, about the possibility of conducting such a retreat and invited interested parties to attend an information session; the researcher explained the Doctor of Ministry degree requirements, as well as the theological and pastoral basis for such an undertaking, so that when the letter and information flyer (Appendix 2) was distributed with the specific retreat date, September 25, 2010, those with interest responded quickly. Again, specific dates for the team formation sessions were decided in consensus with prospective team members (Appendix 4). Finding appropriate dates for all of the fourteen of the original volunteers proved difficult, causing two individuals to decline participation before start of the sessions, while another

individual withdrew because of workplace pressures after the first session, so that the St. Matthias team consisted of eleven individuals.

Concurrent with the recruiting process and once the retreat dates were ascertained, the researcher worked with the Media Department at Seton Hall University to develop a flyer to be utilized in publicizing the two retreats (Appendix 6).

Participants

Despite the extreme inconvenience of having to attend six two-hour evening sessions during the months of July, August and September, nineteen individuals in total devoted what is calculated to be over 400 hours of personal time to this project. This was time that was somehow found in the midst of work responsibilities, family vacations and numerous other individual pursuits.

Some of the individuals in each team knew one another from taking courses or serving on parish ministries. Several individuals on each team were also already acquainted with the researcher: several of the ICSST group had attended the course, Theology of Work, taught by the researcher; some the St. Matthias team knew the researcher from the assistance given several years ago to help St. Matthias establish a parish employment ministry. Still, there were some participants who were new to most of team, as well as the researcher.

Demographic information was requested from participants at the start of the first session (Appendix 5).

Characteristics of St. Matthias team members were as follows:

- All eleven participants possess a bachelor's degree, one of those in theology.
- Seven of the eleven participants have graduate degrees, three of those in religious studies.
- All individuals but one are employed, only one of the employed individuals works in a ministerial role.
- Two individuals are retired, but employed part-time.
- Five individuals have the expectation of integrating their work and faith lives; three individuals expect to learn about the retreat process.
- Six of the eleven individuals participate in a volunteer ministry within their parish; all participants are members of St. Matthias Parish.
- Team consists of six men and five women.

Characteristics of ICSST team members:

- All eight participants possess a bachelor's degree, only one of those in theology.
- Seven of the eight individuals have graduate degrees, five of which are in theology/pastoral ministry; four individuals have more than one graduate degree.
- Four individuals are currently students at ICSST; four are alumni.
- Six of the eight individuals are employed, one part-time and one in a religious setting.
- Two individuals are retired.
- Four individuals have the expectation of integrating their work and faith lives; four individuals hope to learn about the retreat process.

- Six of the eight individuals participate in a volunteer ministry within a parish.
- Team consists of three men and five women.

These demographics, taken in total, point to there being a number of similarities in the majority of the individuals who volunteered for this project: this is a highly educated group, one whose continued interest in growing intellectually and spiritually indicate that they are life-long learners; they are clearly interested in and want to learn more about the idea that there is a connection between our faith and the work that we do on a daily basis, and, not only do they have a personal desire to explore this idea, they are also interested and motivated to want to share it with others; finally, they are a group with a great generosity of spirit, indicated by giving their time and effort to both the various ministries in their individual parishes and to this project.

More specifically, the data shows that, while all participants possess a bachelor's degree, only two out of the nineteen degrees are in theology/religious studies. However, out of the fourteen individuals who possess graduate degrees, eight are in theology or religious studies, indicating that an interest in topics of spirituality/theology grew (and continues to grow) with time and maturity. Additionally, of the seventeen individuals who are employed, only two are employed in a religious/ministerial setting, indicating that this group's interest in exploring the connection between work and faith is particularly relevant.

Chapter 4

The Team Formation Sessions

Session Particulars

After consultation with each of the team members dates and times for the six team formation sessions were agreed upon: the St. Matthias group would meet on Tuesdays from 7:00pm to 9:00pm; the ICSST group on Thursdays from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. As discussed earlier, participants also were invited to attend a pre-session meditation/transition period to take place one half-hour before each of Sessions II, III, and IV; for the last two sessions this pre-session time would be allocated for meeting with individual team members in order to assist them with their talks. Two sessions were held, respectively, during the months of July, August, and September (see Appendix 13 for complete schedule for each team).

The date and place for each of the retreats was confirmed: Saturday, September 18, 2010 for ICSST and Saturday, September 25, 2010 for St. Matthias, both retreats to be held from 9:00am to 3:00pm; retreat space was reserved with both organizations. In addition, the flyers to be used for retreat publicity were completed and approved (Appendix 6); strategy for publicity was discussed during the sessions.

The following narratives and session plans will give an accounting of the content for each of the sessions; the content described was identical for both teams. The

researcher chose topics that past workshops indicate to be the most common areas of experience related to work (i.e., human dignity, doing the right thing, stress, work/life balance, etc.), to give the team members the optimum opportunity to find a mirror to their own experience. Naturally, there was some variation in focus and discussion given two teams of different participants having had differing work experiences, as well as being at different stages on the spiritual journey; that detailed variance will not be reported here, as it is not necessary information for conducting the formation sessions. The variety and topics of the talks given by each of the teams (Chapter 5) will give an indication of the specific topics of discussion in each group. Scripture passages, discussion and reflections questions, as well as meditations, were all chosen with the goal of helping participants to look inward in order to discover their particular “story” of how and when they met God in their work, a process that often comes to light when reflecting back on those experiences. This kind of reflection is what the team formation process aims to facilitate; it is the fruit of such reflection which serves as the basis for the talks.

The structure and flow of each two-hour session is given in the detailed session plans that follow; these plans were the researcher’s working documents and were not shared with the team. The session plans given here follow the time-line for the St. Matthias meetings; however, the same time-line was utilized for the session plans for ICSST, the only difference being that the sessions began at 6:30pm instead of 7:00pm. All timeframe designations are approximate. Materials relating to the sessions (pre-session meditations, opening/closing prayers and handouts) can be found in the appendix

designated for a particular session. The prayer at the beginning of each session plan was said privately by the researcher before the start of each session.

**Session I: God the Father Labors and Rests
 The Creation Story: Finding Meaning in Work
 (Appendix 7)**

Planning for the first session is particularly important so that the participants who have so generously given of their time clearly recognize that the process will be worthy of their sacrifice. The researcher had prepared the appropriate number of folders which contained the themes for all the sessions and other pertinent information; each participant was also given a notebook to be utilized for journaling both during the sessions and at home. These items, along with a blank nametag, were given to each participant as he or she was greeted and briefly introduced to other team members. When all arrived attention was given to the opening prayer service: the researcher read the scripture passage, one of the team read aloud the meditation, and after a moment of silence, all said the prayer. All of the opening prayer services followed this formula.

The session began in earnest with some necessary “business”: first thanking the group for taking part in the project, and proceeding with more practical issues, including a review of session dates, set up of the room, etc. One of the most important pieces of business was to make explicit that all team members’ conversation, in fact, all comments made during the sessions, must be held in confidence; this was extremely important to allow for the free flow of discussion, much of which would be about personal experiences. The St. Matthias group decided not to take a formal break during the two hours; time was of the essence and restroom facilities and water were adjacent to the

meeting room, so that individuals could easily access at will. A ten-minute break would be part of the ICCST session schedule as facilities were on another floor. Lastly, the team members began the important business of filling out the pre-evaluation questionnaire, taking whatever time was necessary to complete. Each of the folders given to participants contained a code number; participants would now attach that code number to the pre-evaluation form with their responses, and at the completion of all the sessions they would do the same with the post-evaluation questionnaire.

As all team members were not acquainted, an icebreaker was in order: after a few moments of reflection, participants were asked to introduce themselves by sharing with the group the situation that they would consider to be their best work experience. This proved to be both a fun and informative exercise.

The theological focus of this first session was the creation story and the consequent mandate to work. The researcher led the group in considering the meaning of work and spirituality (handout), after which the researcher spoke about making the connection between the two; brief readings from Pope John Paul II's *Laborem Exercens* assisted in clarifying that connection. Last, the researcher asked the group to recall the "best" work experience they spoke of earlier, leading them in a meditation (with music) on that experience, followed by time for quiet journaling of thoughts; time was then allotted to sharing those thoughts with the group.

The session ended with a closing song and prayer, as participants gathered around a table with crucifix and candles. This gathering together for closing prayer became a ritual: the St. Matthias group would leave their seats at the table and stand around the

prayer table; the ICSST team was already seated around a table set with appropriate religious articles and candles.

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Plan for Session I

God the Father Labors and Rests The Creation Story: Finding Meaning in Work

Loving Father, we offer you this day our accomplishments
and our hopes and dreams for the future.

Continue to bless us, as together we explore how to find you,
in the work we do in our careers, in our homes, and in our leisure time.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, your son and our brother, and in the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

6:00pm – 7:00pm

Pre-session Planning

- Bring notebooks for participant journaling
- Assemble folders with contact info, session descriptions, code assignments/evaluation forms, nametags, opening prayer, consent forms, closing song, notes, why we work.
- Set up meeting room: arrange chairs, centerpiece (crucifix, candle, holy water)
- Set up music as needed
- Prepare to welcome participants

7:00pm – 7:10pm

- Welcome participants; hand out nametags, notebooks, and folders.
- Opening prayer service and meditation

7:10pm – 7:45pm

- Session details, review of dates, consent forms (ICSST only), set up for future meetings, retreat information, questions
- Pre-Formation Questionnaires

7:40pm – 8:00pm

- Icebreaker/introductions: participants will be asked to think of all the work they have done, and focus on the work situation that was most desirable/fun/rewarding. What was that situation? Each participant will then introduce themselves: name, affiliation with SHU/St. Matthias, and briefly describe best work situation.

8:00pm – 8:15pm

- Clarify meaning of work (handout) as inclusive of all human activity, paid and unpaid; discuss how work is spiritual and why we work.
- John Paul II's Theology of Work; brief passages from *Laborem Exercens* that focus on man sharing in God's creation and joy/benefits of work

8:15pm – 8:25pm (music)¹

- Guided meditation on participants' best work experience. Leader's comments for meditation include:
 - Put yourself back to remember that place of work that you mentioned in our introductions. Envision it...the building and physical setup of your workplace.
 - Remember preparing and journeying to work...what did you feel most days?
 - Recall the people you worked with...where there some long-standing relationships? Who in particular made it pleasant to work there?
 - Were you recognized for your accomplishments; do you remember one in particular? Who was it who applauded you?
 - Can you relate your work here to JP II's comments on our sharing in the continuing God's creation by the work we do?
 - Was your faith an influencing factor in the work or relationships you conducted at this place of work?
 - Did God seem to be present in this work experience?

8:25pm-8:35pm

- Participants journal their thoughts and remembrances from above meditation.

8:35pm-8:50pm

- Sharing

¹ Marty Haugen, *Instruments of Peace*. GIA Publications (CD) 1991, tracks 7, 8, 9, 10.

8:50pm – 9:00pm

- Closing ritual: participants gather around centerpiece table for song² and “A Blessing Upon Work” prayer which all say together.

Session II: Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action
Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work
 (Appendix 8)

The focus of this session is human dignity: the dignity of the worker and the responsibility that such dignity demands of the worker himself/herself, as well as the worker’s treatment of others. In its simplest form, it is a responsibility to do the right thing. In this session the teams explore what that means; Jesus Christ is the model for living out faith in daily life while the social teaching of the Catholic Church is discussed as providing the essential precepts of right conduct for individuals and organizations.

A scripture reading of Peter denying Jesus three times (Lk 22:56-63) provided a mediation on making right choices after which team members spent some quiet time journaling their thoughts.

Next, team members shared their responses to one of the questions on the pre-evaluation: what comes to mind when you hear the word “spirituality?” Their responses were quite poignant and revealing of an understanding that was a fit with the living out of one’s faith in daily activities.

The handout on the precepts of Catholic social teaching was reviewed and discussed in the context of the work environment of the participants. The responses were

² *Anthology Volume II: God of Day and God of Darkness*, Words by Mart Haugen; Music “Beach Spring” from *The Sacred Harp*. GIA Publications (CD), 1985.

quite divergent. This focus was completed with brief meditation/questions to help the participants examine their personal experience of marginalization in the workplace.

The last fifteen minutes of the session were spent on reviewing the various roles and responsibilities to be addressed in retreat planning, after which team members were asked to begin to think about: what might be their story of work?

This second session concluded with a prayer to St. Joseph for Workers.

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Plan for Session II

Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action

Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work

Loving Father, we offer you this day our accomplishments
and our hopes and dreams for the future.

Continue to bless us, as together we explore how to find you,
in the work we do in our careers, in our homes, and in our leisure time.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, your son and our brother, and in the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

6:30pm – 7:00pm

Pre-session meditation-handout (music)³

7:00 pm – 7:05pm

Opening prayer

7:05pm – 7:30pm

- Scripture reading (Lk 22:56-63): Peter denying Jesus: meditation and journaling with following questions:

Can you recall a time in your work life when you were put in a position where you needed to take a stand and do the right thing? Remember the details of the situation—when, where, who, how and why. Take note of the feelings that went along with this situation.

³ Marty Haugen, *Instruments of Peace*. GIA Publications (CD) 1991, tracks 7, 8, 9, 10.

7:30pm – 7:50pm

- *Doing the Right Thing at Work* handout⁴ – discussion

7:50pm – 8:00pm

- Jesus the Worker; comments by researcher...and the following from John Paul II:

Jesus himself gave particular emphasis to this truth: that through work, people share in the activity of the Creator. For Jesus was himself a workingman, a craftsman like Joseph of Nazareth. Jesus clearly belonged to the working world. So did most of his disciples and listeners: ordinary fishermen, farmers, and workers. So when he speaks about the kingdom of God, Jesus constantly uses terms connected with human work: the work of the shepherd, the farmer, the doctor, the sower, the householder, the servant, the steward, the fisherman, the merchant, the laborer. And he compares the building up of God's kingdom to the manual work of harvesters and fishermen.

Pope John Paul II, Talk in Pusan, South Korea, May 1984⁵

8:00pm – 8:30pm

- Reading and discussion of Catholic social teaching handout, followed by brief mediation on personal experience marginalization in the workplace.

Recall a concrete instance where you felt blocked, limited or marginalized, even belittled, by your workplace. Do you remember the feeling that accompanied that experience? What did you do in response? Who did you share that situation with, if anyone? Did you turn to God?

8:30pm -- 8:40pm

- Review of team responses in reference to the meaning of spirituality.

8:40pm – 8:55pm

- Retreat planning – discussion of primary roles/responsibilities: planning the retreat (date, place, theme, schedule, leadership); promoting the retreat; registering participants; offering hospitality; developing program elements and coordination; recruiting leadership; coordinating worship; creating an evaluation; and establishing and working within a budget.

⁴ Nolan, 6.

⁵ Droel, 8.

8:55pm – 9:00pm

- Team members asked to reflect on: what might be your story of work? Is there something that was already touched upon that reminds you of sometime in your work life...joyful or perhaps painful? If so, participants were encouraged to spend some time journaling about that experience.
- Closing prayer: Prayer to St. Joseph the Worker

**Session III: The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model
Offering our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships
(Appendix 9)**

The focus of this session is to offer ways to deal with some of the hardships of work, especially the issue of stress and the need for balance in work and life, as well as the hardship of unemployment. Participants will be encouraged to look to the Mass as a way to offer their sufferings with Christ's suffering, and to find solace in reception of the Eucharist.

After the opening scripture and meditation a reading from the second half of the pre-session closing questions regarding work and leisure resulted in a lively discussion of the difficulties of finding adequate time for family, friends, and personal interests even during the weekends. Team members were asked to identify a particularly difficult situation of stress at work and to remember its consequences. Time was then spent in private journaling.

The researcher introduced the topic of how our faith practices, especially the liturgy, can be a comfort to use during stressful times. When we gather around the Word of God and share the breaking of the bread, our Christian community, in worship together, lets God channel the fire within us and enables the Holy Spirit to give us

strength to deal with our problems and propel us on the right course. Brief readings from *Pope John Paul II's Gospel of Work* and *On-the-Job Spirituality: Finding God at Work* provided both practical and theological examples.

Team members were given an exercise to complete: it simply required individuals to name what they consider to be the five most important aspects of their life, and on the flip side, to name how it is they spend most of their time. Such an exercise quickly demonstrates the tension that often exists between what we consider most important and how we spend our time; discussion of the results was lively and very enlightening. Last, some time was dedicated to retreat planning (handout).

In closing, the researcher indicated that at the next session team members would be asked to identify a topic for their retreat talk, keeping in mind that everyone is not required to give a talk; there are a number of differing roles required for the retreat, as had been discussed in the previous session. Team members were invited to call or email the researcher with any questions they may have regarding talk topics or any aspect of the sessions/retreat in the interim time.

The session concluded with a closing prayer.

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Plan for Session III

The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model

Offering our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships

Loving Father, we offer you this day our accomplishments
and our hopes and dreams for the future.
Continue to bless us, as together we explore how to find you,

in the work we do in our careers, in our homes, and in our leisure time.
 We ask this in the name of Jesus, your son and our brother, and in the Holy Spirit.
 Amen.

6:30pm – 7:00pm Pre-session meditation-handout (music)⁶

7:00pm – 7:10pm Opening prayer

7:10pm – 7:30pm

- Reading of second part of the pre-session handout, the last entrée on working and resting with discussion questions: Is your weekend usually more work than leisure? Do you carve out time with family/friends? Do you have any time for yourself? Team members respond.

7:30pm – 7:50pm

Journaling of responses to the following: Do you recall a particular time in your work life when you had a lot of stress...how it may have affected your health, your family....how did you handle that? What kind of helps did you have?

7:50pm – 8:15pm

- This is one of the things that our faith, our church, can help us with...specifically, spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation, reading the bible, attending mass....besides, the essential realization that we are made for eternity, not for this world. Particularly, as Catholics, we have the gift of our liturgy, more importantly, the Eucharist...coming to the altar, praying, offering our troubles and sacrifices, asking for guidance and direction, being strengthened by the Eucharist.
- Readings from *Gospel of Work*⁷ and *On-the-Job Spirituality: Finding God at Work*.⁸

8:15pm – 8:35pm

- Exercise on what's important in life vs. what time is being spent on (handout)

⁶ Marty Haugen, *Instruments of Peace*. GIA Publications (CD) 1991, tracks 7, 8, 9, 10.

⁷ Droel, 45.

⁸ Roche, 149.

- How did your responses add up? Team members respond.

8:35pm – 9:00pm

- Retreat planning (handout)
- Discussion on individual talks for next week

9:00pm Closing Prayer

**Session IV: A Pentecost Model of Work: Inspired to Take Action
Working with the Spirit: Personal & Group Discernment
(Appendix 10)**

Given that both teams were very enthusiastic in discussion of last session's topic, work/life balance issues, the topic was continued at the beginning of Session IV. The researcher utilized notes from past lectures on the topic to help participants find a "center" from which all of life's priorities would flow. For the Christian person that center is one's faith which, in turn, leads us naturally to recognizing which of life's responsibilities should come first. All of life under the umbrella of certain beliefs: the dignity of all humankind, the priority of the family, treating others as we want to be treated, and so forth...these precepts, when practiced, point the way to our priorities.

The above led directly into a brief discourse on periods in church history important for a Theology of Work, especially the early periods, the Celtic and Benedictine, with its most pronounced integration of work and daily life. The researcher noticed that many utilized their journals for taking notes!

A major portion of this session was spent on listening to team member's ideas of topics for a talk on work and faith. Several elected not to give a talk; still, they were

asked to share what topic/subject matter discussed in the sessions seemed to “hit home.” In one instance the researcher suggested to a team member who had decided not to give a talk that she consider doing so. The researcher had made note of this individual’s response at the very first session when the group was asked to share their most joyful experience of work; this person spoke of her quilting group, a group of women who come together on a regular basis (indeed, they had been doing so for 10+ years), to make quilts for those in need, including new mothers, the military, and the elderly, as well as family and friends. The researcher asked the individual to spend some time reflecting, praying and journaling on this work experience and the value of sharing it with others. Hopefully, she would come to realize that this work of quilting was as worthy as that of the gentleman who had been a bank Vice President.

Several team members had come with topics already developed into part of a talk; the topics were varied, but all reflected a growing understanding of work and the part that their faith played in both the joys and trials inherent in that work.

The final half-hour of the session was dedicated to retreat planning; specific issues of timing, structure, content and individual responsibility were decided upon. Individuals giving talks were asked to develop two reflection questions and to choose a scripture passage appropriate for their talk for the next session. Additionally, individuals were scheduled to give their talks to the group over the next two sessions.

The researcher presented a schedule of times when she would be available to meet with individuals privately for those who might want to practice their talks.

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Plan for Session IV

A Pentecost Model of Work: Inspired to Take Action

Working with the Spirit: Personal and Group Discernment

Loving Father, we offer you this day our accomplishments
and our hopes and dreams for the future.

Continue to bless us, as together we explore how to find you,
in the work we do in our careers, in our homes, and in our leisure time.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, your son and our brother, and in the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

6:30p – 7:00pm Pre-session meditation-handout (music)⁹

7:00pm – 7:05pm Opening prayer

7:05pm – 7:30pm

- Work/Life Balance (brief lecture and discussion): only by developing a way of centering ourselves in the midst of all these conflicting obligations and responsibilities, can we ever hope to balance our lives.

7:30pm – 7:50pm

- Work/Life Balance in Church Tradition: review of pertinent historic periods in church history.

Celtic: 5, 6, 7th C.

Benedictine: 6th C.

Dominican: 14th C.

Ignatian: 16th C.

Salesian: 16/17th C.

Protestant Reformation

Carmelite: 17th C.

⁹ *Lost in Meditation: Meditative Gregorian Chants*, Della Music (LaserLight CD), 1994, tracks 1-7.

7:50pm – 8:30pm

- Open discussion on individual's ideas for talks, including finalizing who will give talks (strictly volunteer basis); reach consensus on talk topics.

8:30pm – 9:00pm

- Open discussion on issues for retreat, including publicity (parish website, announcement after masses, etc.), retreat menu (light breakfast and lunch), music, hospitality, room setup, etc., as well as finalization of individual responsibilities.
- Discussion on use of reflection questions/silence/small group discussion for retreat; each presenter will develop two reflection questions based on talk, and determine a scripture passage appropriate to talk.

9:00pm

Closing prayer

**Session V: A Resurrection Model of Work: Finding Joy in Work
Making Sense of Our Stories
(Appendix 11)**

The pre-session reflection time was given to individual coaching of team members who desired some assistance with preparing their talks.

After the opening prayer, the researcher took up the prayer's theme and spoke on Julian of Norwich and "spirituality of abundance: a way of living that is based on hope rather than on despair, on joy rather than on sadness. It focuses on what life offers me rather than being stuck in its difficulties."¹⁰ This was followed by some comments from Dennis Bakke's *Joy at Work*. The purpose was to make clear that it is by doing the work that we were meant to do that we live fully and abundantly; this is what brings us joy, and at the same time pleases our God. This model of joyful work was given by God: "Genesis

¹⁰ Mercedes Rojo, OSF, "Julian of Norwich: The Spirituality of Abundance," *Spiritual Life: A Journal of Contemporary Spirituality* 47, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 4.

tells us that God paused at each step of the creation process to pronounce His work 'good.' Jesus reminds us of God's enjoyment in work in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-29."¹¹

The above provided a good lead to a concrete demonstration of the fruits of the work of several team members; the group listened to and commented on the retreat talks of four team members; the remaining team members giving talks did so in Session VI.¹²

Finally, some time was allotted to additional retreat planning issues (primarily dealing with final detail on the retreat day schedule), including a reading of the reflection questions developed by the individuals giving talks. The researcher also presented a rough draft of the retreat program and requested bios from all the team.

The session concluded with the Prayer of St. Francis.

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Plan for Session V

A Resurrection Model of Work: Finding Joy in Work Making Sense of our Stories

Loving Father, we offer you this day our accomplishments
and our hopes and dreams for the future.

Continue to bless us, as together we explore how to find you,
in the work we do in our careers, in our homes, and in our leisure time.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, your son and our brother, and in the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

¹¹ Dennis W. Bakke, *Joy at Work: A Revolutionary Approach to Fun on the Job* (Seattle: PVG, 2005), 258-259.

¹² As previously indicated, giving a talk was not a requirement for participation in the team formation session or the retreat. Six of the eight ICSST chose to give talks, and seven of the eleven St. Matthias team members gave retreat talks.

<u>7:00pm - 7:05pm</u>	Opening prayer
<u>7:05pm - 7:25pm</u>	In line with the opening prayer theme the researcher made comments on Julian of Norwich's idea of a "Spirituality of Abundance" and <i>Joy at Work</i> from Dennis Bakke.
<u>7:25pm – 8:30pm</u>	Retreat talks from four team members with comments from team.
<u>8:30pm - 9:00pm</u>	Retreat planning; details of retreat day schedule; retreat program; bios of all needed ASAP.
<u>9:00pm</u>	Closing prayer

**Session VI: A Trinitarian Model of Work: Collaborative Work
Putting It All Together
(Appendix 12)**

Once again, the pre-session reflection time (and the two hours prior) was given over to individual meetings with team members who wished to practice their retreat talks. Immediately after the opening prayer the post-evaluation questionnaires were given to the team members to complete. Two of the eleven team members were not given evaluations as they had missed three of the sessions. The researcher explained that missing half the sessions would not have given them sufficient exposure to the process in order to make determinations regarding either their personal benefit or the process itself.

The team members who did not give their talks last week gave them to the group, each followed by comments and suggestions. Once again, the group was amazed at how truly inspirational the talks were.

Finally, the group discussed the remaining details surrounding various aspects of the retreat; all appeared to be in place, including the count of how many were expected to attend.

The researcher ended this last session with whole-heartedly thanking the team members for their generosity and hard work and attention during the past six sessions. It was an experience that this researcher would hold in her heart always.

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Plan for Session VI

A Trinitarian Model of Work: Collaborative Work

Putting It All Together

Loving Father, we offer you this day our accomplishments
and our hopes and dreams for the future.

Continue to bless us, as together we explore how to find you,
in the work we do in our careers, in our homes, and in our leisure time.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, your son and our brother, and in the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

<u>7:00pm – 7:05pm</u>	Opening prayer
<u>7:05pm – 7:35pm</u>	Evaluations
<u>7:35pm – 8:35pm</u>	Retreat talks from four team members with comments from team.
<u>8:35pm – 9:00pm</u>	Retreat business/final words from researcher
<u>9:00pm</u>	Closing prayer

Chapter 5

A Working Life Retreat

General Comments

The two retreats were held as planned: nine individuals attended the ICSST retreat on September 18, 2010 and twenty-five attended the St. Matthias retreat on September 25, 2010. Both retreats adhered to the same timeframe (9:30am to 3:30pm) and had a similar format. A full retreat schedule for each retreat can be found in Appendix 13.

The day began with the respective teams meeting for private prayer before the formal program began. A light breakfast was provided as guests gathered and mingled. The researcher opened the retreat with a brief prayer and extending a welcome to all, followed by introductory remarks with comments on the spirituality/work connection and an introduction of the first two speakers; speakers were paired by similar talk themes which were articulated in the introduction. After the first two talks reflection questions (Appendix 13) relating to those talks were read aloud followed by several minutes of silence leading to twenty of minutes of small group discussion addressing the reflection questions. This format was repeated throughout the morning and afternoon: introduction of speakers and theme, one, two, or three talks, reflection questions, silence, and small group discussion. Lunch was also provided. After the final talk a closing prayer and, in the case of St. Matthias, a closing song with guitar accompaniment was followed by requesting the attendees to fill out a retreat evaluation form (Appendix 17).

Finally, the team members and researcher met briefly to share thoughts and congratulate one another on a retreat well done.

All team members took part in the retreat, though not all chose to give talks; talks were approximately 10-15 minutes in length. Other areas of responsibilities included being table discussion leaders, prayer leaders, and attending to hospitality. Several team leaders took on more than one role; some contributed in all areas.

Regarding the costs incurred with each retreat, as no financial remuneration was given to the team members, the primary cost was the light breakfast and lunch. In the case of ICSST, attendees were charged \$20.00 for attending the retreat, a normal practice for ICSST events. The cost for the St. Matthias retreat was split between St. Matthias and the researcher. The cost for copies and other incidentals was incurred by the researcher.

Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology

Following are the titles and a content synopsis for each of the six talks given by ICSST theology students and alumni;

“Holy Boldness in the Workplace”

This student’s “holy boldness” in the workplace refers to her boldness in speaking out against the assaults to basic human dignity and moral injustices (particularly abortion) that she encountered during her nursing career. In doing so she elaborates on the precepts of Catholic social teaching in the content of specific instances experienced in the workplace. She also speaks of her reliance on God’s guidance in all circumstances of life,

workplace. She also speaks of her reliance on God's guidance in all circumstances of life, especially several of the difficult personal health and career decisions that she has been confronted with. Notable quote: "All that we do in work should be in God's name because it is in God's name that work was given to us."

"A Pig Roast and Father Corapi"

This individual begins his story by speaking about his annual gathering of friends and family, a pig roast, and what a joy this occasion is, except that one friend, an observant Jew, could never attend because it is held on a Saturday. This friend often told him how wonderful this day was...a day of rest, worship and family. Shortly thereafter he heard a talk given by the EWTN's Fr. Corapi on the topic of the Ten Commandments, suggesting that many Catholics probably could not list them in order. He took up that challenge and failed, making him realize how little he knew about his faith, and that he needed to devote some time to focusing on it. Finally, he relates how his grandfather lived his faith by example, one of which was to make Sunday truly a day of rest. The combination of these remembrances led him to make a conscious decision to live Sundays as a day of rest, a decision that he claims has changed his life. Notable quote: "I realized that I needed to change my lifestyle—being a Catholic is more than going to Mass on Sundays, praying and receiving the sacraments. It is a lifestyle."

“Evangelization in the Marketplace—Taking Jesus to Work in NYC”

This theology student shared her experience of both practicing and talking about her Catholic faith in workplace situations and the often quite astounding consequences. She gave specific examples of such instances: saying grace before meals both in the company cafeteria and in public; inviting a non-practicing Catholic to attend noon Ash Wednesday services; and simply telling a distraught employee that she will pray for her. In many of these instances the individuals involved later asked for advice and posed questions about her faith; one previously alienated Catholic has come back to the church as a result of such discussions...and brought his entire family with him. In conclusion, she offered several points for practical evangelization in the workplace. Notable quote: “It is one soul at a time; these moments come every day; they are quiet and small. We need to open our eyes/ears to see and listen for the opportunities.”

“Mentoring for a Kinder Workplace”

This individual, an alumnus of ICSST, speaks of the alienation and loneliness he encountered when hired for his first job as a software engineer; the “cubical-culture” literally left him without human contact for most days. Eventually, he was asked to lead a team, and describes the insecurity that he initially experienced due to a total lack of direction. However, despite the challenges, he progressed through assignments of increasing management responsibility during the next twelve years, during which time he initiated a mentoring program for new employees, so that others would not experience the

same alienation and insecurity. In reflecting on how his Catholic faith played a significant role in this journey, he highlights three aspects: the Eucharist, dignity of the human person, and Lasallian¹ spirituality. Notable quote: “As an engineer, I was taught that integration is the act of making whole and complete. As a theologian I see that the same is true, except with the end being the person and community being made whole and complete with God as the glue.”

“Searching”

This alumnus tells the story of his career and faith journey, how they are intertwined, and how he is still on that journey, searching to recognize where God wants to lead him next. He tells of his aunt as a great influence in the development of his strong Catholic faith and his early attraction to the possibility of the priesthood. While he has a long career in business, one that many would consider successful, he gives himself a B- for all the work done “on projects which in the end seem to have no productive or socially positive consequences.” Although he has been happily married with now grown children for many years, he ponders the possibility of having missed his calling. He still recognizes that the constant in his life has been that “God has always been there to walk with me.” So, he continues to stay on the path his life has taken, while still searching

¹ The spirituality of Saint John Baptist De La Salle - "Lasallian spirituality" - is built on the four pillars of faith, compassion, prayer and practical action. Its prime source of inspiration is the compassion shown by Jesus in the gospels. We are told many times by the gospel writers that Jesus had compassion on the crowds.

where God may yet lead. Notable quote: “I think now that maybe I would not have made a good priest early in my life. I knew the Church, its dogma and rules, but I did not know the love of God. It actually took me learning to subordinate myself...by working in a daily grind, living in a relationship with a very loving and tolerant spouse and in raising children to come to know God and to understand his love for me.”

“Just a Mom”

After an early career as a nurse and later earning a Master’s degree in Pastoral Ministry and serving as a parish DRE, this alumnus speaks of her most rewarding work as that of being “just a mom.” She reflects on both the joys and trials of living an “ordinary” life as a mother, encompassing everything from “having the flu and trying to care for four children with no family around” to “staying up for days on end while a daughter, a Navy fighter pilot, flew combat missions in Iraq.” The importance of their Catholic faith to both herself and her husband is clearly evident; St. Elizabeth Ann Seton served as her role model, as well as being the subject of a theology course project. “What a privilege it has been to spend my life helping to mold my four children into the image and likeness of God,” she declares before ending her talk with a verse she created. Notable quote: “God gave me the gifts of nurturing and compassion/to make my little family a church in some sort of fashion.”

St. Matthias Parish

Following are the titles and a content synopsis for each of the eight talks given by St. Matthias parishioners:

“Journeying from Emptiness to Fulfillment: the Search for God in Our Work”

This was an individual searching to understand what his work life had to do with God’s plan for his life. He told a harrowing story of working in an environment where there were “many instances of under-handedness, backstabbing and other non-professional behaviors – many times motivated by the advancement of self-interest or in response to a survival instinct.” As a manager, he gained a reputation as one who had genuine concern for his employees; he recognized both their limitations and their particular contributions and often supported them when upper management did not see their good attributes. Still, while the cut-throat work environment was wearing him down, he was growing in the knowledge of his Catholic faith and personal spirituality, so that he desperately wanted to realize a connection between his work and his maturing faith. Then he reflects: “it was the planning for this retreat that helped open my eyes to something that maybe I should have seen a long time ago.” His fellow team members pointed it out to him during one of the formation sessions: “Their message was - don’t you get it – you *are* doing God’s work and you have been doing it for a long while. You’ve been witnessing to Christ all along. You’ve been bringing God’s love, compassion and justice to your workplace.” Notable quote: “...perhaps all along, those aspects of my job that I

found so disturbing, so distasteful, those things that caused me to question the value of my job, that caused me to want to detach, maybe all along those were little blessings provided by God to allow me to do His work.”

“Blessings Which are Revealed in Time”

Looking back at a lifetime career of twists and turns (good and bad work situations, promotions and firings), most of which were unplanned, leads this individual to realize that many of these situations, despite the many stresses and pressures, were blessings in disguise. She recalls the worst of the stressful times: missing the funeral of her best friend’s father because of yet another business trip. “My job had become my religion, and I felt stuck in a situation that was supposed to be my life’s work.” Her reflection also leads her to see that all of her career experiences, good and bad, contributed to giving her a set of skills and the eventual determination that allowed her to rid herself of dependence on the fluctuations of the marketplace and establish her own consulting practice. She articulates the struggle, particularly the two months of decompression, introspection, exploration, and prayer before she made the decision to venture out on her own. Notable quote: “It’s clear that despite my best efforts to direct my own path, Someone Else was clearly in charge. Nearly twenty years of work ups and downs blossomed into a career blessed with fun.”

“Losing a Job”

This individual tells a dual story, that of the pain of losing a job and the pain of losing a beloved family member, his 24-year old niece who was recently killed in an accident. “Though not quite as devastating as the loss of a loved one, the loss of employment can be a serious and painful loss, emotionally and financially. We go through the very same process of grieving, letting go, and moving on...” In reference to both losses, he asks: “Is there a spiritual dimension that we can find that can help to bear this cross?” In his reflection he comes to understand that brokenness and change must be accepted as part of life; it is part of the paschal mystery, the dying and rising that we must do many times, even in the course of the day. He comes, too, to appreciate the act of centering oneself: “First, a breath to let go; then, a breath to center oneself in the moment; third, the breath of new possibility.” Notable quote: “As people experiencing the tough breaks in life such as job loss, we must remember these things: to quietly behold the mystery, to listen, to breathe. And trust that the Spirit will inspire you, re-animate you, and fill you with new life.”

“Should I Stay or Should I Go?”

This is a talk about discernment, listening for God’s call is something that is an integral part of this individual’s spirituality. While she feels that it is time to move on from her present work situation, she cannot decipher the direction. She shares her story of moving to New Jersey, the initial excitement of a new job and being part of a dynamic

team, doing work that matters; then circumstances in the organization drastically change, impacting both personal relationships and work responsibilities. It is a challenge now to trust in God's guidance, to have patience, to wait for a clue to take the next step. Notable quote: "I have no answers, but on good days, I trust that all will be well, and on not-so-good days I struggle through and try to be grateful for what I have."

"Work as an Act of Love"

This is the story of a man now retired from a successful banking career, one of many accomplishments. He speaks, too, of the satisfaction he found in many work-related relationships formed over the years and the priority he always put on the human element in the workplace. Yet, with all the accomplishments achieved in his work life the work that has given him the greatest joy of all was seeing the smile on his son's face after painting the deck for his family. It was right after the birth of his grand-daughter that his son had to travel on business, so that he and his wife went to stay with the new mother and child. It was a summer with daily 100 degree temperatures and even though all tried to discourage him, he moved ahead with his plan. The delight of his son upon his return was the greatest reward he had ever received for his work, work that is truly an act of love. Notable quote: "The smile and the hug I received from my son that day will remain

"Work After Work"

This is the story of a man who "failed" retirement; in his words, he "missed the schedule, missed being important, being listened to." This was easily remedied by turning

one of his life-long passions, golf, into a profession; he became a Class-A PGA certified golf instructor. Golf is an endeavor that requires that a great deal of time and attention be given to the fundamentals; given enough attention and work on fundamentals means that the rest will “just work out.” He has also learned that “I must provide HOPE as I work through the often-long learning process with my students.” This reflection leads him to think about the fundamentals of his faith life, an area that he has recently been giving more attention; saying yes to this retreat process is one of them, working with the parish’s Employment Ministry is another. Both of these activities have led him to both reflect on a life that has been greatly blessed and to look to a future with great hope. Notable quote: “The Employment Ministry and the preparation for this retreat made me think more about how spirituality and work are connected.”

“The Best Work I’ve Ever Done!”

Initially, this individual did not think that she was doing any work of value, as she was retired from her work for one of the New Jersey dioceses in order to take care of her grandchildren. However, after telling the group about the quilting group she is a part of, her fellow team members encouraged her to tell that story. This group of women has been together for over ten years, quilting and sharing the many joys and sorrows of their lives. They meet twice a year for four days to sew quilts for many differing needs: quilts for military hospitals, placemats for Meals on Wheels and pillowcases for children who have experienced tragedy, as well as gifts for family and friends. More importantly perhaps,

“We are church to one another. And our love and our troubles are unconsciously sewn into each and every quilt.” Notable quote: “I feel I am doing what God wants of me – I use my talents to give joy to others; for all of us quilters, this becomes a way of expressing our love. This reminds me of a passage from Colossians, ‘Whatever you do, do from the heart’” (3:23)

“How God is at Work Creating a Champion in YOU!”

This was not a formal talk, but a commentary on all of the talks given extemporaneously by the permanent deacon who is a spiritual mentor to several in the group. It was uplifting and brought in elements of all the talks, as well as reflecting on the meaning of “champion,” living as a “spiritual champion” in everyday life activities.

Chapter 6

Evaluations, Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Assessment Before and After Formation

As previously stated, questionnaires were administered to both teams at the beginning of formation Session I; these anonymous self-evaluation questionnaires were designed to elicit responses that would provide the researcher with information regarding pre-session participant attitudes toward a perceived connection between their work and faith lives, as well as general attitudes about work and individual expectations for participating in the project. Participants were also asked to provide general information regarding education and their current work situation. Specific open-ended questions provided the researcher with participants' current definitions of work and spirituality, while their responses to statements about work gave the researcher valuable feedback on participants' attitudes toward a host of work-related issues including ethical values, work-life balance, self-esteem, competition in the workplace, spiritual practices, and hope for their future work. A listing of reasons for working also contributed to a current view of participant attitudes toward their work. Finally, participants were asked to articulate their expectation(s) in taking part in the formations sessions.

Questionnaires were administered to both teams at the conclusion of formation Session VI. All eight individuals from the ICSST team participated in both the pre and post assessments, while only nine of the eleven St. Matthias participants took part in the

post-assessment; two individuals were not given post-assessments, as they attended only three of the six sessions. These anonymous self-evaluation questionnaires repeated two assessment instruments from the pre-evaluations: one requesting participants to list their top five reasons/motives for working, and the other requiring responses to statements regarding work; these instruments provided clues to changes in participant attitudes about work that were a direct result from participating in the six formation sessions. In addition, participants were asked to respond to a series of open-ended questions designed to elicit feedback regarding any specific benefits perceived to be a result of participation in the formation sessions, as well as their analysis of specific instruments utilized in the formation sessions, i.e., pre-session meditations and prayers. They also were asked to provide suggestions for areas of improvement for future sessions and to rate their overall experience of the project on a scale of “poor” to “excellent.” Finally, participants were given a copy of their pre-formation response regarding their expectation(s) for participation in the sessions, and were asked to qualify the outcome.

Analysis of the Pre and Post-Evaluation Questionnaires

Results from the pre-formation questionnaires from both teams were charted in preparation for analysis against the post-formation questionnaires; the same was later done with the results from the post-evaluations. The responses of both teams to the statements about work revealed some substantial changes in attitude within each group, most particularly the St. Matthias team. A chart illustrating the attitude changes of each participant to each statement can be found in appendices 14 and 15. Following are the statements that elicited the highest percentage of positive change among the St. Matthias group:

- “I think that I am making the world a better place through the work I do.”

Five participants increased their agreement with this statement. Specifically, of the nine respondents, two individuals changed from “somewhat agree” to “completely agree,” one individual changed from “completely disagree” to “agree,” another individual changed from “somewhat agree” to “agree,” and one individual changed from “agree” to “completely agree.”

- “Recognition for my contributions in the workplace is very important to me.”

Five participants changed their attitude with regard to the importance of personal recognition in the workplace by decreasing their agreement with this statement. Specifically, of the nine participants three individuals changed from “completely agree” to “agree,” and two individuals changed from “completely agree” to “somewhat agree.”

- “I look forward to future work with great hope.” Five participants now look to the future with greater hope. Specifically, of the nine participants, three individuals changed from “somewhat agree” to “agree,” and two individuals changed from “agree” to “completely agree.”

- “When searching for a new position, the ethical practice of a potential employer is important.” Four participants came to agree more strongly that the ethical practice of their employers is an important factor in determining their place of work. Specifically, of the nine participants, three individuals changed from “somewhat agree” to “agree,” and one individual changed from “agree” to “completely agree.”

- “I don’t really have much personal time; my work is all consuming.” Four participants increased their disagreement with this statement. Specifically, of nine participants two individuals changed from “disagree” to “completely disagree,” one individual changed from “agree” to “disagree,” and another changed from “somewhat agree” to “disagree.”
- “I frequently stop to say a prayer while working.” Four participants increased their agreement with this statement. Specifically, two individuals changed from “somewhat agree” to “completely agree,” one individual changed from “somewhat agree” to “agree,” and one individual changed from “completely disagree” to “disagree.”
- “Work is necessary to pay the bills; that’s about it.” Three participants came to “completely disagree” with this statement. Specifically, one individual changed from “agree” to “completely disagree,” and two individuals changed from “somewhat agree” to “completely disagree.” In addition, one individual changed from “completely agree” to “somewhat agree.”
- “My self-esteem has greatly diminished due to treatment in the workplace.” Three participants evaluated negative treatment in the workplace as less important for feelings of self-worth than prior to the formation sessions. Specifically, of the nine participants one person changed from “completely agree” to “agree,” and two individuals changed from “completely agree” to “somewhat agree.”
- “Spirituality of Work? I don’t see the connection.” Three additional participants came to realize that there is a spiritual component to their work. Specifically, one

individual changed from “agree” to “completely disagree,” another individual from “somewhat agree” to “disagree,” and one individual from “somewhat agree” to “completely disagree.”

The ICSST team results indicate the highest percentage of positive change to the following statements:

- “My work life is completely separate from the rest of my life.” Three additional participants came to more emphatically realize that their work lives are and should be compatible with the way they lead all the rest of life. Specifically, of the eight participants, two individuals changed from “somewhat agree” to “completely disagree,” and one individual changed from “somewhat agree” to “disagree.”
- “Sometimes one has to sacrifice time with the family in order to get ahead at work.” Three participants changed their attitude about sacrificing time with family in order to get ahead at work as an appropriate tradeoff. Specifically, of the eight participants, three individuals changed from “somewhat agree” to “completely disagree.”
- “Recognition for my contributions in the workplace is very important to me.” Three participants increased their agreement with two individuals changing from “somewhat agree” to “agree,” and one individual changing from “completely disagree” to “disagree.” However, two individuals increased their disagreement with the statement, one changing from “completely agree” to “somewhat agree” and one from “agree” to “somewhat agree.”

- “Household and volunteer work is just as important as paid work.” Two participants changed their attitude regarding the value of unpaid work. Specifically, of the eight participants, one individual changed from “somewhat agree” to “agree,” and one individual changed from “somewhat agree” to “completely agree.”
- “I believe that God has guided me in the work that I do.” Two additional participants came to more strongly believe that God is guiding them in every aspect of life, including work. Specifically, of the eight participants, one individual changed from “completely disagree” to “completely agree,” and one individual changed from “agree” to completely agree.”

In terms of participant response to the reasons/motives for working, of the eight ICSST participants, three changed/added three reasons to the post-evaluation listing that were not given on the pre-evaluation; these include: “having a purpose in life,” “...to use my given talents contributing in a positive way to this world,” and “to be of service to society.” Four ICSST participants added “to learn” or “to grow” as a new reason for working, and three participants made reference to finding their “purpose.”

Of the nine St. Matthias participants three changed/added three or more reasons/motives for working to the post-evaluation listing that were not given on the pre-evaluation; these include “have the opportunity to share faith on a regular basis,” “to use my gifts,” “doing something I love,” and “keep learning.” In fact, four individuals added a comment to the post-evaluation listing indicating a desire to continue learning. Additionally, one individual

changed “money” from second most important motive for working on the pre-evaluation to third in importance on the post-evaluation.

Findings

With regard to the listing of reasons/motives for working (see Appendix 16) we find that four individuals respectively in both the ICSST and St. Matthias teams listed “to learn” or “to grow” on their post-evaluation questionnaires, but had not listed these terms in the pre-evaluation. This may possibly indicate a growing understanding of work as a vehicle for self-actualization. It is through work that we develop our gifts and talents and become more of who we are meant to be. This response may also be an indication of an appreciation and excitement at the learning that took place during the sessions, learning from both the content of the materials presented, as well as from each other.

Participant response to the statements about work indicates a divergence between the ICSST and St. Matthias groups; their attitudes about work, as indicated in both pre-evaluation and post-evaluation questionnaires are simply not the same. This is not surprising; the ICSST team members have had theological training, and in many cases, a great deal of theological training, so that they would have been exposed to some of the concepts covered in the sessions at a previous time. Certainly, the greatest number and increase in attitudes and changes in attitudes was among the St. Matthias team, even though several have had some religious/theological training.

One statement which both groups did come together in terms of the greatest number of participant attitude change was “Recognition for my contributions in the workplace is very

important to me.” This statement represented one of the highest “gains” (in disagreement) for the St. Matthias group in the post-evaluation with five of the nine St. Matthias team members changing their attitude about the importance of receiving recognition for contributions in the workplace. This may indicate a growing humility in attitude toward achievement in work, as well as a realization that there is more to work, and more reasons to do good work, than just receiving accolades. Yet, with the ICSST group three team members increased their agreement with this statement, while only two decreased agreement. This may be due to the fact that there was quite a bit of discussion in this group centered around the topic of human dignity and the need to recognize and mentor one another in the workplace; indeed, several of the ICSST talks centered on these topics.

Additional Findings

Another area of individual response sought on both the pre and post-evaluation questionnaires concerned participants’ expectations of the team formation sessions and asked if these expectations had been met. These expectations generally fell into one of two categories: to integrate one’s faith into the workplace/daily life, and/or, to learn about retreat planning.

Of the nine St. Matthias participants seven said that their expectations had been met, one responded that expectations had “somewhat” been met, and another responded that expectations had been “partially” met, as indicated below:

1A.¹ Yes x100!

2A. Yes- I definitely learned from the group and have been most impressed with the team talks and their enthusiasm. It has been a most rewarding experience.

3A. Absolutely! 1. I have indeed involved myself in service (via retreat) and service ministry (I have joined the employment ministry) 2. I have learned about myself through the retreat planning discussions and extra-curriculum reading.

4A. Yes, my expectation was to work collaboratively with a team to design and lead a meaningful retreat.

5A. Partially- the barriers to completely fulfilling my expectations were _____² to the time commitment needed to assist a seriously ill family member.

7A. Yes! My expectation was to discover/learn how to discover or feel God's presence outside of convention ie in the work environment.

8A. Yes my expectations were fulfilled. I learned a "process" to run a retreat and I learned how spirituality can be found in the everyday, good & bad, work experiences- I found mine in an unlikely place!

9A. Somewhat- I expected the process to be more relational so I didn't make quite the connections I hoped to. Thought I'd learn more too.

14A. Yes my expectations were exceeded.

Of the eight ICSST participants six said that their expectations had been met, one responded that expectations had "partially" been met, and one individual did not respond, as indicated below:

1B. Yes. Reflecting on meaning of work, reviewing what has been good and bad in my life's work gave me deeper gratitude for where our Lord has led me and how He has helped me.

¹ Numbers refer to participants in a way that identifies where they participated, while protecting their anonymity.

² This word as written was not discernable.

- 2B.** Yes. Journaling has actually helped me to realize that spirituality has been a big part of my life. Becoming aware of this helps to strengthen the spiritual aspects of my life even more.
- 3B.** Yes. Our goal was to support Julie and I feel that I did by following through the retreat and giving a good talk. I did grow spiritually and I also found how much more passionate and I became about motherhood.
- 5B.** Partially I expected to review more deeply the essence of the Theology of work and how it is relevant to the human person in relating to God and to work. I found we did not do that, but I did meet my expectations regarding joining other people in the development of the retreat in honing my skills to speak in front of a group, increasing self confidence. PS- although I did not meet my intended expectations (some); the ultimate results were probably more relevant to me than my expectations anticipated.
- 6B.** Yes they were, these sessions allowed for more reflections into my particular goals and discernment on how to actualize these goals in communities of prayer and parish life, family life, confraternity
- 7B.** No expectations made on pre or posttest.
- 8B.** Yes, I wanted to hear other peoples' experiences of work especially in work disciplines other than my own. In this experience I could hear and empathize with faith playing a key role in their work.
- 9B.** Yes- participating and engaging with fellow students has been a blessing. For the first time I felt encouraged to share my experience of God at work with others.

In addition to the above, all participants were asked to rate their overall experience in the formation sessions, including the overall preparation process for the retreat (on a scale from "poor" to "excellent"). Of the eight ICSST team members, six rated their experience to be "excellent," and two "very good." Of the nine St. Matthias team members five rated their experience "excellent," one "very good," one "average" and two did not respond.

Following are responses from team members to open-ended questions on the post-evaluation questionnaire:

- When team members were asked how/if participation in the formation sessions might have helped them to form a deeper connection between their work life and their Catholic faith: all eight ICSST participants responded in the affirmative; all nine St. Matthias participants responded in the affirmative (three attested to affirmation of a connection already there).
- When asked if the team formation process and retreat are appropriate and worthwhile additions to parish ministry: all eight ICSST participants responded in the affirmative; eight of the nine St. Matthias participants did also with one person “still reflecting.”
- When participants were asked if they were able to apply some of the spiritual principles regarding a spirituality of work to their own work life: seven of the eight ICSST participants responded affirmatively—one with no reply; all nine St. Matthias participants responded affirmatively.
- When asked if participants had any other thoughts for the researcher regarding your participation in these sessions: use of a book to stimulate group discussion; and sessions sometimes seemed too “disjointed,” moving from one topic to another.
- When asked if participants would recommend participation in these or similar team formation sessions to others: all participants in both teams responded in the affirmative.

Retreat Attendee Evaluations

Individuals who attended both retreats were asked to give their response to a number of questions regarding personal educational background, parish affiliation, etc., as well as commentary on the retreat itself. The evaluation format utilized is the standard evaluation

format utilized by ICSST for all events; attendees are given the option of responding anonymously (Appendix 17).

The ICSST retreat evaluation from nine individuals indicates a positive response to the event with the majority (8) rating the overall impact of the event at 5 (scale of 1-5, 5 being high). Their comments also attest to an increased recognition of a connection between their work and faith lives, and an interest in learning more about the topic.

The response from the twenty-five individuals who attended the St. Matthias retreat was similar: all attendees rated the overall event a 5; responses also indicated an increased awareness of the work-faith connection, and 16 of the attendees indicated further interest in the topic.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As a way to recap the above findings, the following instruments were utilized in evaluating this project:

- Analysis of pre and post-evaluation responses from each group
- Comparison of individual participant expectations before the after the formations sessions
- Participant rating of various facets of the formation sessions, their overall rating of their personal experience, and recommendations for future utilization of the team formation/retreat process
- Retreat Attendee Evaluations

As previously indicated, the positive percentage change of both teams to the statements made in the post-evaluation questionnaire indicates a greater “gain” in change of attitude regarding an understanding of a work-faith connection on the part of the St. Matthias team. This is good news since this was the expectation---that the group with less formal theology

training would have the most gain. This evidence also speaks well for the design of the process in that the original purpose was to design a team formation process for a parish-based group, rather than a group of theology students and alumni.

In addition, the overwhelmingly positive response from those attending both retreats indicates that this process can be a vehicle for a growth in spirituality, and specifically for an understanding of the connection between our work and faith lives, not just for the team members, but also for those attending the retreat itself.

Given the findings above, in particular the overall excellent rating given to the team formation process by participating team members, the overwhelmingly positive response from those retreat attendees, and the statistical evidence for effecting a genuine change in attitude toward work and faith, it would seem appropriate to highly recommend the implementation of this process. Specifically, this team formation/retreat process provides a vehicle for pastors/pastoral associates who desire to respond to the US Bishops mandate calling for “a spirituality that ...supports lay initiative and witness not just in our churches but also in business, in the labor movement, in the professions, in education, and in public life.”

In terms of improvements to the process as presented here, the overriding conclusion is for a greater number of team formation sessions; the researcher’s specific recommendation is for ten sessions, two hours per session, instead of the six sessions given here. This correction was one that was presupposed at the start of this project; the researcher was simply uncomfortable with requesting additional time from the volunteers who so generously gave so much already. Additional sessions could be structured around many of the topics

discussed in this paper; for instance, an additional session for workplace difficulties and/or work-life balance would be most appropriate. Team participants could also suggest topics for additional sessions, according to their own difficulties or questions about work. Most certainly, more time should be devoted to prayer, meditation, journaling and discussion to be experienced at a slower pace than indicated on the session plans, so that it may be that the introduction of new topics may not be necessary or even desired. The bibliography for this paper contains many resources for additional prayers, meditations, and topics on work and faith for utilization in additional sessions.

It is the researcher's hope that this project and its outcomes will serve as an incentive for parishes to implement this or a similar program aimed at providing an avenue for individuals to make the connection between their faith and work lives.

At each of the retreats the researcher presented a holy card to each of the team members as one small remembrance of the occasion; its sentiment is one that is appropriate for the myriad of workplaces we find ourselves.

Workplace Prayer

Bless to me, O God,
everything my eye shall see.

Bless to me, O God,
everything my hand shall do.

Bless to me, O God,
the place and equipment.

Bless to me, O God,
the people we shall serve
through our work.

Be in the interruptions
and the setbacks.

Be in the eye of every person
who is difficult.

Be in the eye of the person
who is a delight.

~Celtic Blessing³

³ William David Thompson, *On-the-Job Prayers: 101 Reflections and Prayers for Christians in Every Occupation* (Skokie, IL: ACTA Publications, 2006), 73.

APPENDIX 1
LETTER OF APPROVAL
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD



OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL
REVIEW BOARD

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

May 26, 2010

Julie V. Burkey
900 Laurel Avenue
River Edge, NJ 07661

Dear Ms. Burkey,

The Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board has reviewed the information you have submitted addressing the concerns for your proposal entitled "Theology of Work: A Working Life Retreat". Your research protocol is hereby approved as revised through expedited review. The IRB reserves the right to recall the proposal at any time for full review.

Enclosed for your records are the signed Request for Approval form, and the stamped original Consent Form. Make copies only of this stamped form.

The Institutional Review Board approval of your research is valid for a one-year period from the date of this letter. During this time, any changes to the research protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation.

According to federal regulations, continuing review of already approved research is mandated to take place at least 12 months after this initial approval. You will receive communication from the IRB Office for this several months before the anniversary date of your initial approval.

Thank you for your cooperation.

In harmony with federal regulations, none of the investigators or research staff involved in the study took part in the final decision.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Ruzicka, Ph.D.
Professor
Director, Institutional Review Board

cc: Dr. Diane M. Traflet


**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION OR
RELATED ACTIVITIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS**

All material must be typed.

PROJECT TITLE: Theology of Work: A Working Life Retreat

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:

In making this application, I(we) certify that I(we) have read and understand the University's policies and procedures governing research, development, and related activities involving human subjects. I (we) shall comply with the letter and spirit of those policies. I(we) further acknowledge my(our) obligation to (1) obtain written approval of significant deviations from the originally-approved protocol BEFORE making those deviations, and (2) report immediately all adverse effects of the study on the subjects to the Director of the Institutional Review Board, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ 07079.

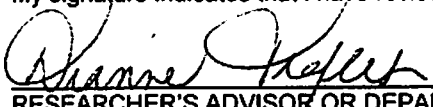


RESEARCHER(S) OR PROJECT DIRECTOR(S)
Julie V. Burkey, Research & Project Director

3/24/2010

DATE

My signature indicates that I have reviewed the attached materials and consider them to meet IRB standards.



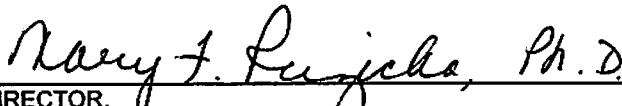
RESEARCHER'S ADVISOR OR DEPARTMENTAL SUPERVISOR
Dianne M. Traflet, JD, STD
Associate Dean & Professor of Pastoral Theology
Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology
Seton Hall University

4/13/10

DATE

The request for approval submitted by the above researcher(s) was considered by the IRB for Research Involving Human Subjects Research at the in April 2010 meeting.

The application was approved ☒ not approved ☐ by the Committee. Special conditions were _____ were not ☒ set by the IRB. (Any special conditions are described on the reverse side.)



DIRECTOR,
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL
REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

5/25/10

DATE

APPENDIX 2

LETTER OF SOLICITATION/FLYER TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS



INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

June 2010

Dear Colleagues:

This letter is addressed to all current lay students, as well as alumni, of this most beloved institution. Some of you I know quite well, while others I have yet to meet. As a means or introduction to all: I am currently employed by SHU/ICSST as Coordinator for The Center for Workplace Spirituality at the Institute for Christian Spirituality, and Adjunct Professor for Pastoral Ministry with ICCST. Previous to my association with SHU/ICSST I spent three years as a Pastoral Associate for a parish in the Archdiocese of Newark, so that I am very aware of programs that are well-suited for ministry at the parish level.

Those of you who do know me also know that I am completing my studies at Catholic University toward a Doctor of Ministry degree, so it will be no surprise to learn that my dissertation and project will be on a Theology of Work. Our project is meant to make some contribution to ministry in the Roman Catholic Church. Toward that end I have proposed to incorporate all aspects of a theology of work into a team formation process that will result in a one-day retreat to take place here at ICSST on **September 18, 2010**. I ask that you consider joining me in this venture; in fact, it will not be able to be accomplished without your assistance. Please take a moment to reflect on the words of Pope John Paul II:

The Church considers it her duty to speak out on work...It is her particular duty to form a spirituality of work that will help all people to come closer, through work, to God...This Christian spirituality of work should be a heritage shared by all.

- Pope John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*

Our Catholic Theology of Work is one of the many treasures of our Catholic faith. Unfortunately, it is largely a "hidden gem" with which many are not intimately acquainted. This project hopes to make this theology more accessible by suggesting a ministerial format for use at the parish level, that is, a retreat centered on the topic of work. My project is the team formation process that is preparation for that retreat. This process will include: prayer and meditation, scripture readings, an examination of select church documents, issues of work/life balance, unemployment and ethics, and, especially, discussion and application of all to real-life experiences. Participants will also be involved in the practical aspects of retreat planning, each assuming differing roles, including presenting a talk on their personal experience of work.

108

Tel: 973.761.9575 • Fax: 973.761.9577 • theology@shu.edu
400 South Orange Avenue • South Orange, New Jersey 07079 • <http://theology.shu.edu>

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SEMINARY

This process will take place in six sessions of approximately two hours each, to be held in August and September on the Seton Hall campus at a mutually agreed upon time and place; consequently, this project will require approximately 18 hours of your time (12 hours for the six sessions, 6 hours for the day of retreat).

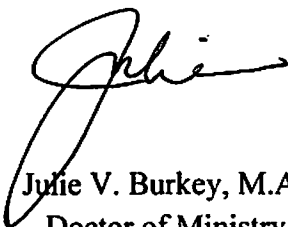
All that is required of potential team members is an earnest desire to enrich one's personal faith, and a willingness to give of one's time in order to do so, along with the trust and openness to share personal experiences of work with others in a confidential setting. In other words, please allow yourself to be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in considering this opportunity.

Please know that your participation in this project is entirely voluntary; your decision to participate or not participate will not affect your relationships or status with ICSST. There is absolutely no pressure to take part in this study.

Also, while this project is pastoral in nature, it is a research project; therefore, Federal and University guidelines require that all participants will be provided with anonymity and confidentiality. Participants will not be named in the final oral and written components. There will be no use of video, tape recording, cell phone or laptop equipment. When written information and feedback is requested (pre and post evaluation forms) you will be assigned your own code, so as not to identify you with your comments. All information will be locked confidentially on flash discs in a separate location with password protection. For practical purposes when written information is requested, you will be assigned your own code.

This collaboration between the Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology and The Catholic University has been granted all the necessary approvals to conduct this project. Please call me personally with any questions you may have. The attached flyer includes registration information.

Thank you for your consideration.

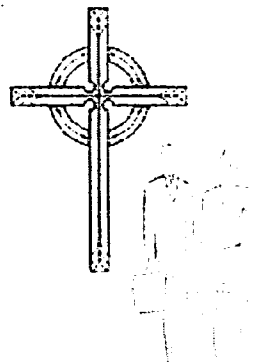


Julie V. Burkey, M.A.P.M

Doctor of Ministry Candidate, The Catholic University of America

I come to announce the gospel of work to you...

~Pope John Paul II



A Working Life Retreat

What? *Work* and *Retreat* in the same phrase?! An oxymoron?...or an opportunity to explore how God is active in your daily life?

Join us...discover renewed meaning in your work...

And then, give the gift to others...

Be part of the team that will present The Working Life Retreat at St. Matthias on September 25, 2010. We will meet for six sessions, approximately two hours each, during the months of August and September. This team formation process will include: prayer and meditation, scripture readings, an examination of select church documents, issues of work/life balance, unemployment and ethics, and, especially, discussion and application of all to real-life experiences. Participants will also be involved in the practical aspects of retreat planning, each assuming differing roles, including presenting a talk on their personal experience of work.

While there is no financial remuneration for participation in this project, there are many benefits:

- Make the connection between your faith and work life.
- Learn what the Christian faith, and in particular the teachings of John Paul II, have to say about work.
- Contribute to the development of a Theology of Work in the Roman Catholic Church.
- Contribute to the development of a parish Work Ministry.
- Take part in and learn a retreat process that can be repeated in your parish and elsewhere.
- Reflect on the personal joys and difficulties associated with your own work life.
- Further develop leadership skills needed for service in our Church today.

The experience of this project will create deeper bonds of faith with other participants.

Requirements: an earnest desire to enrich one's personal faith, and a willingness to give of one's time in order to do so, along with the trust and openness to share personal experiences of work with others in a confidential setting.

While this project is pastoral in nature, it is a research project; therefore, Federal and University guidelines require that all participants will be provided with anonymity and confidentiality. Participants will not be named in the final oral and written components. There will be no use of video, tape recording, ipod, cell phone or laptop equipment. When written information and feedback is requested you will be assigned your own code, so as not to identify you with your comments.

For further information and registration please contact (in confidence):

Julie Burkey, jyburkey@verizon.net or 201-262-7990, and/or you may call...

Dr. Dianne Traflet, Associate Dean, Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology

Dianne.Traflet@shu.edu, or 973-761-9633

APPENDIX 3
LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS BEFORE SESSION I

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Preparation for Session I

God the Father Labors and Rests The Creation Story: Finding Meaning in Work

- Every effort will be made to begin promptly at 6:30pm and end at or before 8:30pm.
- I realize that all of you are already making quite a sacrifice to attend these sessions and put on the retreat, but I will ask for one more sacrifice. Because our time together is very short (for planning a retreat!) I ask if you can plan your meals for the days we meet so that you will not have to eat during the session. Perhaps a late lunch, or whatever works for you. What I am saying is that your undivided attention during the two hours we are together is critical. Please do bring water, coffee, or whatever you wish to drink during the sessions.
- Please let me know beforehand, if possible, if you will miss a session.
- I attach the “informed consent form” once again FYI; please read it carefully. I will have a copy on ICSST stationery for you to sign at the start of our session. Seton Hall student and alumni participants are required to sign this for the Institutional Review Board. It does give you an idea of the seriousness with which the university considers the conduct of such a project. It is, in fact, a research project conducted with human subjects, so their (and that’s you!) protection is of paramount concern.
- Last, but not least, I ask that each of you pray for me and for all the members of the team, those you know and those you have yet to know. We ask the Lord to open our minds and hearts to all that we will hear. Personally, I pray for the inspiration to guide our team according to God’s will.

At the first session:

- I will have folders with some information and notebooks for the purpose of journaling for each of you. Be assured that the journal is your personal property; you will not be required to share anything you write unless you wish to do so. It is meant as a tool for you to express your thoughts and feelings after meditation and discussion on various topics. It is also a tool to help you develop your “story” about work. As we discussed, the retreat will be a series of talks given by those of you who wish to share your story.
- In your folder is a “pre-evaluation questionnaire.” I will ask you to fill this out at the beginning of our session. On the questionnaire will be a numerical code; please record your code number. It will be used again at the end of the project for you to give your confidential evaluation/comments about our sessions. I will not know which individual has which code.
- At the beginning of this session I will go over some details and answer any general questions you might have at that time.

APPENDIX 4
ICSST & ST. MATTHIAS SESSION DATES AND THEMES

A Working Life Retreat

ICSST Team Formation Sessions (Thursdays: 6:30pm – 8:30pm)

- I. July 22: God the Father Labors and Rests**
The Creation Story: Finding Meaning in Work

- II. July 29: Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action**
Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work

- III. August 19: The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model**
Offering our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships

- IV. August 26: A Pentecost Model of Work: Inspired to Take Action**
Working with the Spirit: Personal and Group Discernment

- V. Sept. 9: A Resurrection Model of Work: Finding Joy in Work**
Making Sense of our Stories

- VI. Sept. 16: A Trinitarian Model of Work: Collaborative Work**
Putting It All Together

- September 18: A Working Life Retreat Day***
9:30am -3:30pm

- September 25: A Working Life Retreat Day ~ St. Matthias Parish, 168 JFK Blvd.,**
Somerset, NJ 08873

A Working Life Retreat

St. Matthias Team Formation Sessions (Tuesdays: 7:00pm – 9:00pm)

- I. July 20: God the Father Labors and Rests**
The Creation Story: Finding Meaning in Work

- II. July 27: Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action**
Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work

- III. August 24: The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model**
Offering our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships

- IV. August 31: A Pentecost Model of Work: Inspired to Take Action**
Working with the Spirit: Personal and Group Discernment

- V. Sept. 14ⁱ: A Resurrection Model of Work: Finding Joy in Work**
Making Sense of our Stories

- VI. Sept. 21: A Trinitarian Model of Work: Collaborative Work**
Putting It All Together

- September 25: A Working Life Retreat Day***
9:30am – 3:30pm

- September 18: A Working Life Retreat Day ~ Immaculate Conception**
Seminary School of Theology, Seton Hall University

APPENDIX 5
PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

ICSST Participants- Results of Preliminary Survey Demographics

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Undergraduate Degree</u>	<u>Graduate Degree</u>	<u>Working or Retired</u>	<u>Profession</u>	<u>Volunteer Work</u>	<u>Expectation</u>
1B.	Theology, History, and Education	Psychology, Systematic Theology, and Scripture	Employed Part Time	Consecrated Virgin	Annulment Advocate, Faith Formation, Ministry to the blind and homebound (Eucharist)	Gain deeper insight; apply faith in daily life
2B.	French	N/A	Retired	Teacher and Office Manager	Beginning Experience, Annulment Advocate, RCIA, Facilitator for a Small Christian Community	Integrate spirituality into daily life
3B.	Nursing	Pastoral Ministry	Employed	Baptism Ministry	Eucharistic Minister, Lector, RCIA, Catechist	Deepen spirituality
5B.	Political Science	Marketing & Theology	Employed	Compensation Manager- Prudential Financial-Long Term Care Division	Evangelization at Parish	Become challenged spiritually; develop/ hone skills
6B.	Nursing	Law & Pastoral Ministry	Retired	Nursing, Health Law Advocacy, and Ministry	Director of Catechesis, youth ministry, and health advocate	Assist others through pastoral/spiritual direction
7B.	Mechanical Engineering	N/A	Employed	Mechanical Engineer	Youth ministry and Eucharistic Minister	No Expectations
8B.	Electronic Engineering	Computer Science & Systematic Theology	Employed	Software Engineer	Active in ministry at local parish	Interaction with others; learn work-faith connection
9B.	Marketing	N/A	Employed	Executive at a non-profit organization	N/A	Interaction with other participants; practice faith outside of Sundays

Saint Matthias Parish Participants- Results of Preliminary Survey Demographics

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Undergraduate Degree</u>	<u>Graduate Degree</u>	<u>Working or Retired</u>	<u>Profession</u>	<u>Volunteer Work</u>	<u>Expectation</u>
1A.	Computer Science	None	Employed	Information Technology (IT)	N/A	Further integrate faith at work; help others; design retreats
2A.	French	Pastoral Ministry	Employed	Pastoral Ministry	Active in Church Ministry	Learn from interaction with other participants
3A.	Chemistry	Computer Science, Education, & Human Resource Management	Employed	Information Technology	N/A	Become involved in a service ministry; learn about the self through interaction with others
4A.	Communication	Education	Employed Part Time	Training and Organization Development Consulting	Employment Ministry	Help create and facilitate retreats
5A.	Spanish	Organization Management	Employed	Management Consultant, Facilitator, Trainer	Leadership & various positions within Church and non-profit	Implement spirituality into practice
7A.	Business	N/A	Employed	Computer Programmer	N/A	Discover God and feel His presence in the workplace
8A.	English Literature	Religious Education (M.A.R.E.)	Not Employed	Teacher/Leader of Adult Formation	Team Leader on RCIA & Head minister in Secular Franciscan Fraternity	Help expand spirituality through retreats
9A.	Theology	Divinity	Employed	Ministry-Present Program Manager	Some volunteer ministry at the Church	Reflection & Prayer; design retreats; interaction with other participants
10A.	Finance & Accounting	N/A	Retired & Employed as Substitute Teacher	Investment & Bank Operations Manager	N/A	Share knowledge & experience with others
13A.	Chemistry	N/A	Employed	Research Chemist	N/A	Integrate faith into work & and find meaning in work
14A.	Accounting	Business	Retired & Employed Part Time	Business Manager & Teaching	Employment Ministry	Assist others; learn Work-faith connection; spiritual growth

APPENDIX 6
RETREAT PUBLICITY

The Institute for Christian Spirituality at Seton Hall University invites you to join us for

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

- Enjoy a day of reflection on the meaning of work in our lives
- Listen as students and alumni share their real-life stories of both the joys and difficulties of work
- Discover the work-faith connection in your own life

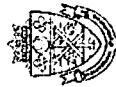
Saturday, September 18, 2010
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

(A light breakfast and lunch will be served.)

Lewis Hall, Seton Hall University

Facilitated by Julie V. Burkey, M.A.P.M., Coordinator,
Center for Workplace Spirituality

R.S.V.P. by 9/13 to Kristine Hudak at (973) 761-9633.
Cost: \$20



INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY
Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

*Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.
The Lord has made everything for its purpose.*
- Proverbs 16: 3-4a



The Catholic Community of St. Matthias and the Institute for Christian Spirituality
at Seton Hall University invite you to join us for

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

- Enjoy a day of reflection on the meaning of work in our lives
- Listen as St. Matthias parishioners share their real-life stories of both the joys and difficulties of work
- Discover the work-faith connection in your own life

Saturday, September 25, 2010

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

(A light breakfast and lunch will be served.)

St. Matthias Parish Meeting Room
170 JFK Blvd., Somerset, NJ

ALL ARE WELCOME!

R.S.V.P. by 9/21 to smcng@smmpo.us

To learn more, please call Deacon John Radvanski
at the Parish office at (732) 828-1400, ext. 130



INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY
Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

*Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.
The Lord has made everything for its purpose.
- Proverbs 16: 3-4a*



APPENDIX 7

SESSION I

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session I

God the Father Labors and Rests

The Creation Story: Finding Meaning in Work

Opening prayer

Scripture passage:

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

~Genesis 1:27:28

Meditation:

Someone has said that when God made the earth he could have finished it, but he didn't. He left it as a raw material to set us thinking and experimenting, risking and adventuring. Thus we find our supreme interest in living. Notice that often children will ignore clever mechanical toys and build with spools, string, sticks and blocks, using the world of their own imagination. It's also true with adults. God gave us a world unfinished, that we might share in the joy and satisfaction of creation. He left electricity to be discovered in the clouds, bridges to be built, laboratories to be opened, diamonds to be cut, music, poetry, dramas to be written, sung and acted, children and adults to be taught. He gave us the challenge of uncountable raw materials, not the satisfaction of a perfectly finished world. With God's wisdom we can find all kinds of ways to improve our world, and, yes, even our workplace.

~Dawn Elliott Davis, Ph.D., Educator

Workplace Prayer:

Creator of heaven and earth, the idea that my work is an extension of your work is a wonderful thought. I confess that sometimes my work feels like drudgery—parts of it anyway—however interesting it may be at times and however much money it produces. Help me when I get bogged down to remember that you made the world, you made me in your image, and you brought me to the work I do. I ask you to give me the energy and insight to do it well. I pray that my work today will be to your glory. Amen.

~William David Thompson

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Participant Notes for Session I

God the Father Labors and Rests The Creation Story: Finding Meaning in Work

Work – an activity or series of activities, requiring effort, either mental or physical, paid or unpaid, and directed toward an end/purpose.

From John Paul II:

‘Work is the fundamental dimension of our life on earth.’

Work is good for us. Through work we not only transform nature, adapting it to our needs, but we also achieve fulfillment as human beings and indeed in a sense become more human.’

~ *Laborem Exercens (On Human Work)*

Definitions of Spirituality

According to Introduction to *Ignatius of Loyola: Spiritual Exercises and Selected Works*, edited by George Ganns, SJ (NY: Paulist Press, 1991): 61

“Spirituality is a lived experience, the effort to apply relevant elements in the deposit of Christian faith to the guidance of men and women toward their spiritual growth, the progressive development of their person which flowers into a proportionately increased insight and joy in the beatific vision.”

From *Finding God in Troubled Times*, 4 points by Richard J. Hauser, SJ:

1. Christian spirituality is love centered focusing on love of God and love of neighbor, more accurately, love of neighbor for the love of God. Love is the primary effect of God’s presence within us, for God is love.
2. Christian spirituality is concerned with the quality of heart underlying our actions. Often we feel that the performance of an action, be it prayer to God or service to others, automatically fulfills the commandments to love God and others. Jesus teaches differently.
3. Christian spirituality is a response to the spirit. The Gospel teaches that all love has its origin in God. When we live in love, we live in God—it’s that simple. The power to love derives ultimately from God’s Spirit.
4. Christian spirituality is concerned primarily with daily action.

From William Reiser, SJ, *Looking for a God to Pray To: Christian Spirituality in Transition*:

“Spirituality refers to the unfolding, day by day, of that fundamental decision to become or to remain a Christian which we make at Baptism, repeat at Confirmation, and renew each time we receive the Eucharist.”

From John Paul II on Genesis/Creation/Work

We hear in the very first pages of Genesis that we were created “in the image of God...male and female.” Entrusting the whole universe to us, God told us to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.” So we know, not only by reason alone but through revelation, that through their work people share in the Creator’s work. We continue it, and in a sense, perfect it by our own work, our toil, by daily effort to wrest a livelihood from the earth, or from the sea, or by applying energy to the many different processes of production. How noble is this mission that only we—by our work—can realize! - Talk in Pusan, South Korea, May 1984

Work corresponds to God’s design and will. The first pages of Genesis present creation to us as the work of God. God’s labor. So to be like God, God calls on many to work. Hence, work is not something off on the side. Even less is it a curse from heaven. On the contrary, work is a primordial blessing from the Creator, an activity permitting people to realize themselves and to offer service to society. In addition, a worker will have a higher reward, for your toil is not in vain when it is done in the Lord...

-Talk in Barcelona, Spain, November 1982

This description of creation, which we find in the very first chapter of the Book of Genesis, is also in a sense the first “gospel of work.” For it shows what the dignity of work consists of: It teaches that man ought to imitate God, his creator, in working, because man alone has the unique characteristic of likeness to God. Man ought to imitate God both in working and also in resting, since God himself wished to present his own creative activity under the form of work and rest.

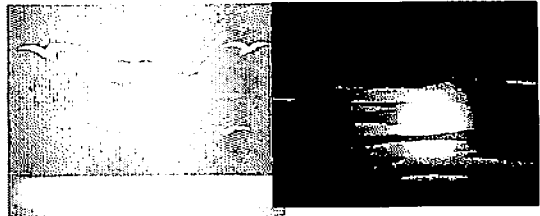
-*Laborem Exercens* (36), 1981

God of Day and God of Darkness

*God of day and God of darkness,
Now we stand before the night;
As the shadows stretch and deepen,
Come and make our darkness bright.
All creation still is groaning,
For the dawning of your might,
When the Sun of peace and justice
Fills the earth with radiant light.*

*Still the nations curse the darkness,
Still the rich oppress the poor;
Still the earth is bruised and broken
By the ones who still want more.
Come and wake us from our sleeping,
So our hearts cannot ignore
All your people lost and broken,
All your children at our door.*

*Show us Christ in one another,
Make us servants strong and true;
Give us all your love of justice
So we do what you would do.
Let us call all people holy,
Let us pledge our lives anew,
Make us one with all the lowly,
Let us all be one in you.*



*You shall be the path that guides us,
You the light that in us burns;
Shining deep within all people,
Yours the love that we must learn,
For our hearts shall wander restless
'Till they safe to you return;
Finding you in one another,
We shall all your face discern.*

*Gentle Father, Loving Mother,
Jesus, brother, savior, friend,
Spirit of all grace and power,
May we praise you without end.
Grant us all a peaceful resting,
Let each mind and body mend,
So we rise refreshed tomorrow,
Hearts renewed to Kingdom tend.*

Marty Hagen, Anthology II

A Blessing Upon Work

**Spirit of the Living God,
bless the work of
our hands, our minds, our hearts,**

**May the work offered be a reflection
of all that is good within us.**

**In planning, creating, doing
grant us the courage to patiently listen
for the stirring of your Presence.**

**Grace us with joyful moments
in the midst of daily routine.
Enliven our spirits with humor.**

**Fill us with reverence for one another
and gratitude for our diversity.
Nourish our spirit with the awareness
that work is holy.**

**May unity, beauty, and truth
be the fruit of our labor.**

Amen.

APPENDIX 8
SESSION II

Session II Pre-Session Meditation

Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work

Gen. 1:; “Then God said, Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth.....”

What meaning does this hold for the way we view our work?

God is asking that man and woman be like God in a particular way. They are to have dominion over the all the earth and all the creatures God made. A variation of this is found in Gen. 2:15, “to cultivate the garden and care for it.” In other words, we are to continue to evolve this world, continually making it more in line with God’s desires.

As a people of faith we know we are to make ourselves according to the image God gives us.

But, that image isn’t up for grabs; as a Catholic people we believe that it is located in both scripture and tradition...both of which we will explore during our sessions.

John Haughey, SJ, observes that one of the major causes of workplace alienation, i.e., sloppy work, and underinvestment in work on the part of otherwise religious people is that they have not seen or been taught the connection between daily work and God’s intention in making us. Do you agree?

Lord, the more we think of work the more we find you;
always creative,
patiently bringing humanity out of inhumanity,
helping us to enjoy your loving, healing presence
in all we do.
Help us to come to know you better in the realities of our work
so that we may be partners with you,
Source of life and of all fulfillment,
Lover of us all. Amen

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session II

Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action

Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work

Opening prayer

Scripture Passage:

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." Nathaniel said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

~John 1:43-46

Meditation:

Enter the house of Nazareth, approach the workbench where, beside Joseph and under the maternal glance of his mother, the Son of God worked. God-made-man knew the experience of human work. We want to enter there, into this house of Nazareth. We want to bring all the modern problems of work: all the social, economic, political, cultural, and moral problems, all the anxieties connected with the world of work, especially the worry caused by unemployment...In this house in Nazareth we return close to Jesus the worker...There cannot be human work that is alienated [here]. I say this in the name of Jesus...Human work is redeemed, is restored in Jesus Christ.

- Pope John Paul II, Angelus Prayer,
Vatican, March 1984

Workplace Prayer:

I need you help, O God, to discern your presence in my place of work. It is a long way in time and place from the carpenter shop of Nazareth, but I know that the unseen Jesus is there, just as surely as I am here. Help me to be aware of His presence. Remind me that I can bring my problems—and all the problems of the world of work—freely to Him. Sometimes I am consumed by the tasks at hand, sometimes I am uninterested and bored, and sometimes I am overwhelmed by the pressures on me. Help me to use the intelligence and experience you have given me to work efficiently and make sound decisions. Keep me close to Jesus the worker, and let me work with the assurance that my work will be redeemed by Jesus Christ. Amen.

~William David Thompson

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Participant Notes for Session II

Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action

Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work

From *Doing the Right Thing at Work* by James L. Nolan

What are the concerns of someone trying to do the right thing at work?

- Standing up for what you believe when times are tough
- Being scared and confused on occasion
- Confronting seemingly futile situations
- Needing persistence after falling short
- Regaining one's moral compass

We can recover our moral compass the same way Peter did by remembering, weeping and repenting, and then going back to work. We can do the right thing at work because we are sustained by the Lord and our communities of love (family, friends, co-workers, faith community).

What we do when confronted with a challenging difficulty or uncertainty at work serves to determine who we are. The working out of who we are is not done in a vacuum. We are social creatures. Our work life is seldom a solitary pursuit. We are all linked with God's other creatures as we work in the world.

The question of ethics is a very practical form of working out who we are in the company of our fellow creatures. This important process of working out our ethics and morals merits special concern because it regards very fundamental questions about:

- The type of persons we should become
- The kinds of communities we should create
- What we should do and avoid doing
- The rights and responsibilities of human beings
- The range of goods—social, economic, cultural, personal, spiritual—that are necessary for human well being, and
- The gradations of good and evil (why some goods are more important and some evils more dangerous than others)

The Judeo-Christian tradition has long understood our work in the world as a calling or vocation. This tradition highlights the fact that businesspersons, managers, entrepreneurs or professional are stewards, entrusted with God's creation.

The claim that our faith is relevant to business came about from a realization of who we are, what we are called to be and how we go about growing in integration and spiritual maturity. It is in the particularity of our work lives that many of us are called to mission, to work with God, to “illuminate and order things” so that who and what we encounter will grow according to Christ. These messages tell us that our job is to contribute to the sanctification of the world and to manifest Christ to others by the witness of our lives everywhere and particularly at work.

When times are tough...voice of one businessman:

I think it is true that in our lives there is a plan somehow working itself out, a wind behind our backs carrying us through. If often used to compartmentalize my faith, partly because it did not seem to help much when I prayed about my business or my relationships anyway! But doing it on my own didn't work either. I realize now I cannot just put my spiritual life on one side and the rest of my life on the other side. Somehow, I have to come back before the altar with everything and realize there is a mystery working itself out in my life.

How can we keep on course to know and do the right thing in the middle of all today's mess? Our faith tells us that this can be done—by finding God who is there at work with us. We can find God when we understand what we are really about at our work.

This is where we come to realize who we are. This is where we spend so much of our day, where we learn by doing to know, choose and do what is best. This is the place where we can truly team up with God. God is already there, working in us and moving us to work for the greater good. We are burning with desire for completeness, for wholeness. We are driven to integrate all of who we are including who and what we are at work. We want to find God as we live our ordinary lives, and doing our ordinary work.

Long ago the prophet Micah berated the leaders of Israel for ripping off people. The leaders were charging people huge sums of have lavish sacrifices. At the same time the leaders led corrupt lives. Greed was their hallmark. Micah predicted horrible consequences. He reminded his listeners that even the most extravagant of offerings to God would not alter the judgments of condemnation the leaders had merited. Then, he offered his famous advice:

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
And what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)*

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT
Participant Notes for Session II

Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action
Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work

Principles of CST:

- **The Dignity of the human person and human rights**

- assumes the utter absolute preciousness of the human person and requires that the basic needs of the person must be satisfied for self-actualization in relations to God and neighbor; these include the need for religious freedom, food, clothing shelter, education, freedom of vocation, civil and political liberty, etc.
- means that every social institution (political, economic, cultural) must serve the human person; any institution that subordinates the person to its structures is judged to be morally deficient.
- Human rights are the minimum conditions for life in community, the pre-requisites for a dignified life in community; human rights include economic rights as well as civil and political rights.

- **Universal Destiny of All Goods**

- stipulates that all goods of the earth are for the use of everyone in order to satisfy their right to a life consonant with the dignity of the person and the needs of the family;
- principle was introduced by the Fathers of the Church;
- prohibits monopolization of the resources of the world.

- **Common Good and Solidarity**

- CG defined as those conditions that allow for ready access to the conditions necessary for both individuals and communities to flourish; seeks the flourishing of each individual in society, not the greatest good for the greatest number; CG does not take precedence over the good of the person because by its definition, the CG includes the good of the person.
- Solidarity is an inner attitude that makes individuals look beyond their own share, and helps them realize that they will receive that individuals share only by participating in the CG; this involves sharing both material and spiritual goods.

- **Subsidiarity**

- calls upon the state not to co-opt or interfere with a smaller social organization if the organization is performing well and benefiting society; a home-rule philosophy;
- comes from the Latin "suscidium" – assistance;
- calls upon the state to provide assistance to smaller organizations.

- **Option for the Poor**

- embraces the obligation to evaluate social and economic activity from the viewpoint of the poor and the powerless; arises from the radical command to love one's neighbor as one's self;
- those who are marginalized and whose rights are denied have privileged claims if society is to provide justice for all; this obligation is deeply rooted in Christian belief.

- **Participation**

- the voluntary and generous engagement of a person in social interchange; justice demands that social institutions be ordered in a way that guarantees all persons the ability to participate actively in the economic, political, and cultural life of society;
- participation is a condition of solidarity – turning toward another self.

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session II Closing Prayer

***Jesus Christ Models Work in Word & Action
Faith in Action: Doing the Right Thing @ Work***

Prayer To Saint Joseph for Workers

**Joseph, by the work of your hands and the sweat of your brow,
you supported Jesus and Mary,
and had the Son of God as your fellow worker.**

**Teach me to work as you did,
with patience and perseverance,
for God and for those whom God has given me to support.**

**Teach me to see in my fellow workers
the Christ who desires to be in them,
that I may always be charitable and forbearing towards all.**

**Grant me to look upon work with the eyes of faith,
so that I shall recognize in it my share in God's own creative activity
and in Christ's work of our redemption, and so take pride in it.**

**When it is pleasant and productive, remind me to give thanks to God for it.
And when it is burdensome, teach me to offer it to God,
in reparation for my sins and the sins of the world.**

Amen.

(This prayer was taken from the booklet "Devotions to Saint Joseph")

APPENDIX 9

SESSION III

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model

Offering our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships

Session III: Pre-session meditation

From Pope John Paul II:

The law of the cross is engraved on our work. It is with the sweat of his brow that the farmer works. It is with the sweat of his brow the ironworker works. It is with the sweat of his brow—the terrible sweat of death—that Christ agonizes on the cross... Christ had himself put on the cross, as if on the great threshold of spiritual history, to oppose any form of degradation by work... This must be remembered by the worker and the employer.

- Homily in Howa Huta, Poland, June
1979

How is the cross engraved on your work?

People ought to imitate God both in working and also in resting, since God wished to present God's own creative activity under the form of work and rest... We find this truth at the very beginning of sacred scripture in the Book of Genesis, where the creation activity itself is presented in the form of "work" done by God during "six days," resting on the seventh day.

-

Laborem Exercens, September 1981

Is your weekend usually more work than leisure?

Do you carve out time with family/friends? Do you have any time for yourself?

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session III

The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model

Offering our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships

Opening prayer

Scripture passage:

No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these—But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

*So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own.
Today's trouble is enough for today.*

~Matthew 6:24-29; 33-34

Meditation:

Life is stressful. Unless you've managed to get away from it all, retiring to some idyllic island, you're surely experiencing stress on a regular basis. And even on that island you might begin to worry about something---there's always something. In a way, you need stress. When you finally get rid of all the stress in your life, you'll be dead. Our daily challenges keep us going. Some people say they thrive on stress. Without a deadline to meet, some nearly impossible task to perform, or a major life drama unfolding—they get bored. When things are too quiet, they worry about what's not happening and why. Some people even stir things up at home or at work as part of an unconscious need for excitement. In the last generation, the world has learned a great deal about the negative effects of stress. High stress can do a number on your heart, raising your blood pressure. It can put a damper on your immune system, making you susceptible to all sorts of diseases. Can you accept it and move on, or do you make things worse by worrying or driving into some self-destructive habit?

~Thomas Whiteman and Randy Petersen, *Stress Test*

Workplace Prayer:

Compassionate God, you know how I react to stress. I may not experience it all the time, and I may not always show it, but stress is real in my workplace. I think of the words of the psalmist, "Be still and know that I am God." That's harder than it sounds, especially the "still" part. So I am asking you to give me whatever it takes to stay calm and take the day as it comes. I know that you are God, and I trust that you will never fail me. Now help me make this truth define who I am and how I deal with whatever stress may come along. I trust that your everlasting arms are underneath me, and with your help I will get through it all. Amen.

~William David Thompson

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session III

The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model

Offering our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships

The five most important things in my life are...

First...

Second

Third...

Fourth...

Fifth...

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session III

The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model

Offering our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships

The five things I spend the most time doing are...

First...

Second...

Third...

Fourth...

Fifth...

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session III Closing Prayer

The Work of Human Hands: A Liturgical Model

Offering Our Sacrifices & Overcoming Difficulties and Hardships

Leader: Let us pray to God for forgiveness and mercy, for our sins of omission:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Reader: For the times we ignored the needs of another:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Reader: For the times we discriminated against another person or a group of people because of their gender, race, age, or economic background:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Reader: For the times we were not completely honest with another person:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Reader: For the times we contributed to the depletion of earth's resources:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Reader: For the times we failed to confront an unjust situation:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: (individual intentions)

Leader: We ask for strength, Lord, to do the right thing, the loving thing.
We ask for courage to deal honestly and justly with one another.
Give us the desire to be disciples in the workplace so that we may have
compassion for all those we encounter.

All: We ask you all this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

APPENDIX 10

SESSION IV

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

A Pentecost Model of Work: Inspired to Take Action

Working with the Spirit: Personal and Group Discernment

Session IV: Pre-session meditation

From Pope John Paul II:

It is within the everyday world that you the laity must bear witness to God's kingdom; through you the church's mission is fulfilled by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Second Vatican Council taught that the specific task of the laity is precisely this: "To seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God."

You are called to live in the world, to engage in secular professions and occupations, to live in those ordinary circumstances of family life and life in society from which is woven the very web of your existence. You are called by God...to work for the sanctification of the world from within, in the manner of heaven...

- Talk in San Francisco, September 1987

There cannot be two parallel lives in [a lay person's] existence: on the one hand, the so-called spiritual life, with its values and demands; and on the other, the so-called secular life in family, at work, in social relationships, in the responsibilities of public life, and in culture...In fact, every area of the laity's lives, as different as they are, enters into the plan of God, who desires that these very areas be the places in time where the love of Christ is revealed and realized for both the glory of the Father and the service of others. Every activity, every situation, every precise responsibility—as, for example, skill and solidarity in work, love and dedication in the family and the education of children, service to society and public life, and the promotion of truth in the area of culture—are the occasions ordained by providence for a continuous exercise of faith, hope, and charity.

- *Christifideles Laici*, January 1989

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session IV

A Pentecost Model of Work: Inspired to Take Action

Working with the Spirit; Personal and Group Discernment

Opening prayer

Scripture passage:

*Where can I go from your Spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
Even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.*

~Psalm 139:7,9-10

Meditation:

Holiness is not limited to the sanctuary or to moments of private prayer; it is a call to direct our whole heart and life toward God and according to God's plan for the world. For the laity holiness is achieved in the midst of the world, in family, in community, in friendships, in work, in leisure, in citizenship.

We need a spirituality that calls forth and supports by initiative and witness not just in our churches but also in business, in the labor movement, in the professions, in education, and in public life. Our faith is not just a weekend obligation, a mystery to be celebrated around the altar on Sunday. It is a pervasive reality to be practiced everyday in homes, offices, factories, schools, and businesses across our land.

~U.S. Catholic Bishops, "Economic Justice for All"

Workplace Prayer:

Eternal God, I know that your Spirit is present everywhere. You do not limit your presence and your power to a time and a place. You make yourself known wherever there is openness to you—even in the workplace and even to me. So give me, I pray, an awareness of you throughout the day. May my whole heart, and all the work of my mind and hands and feet, combine to bring your loving, creative and redemptive Spirit into the workplace. Amen.

~William David Thompson

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session IV Closing Prayer

A Pentecost Model of Work: Inspired to Take Action

Working with the Spirit; Personal and Group Discernment

Giver and Sustainer, you know how hard it is to strike a balance between the time and energy I give to my work and what I seem to have left to give to my family and friends. I need your- help to acknowledge the limits of my physical, emotional and spiritual resources, and to use them well in both places. Help me to be aware of your presence and power in my work life beyond the job. You are the one God, and I am one person made in your image. By your spirit show me how to experience the wholeness of life lived by your Spirit, lived in your love. May my whole life be sustained by you and used by you to make the world a better place. Amen.

~William David Thompson

APPENDIX 11

SESSION V

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session V

A Resurrection Model of Work: Finding Joy in Work

Making Sense of our Stories

I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

-John 10:10b

Meditation:

Spirituality at work is not first and foremost about achieving our goals, making more money, becoming better managers, finding ways to get others to do what we want, or even about becoming happier, although any and all of these may and do happen when soul-making is taken seriously. What spirituality at work is about is abundant life; living fully into each moment, paying attention to what's happening within us and around us, understanding what our lives are about and how we're meant to make a difference within the larger communities of which we are a part. It is, finally, about our deciding to act, to make creative choices that will move us and our organizations toward a deeper wholeness.

-Whitney Wherrett Roberson, *Life and Livelihood*

Workplace prayer:

Lord Jesus, as I enter this workplace, I bring your presence with me.
I speak your peace, your grace, and your perfect order into the atmosphere of this office.
I acknowledge your lordship over all that will be spoken, thought, decided and accomplished within these walls.

Lord Jesus, I thank you for the gifts you have deposited in me.
I do not take them lightly, but commit to using them responsibly and well
Give me a fresh supply of truth and beauty on which to draw as I do my job.

Anoint my creativity, my ideas, my energy so that even my smallest task may bring you honor.

Lord, when I am confused, guide me; when I am weary, energize me.

Lord, when I am burned out, infuse me with the light of your Holy Spirit.

May the work that I do and the way that I do it bring hope, life, and courage to all that I come in contact with today.

And O Lord, even in this day's most stressful moment, may I rest in you.

In the name of Jesus my Savior I pray. Amen.

-Author unknown

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session V: Closing Prayer

A Resurrection Model of Work: Finding Joy in Work Making Sense of our Stories

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

-St, Francis of Assisi (1182-1226)

APPENDIX 12

SESSION VI

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session VI: Opening Prayer

A Trinitarian Model of Work: Collaborative Work

Putting It All Together

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

~Philippians 4:13

Prayer for Working Christians:

We believe in God, the Creator of this amazing universe, who continues to make all things new. From new galaxies to the birth of a child, from new learning and discoveries in science to the arrival of spring after a difficult winter, God is creating. We believe, O Creator God, that you are constantly weaving the fiber of goodness within the world.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, who shows the way for living life to its full potential. It is Christ who leads us to seek forgiveness and conveys through his life and death the immense love of God available to all. It is Christ who asks us to have the hearts of little children and to trust and love God wholly and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We believe, O Christ, that you are constantly calling us to be transformed to your likeness.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the presence of God daily in our lives, the Spirit of truth, justice and love, who guides us and informs us, and the comforting attendant who holds us when we are passing through dark valleys. Joy, patience, compassion—all come from the Holy Spirit. We believe, O Spirit of God, that you seek to be present in every dimension of our lives.

O triune God, may we know you fully and may our lives glorify you.

~Worship and Daily Life

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT

Session VI: Closing Prayer

A Trinitarian Model of Work: Collaborative Work

Putting It All Together

*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.*

-Richard Niebuhr (1892-1871)

The sacred Three be over me
with my working hands this day
with the people on my way
with the labor and the toil
with the land and with the soil
with the tools that I take
with the things that I make
with the thoughts of my mind
with the sharing of humankind
with the love of my heart
with each one that plays a part
the sacred Three be over me
the blessing of the Trinity.

-Celtic prayer

APPENDIX 13
ICSST & ST. MATTHIAS RETREAT:
SCHEDULE, REFLECTION QUESTIONS & PRAYERS

A Working Life Retreat

September 18, 2010

Retreat Schedule/ICSST

8:30-9:00	Team setup
9:00-9:15	Team Prayer
9:30-10:00	Gathering of guests/light breakfast
10:00-10:15	Opening prayer
10:15-10:30	Theme: <i>Spirituality/Work-Genesis/Human Dignity & Rest</i> ; Introduction of Talks 1 & 2
10:30-10:45	“Holy Boldness in the Workplace”
10:45-11:00	“A Pig Roast and Fr. Corapi”
11:00-11:05	Reflection 1 (silence)
11:05-11:20	Table discussion 1
11:20-11:30	BREAK
11:30-11:4	Theme: <i>Evangelization</i> ; Introduction of Talk 3
11:40-11:55	“Evangelization in the Marketplace; Taking Jesus to Work in NYC”
12:00-12:05	Reflection 2 (silence)
12:05-12:20	Table discussion 2
12:20-1:00	LUNCH
1:00-1:05	Theme: <i>Taking action and patiently waiting</i> ; Introduction of Talks 4 and 5
1:05-1:20	“Mentoring for a Kinder Workplace”
1:20-1:35	“Searching”
1:35-1:40	Reflection 3 (silence)
1:40-1:55	Table discussion 3

1:55-2:05	BREAK
2:05-2:10	Theme: <i>Work as an Act of Love</i> ; Introduction of Talk 6
2:10-2:25	“Just a Mom”
2:25-2:30	Reflection 4 (silence)
2:30-2:45	Table discussion 4
2:45-2:55	Recap of speakers/topics
2:55-3:10	Mother Teresa reflection
3:10-3:30	Evaluations and informal discussion with team
3:30-4:00	Team debrief

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT-ICSST

Reflection 1

Seek first the Kingdom of God and all else will follow.

Matthew 6:24:34

Talk 1 Reflections Questions

At the end of any working day, can you recall a circumstance when you did not protect the dignity of yourself or another person?

If not, why not?

People ought to imitate God both in working and also in resting, since God wished to present God's own creative activity under the form of work and rest... We find this truth at the very beginning of sacred scripture in the Book of Genesis, where the creation activity itself is presented in the form of "work" done by God during "six days," resting on the seventh day.

~Laborem Exercens,

September 1981

Talk 2 Reflection Questions

How do you recharge your batteries...when do you take time to sharpen your axe?

Does your family life suffer because work is never done?

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT-ICSST

Reflection 2

You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.

Matthew 5:14-16

Talk 3 Reflection Questions

Have you ever had the opportunity to speak to a colleague at work about your Catholic faith?

Did you take that opportunity? If not, why not? If you did, what happened? How did you feel about the experience?

Does this talk give you the inspiration to be more open about your faith in the workplace?

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT-ICSST

Reflection 3

"I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do"

~John 13:15

Talk 4 Reflection Questions

Have you worked in a place where you felt like a stranger? How did it affect you and your work?

What are some of the ways that you have helped make your workplace a kinder one?

**O LORD, you have probed me, you know me:
you know when I sit and stand; you understand my thoughts from afar.
My travels and my rest you mark; with all my ways you are familiar.
Even before a word is on my tongue, LORD, you know it all.
Behind and before you encircle me and rest your hand upon me.**

~Psalm 139: 2-5

Talk 5 Reflection Questions

What questions are raised in your mind by this talk re fulfilling God's will for your life?

When you look back on your work life—how it is that you “put to work” the gifts and talents the Lord has given you---any regrets? How do you deal with them?

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT-ICSST

Reflection 4

Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do but how much love we put in that action. Love begins by taking care of the closest ones—the ones at home.

~Mother Teresa

Talk 6 Reflection Questions

Does your family always have first priority in your daily life?

Have there been times when your family has suffered or been neglected because of concerns and long hours of work?

When have you "mothered?" (nurtured or been compassionate to others?)

A Working Life Retreat

September 25, 2010

Retreat Schedule/St. Matthias

8:30-9:00	Team setup
9:00-9:15	Team Prayer
9:30-10:00	Gathering of guests/light breakfast
10:00-10:05	Opening prayer
10:05-10:20	Welcome (business...breaks, lunch, etc.)
	Theme: <i>Spirituality/Work & Blessings</i> ; Introduction of Talks 1 & 2
10:20-10:35	"Journeying from Emptiness to Fulfillment; The Search for God in our Work"
10:35-10:50	"Blessings Which are Revealed in Time"
10:50-10:55	Reflection 1 (silence)
10:55-11:15	Table discussion 1
11:15-11:25	BREAK
11:25-11:35	Theme: <i>Work Difficulties</i> ; Introduction of Talk 3 & 4
11:35-11:50	"Losing a Job"
11:50-12:05	"Should I Stay or Should I Go?"
12:05-12:10	Reflection 2 (silence)
12:10-12:30	Table discussion 2
12:30-1:10	LUNCH: (Deacon John/meal prayer)
1:10-1:20	Theme: <i>Work as Action of Love and Joy</i> ; Introduction of Talks 5, 6 & 7
1:20-1:30	"Work as an Act of Love"

1:30-1:45	“Work after Work”
1:45-2:00	“The Best Work I’ve Ever Done!”
2:00-2:05	Reflection 3 (silence)
2:05-2:25	Table discussion 3
2:25-2:35	BREAK
2:35-3:00	“How God is Creating a Champion in YOU!”
	Recap of speakers/topics, and team + commentary on each.
3:00-3:10	Song: <i>God of Day and God of Darkness</i>
	Mother Teresa reflection
3:10-3:30	Evaluations and informal discussion with team
3:30-4:00	Team debrief and cleanup

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT
The Catholic Community of St. Matthias

Reflection 1

By your endurance, you will gain your soul.

~Luke 21:19

Talk 1 Reflection Questions

Sometimes we view our work as drudgery, as a trial that we must endure. Yet it may be that God is actually providing us with a blessing, an opportunity for redemption. When you consider your work experience, might this apply to you? How does it make you feel?

*We cannot do everything and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest.*

(Bishop Oscar Romero, *A Future Not Our Own*)

Talk 2 Reflection Question

What work do you need to stop doing, or to change, to allow God's grace and blessings to enter?

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT
The Catholic Community of St. Matthias

Reflection 2

*Do not forsake me when my strength is spent---do not be far from me; O my God,
make haste to help me! You who have made me see many troubles and calamities
will revive me again; from the depths of the earth you will bring me up again.
You will increase my honor, and comfort me once again.*

~Psalm 71:9,12,20,21

Talk 3 Reflection Question

How have you experienced the Paschal Mystery of dying and rising in your working life?

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight. In all
your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

~Proverbs 3:5-6

Talk 4 Reflection Questions

How do you live with, and deal with, the ambiguities of life?

True vocation is where your deep gladness meets the world's deep need.

~Fredrick Buechner

Is this true of your working life...that it brings you fulfillment and contributes to the world: Do you think it is a goal worth striving for?

A WORKING LIFE RETREAT
The Catholic Community of St. Matthias

Reflection 3

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

~Philippians 4:13

Talk 5 Reflections Questions

Was there ever a time when you did something for someone you love, something that required all the effort and strength you would muster? How did that you feel when that was accomplished?

*Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness,
and all these things will be given to you as well.*

~Matthew 6:33

Talk 6 Reflection Questions

If you are retired, do you find that it is now that you are able to do the work that satisfies you most?

What fundamentals do you need to put first in your life?

Whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God

~1 Corinthians 10:31

Talk 7 Reflection Question

How does the work you do, paid or unpaid, give glory to God?

“A Working Life Retreat”

Retreat Opening Prayer

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.

~Psalm 127:1

Whether we work at home or at school, in a factory or an office,
 indoors or out of doors, we give our work to you, Lord God.
Whether we work alone or with others, with hand or brain,
 in a shop or in a hospital, we give our work to you, Lord God.
Whether our work is paid or unpaid, interesting or boring,
 with computers or with people, we give our work to you, Lord God.
Whether our work involves manufacturing or planning, travelling or
 home-making, teaching, learning or caring,
 we give our work to you, Lord God.
Whatever we do, give us a sense of wonder.
Whatever we make, give us a sense of achievement.
Whatever we build, grant us a sense of glory.
Whatever our work, grant us a share in your purpose.
 In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

~Faith in Business

“A Working Life Retreat”

Closing Prayer: Workers for the Harvest

Vocation is simply a call to belong totally to Christ, with the conviction that nothing can separate me from his love.

Vocation is an invitation to be in love with God and to prove that love.

How do I love God?

How do I prove my love for God?

By doing beautifully the work I have been given to do, by doing simply that which God has entrusted to me, in whatever form it may take.

Like my sisters who take vows—in full reality they become the spouse of Jesus crucified—and that is their vocation: to love Christ with undivided love, in chastity, in true freedom to poverty, in total surrender to obedience, and in whole-hearted free service to the poorest of the poor.

They prove their love for God by putting that love in a living action.

So whatever the work with which you have been entrusted---as a religious, as a layperson—it is a means for you to put your love for God into a living action.

So if I want to know how much I love Christ,

If I want to know if I am really in love with God,

Then I have only to look at how I do the work He has entrusted to me—how much love I put into the doing of that work.

You see, it is not the work in itself that is our vocation—our vocation is to belong totally to Jesus, with the conviction that nothing can separate us from His love.

It is not what we are doing,

Or how much we are doing,

But rather, how much love we are putting in the doing of that work entrusted to us.

What you are doing

I may not be able to do...

What I am doing

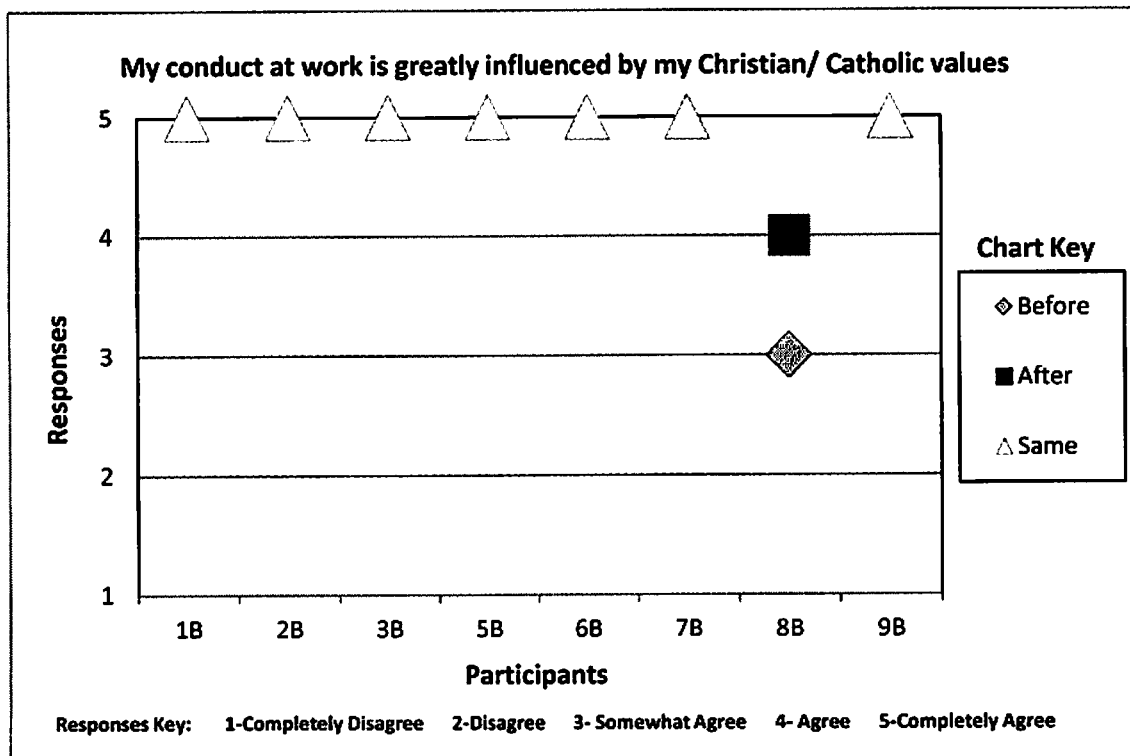
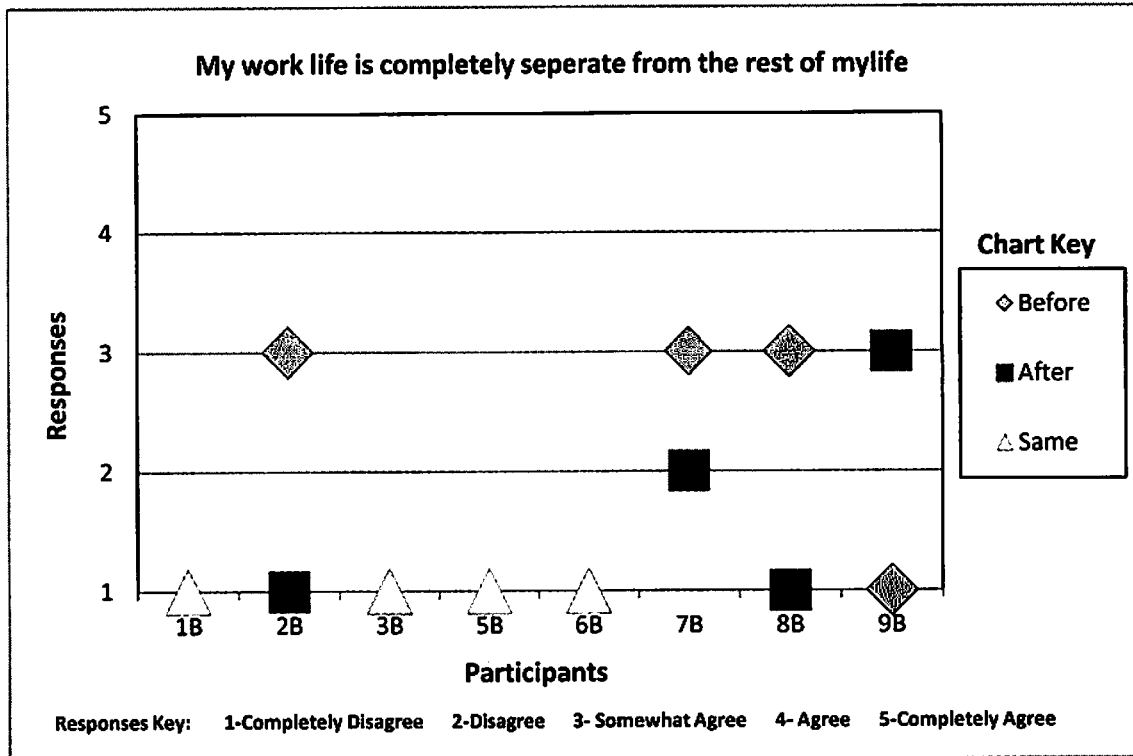
You may not be able to do...

But all of us together are doing something beautiful for God.

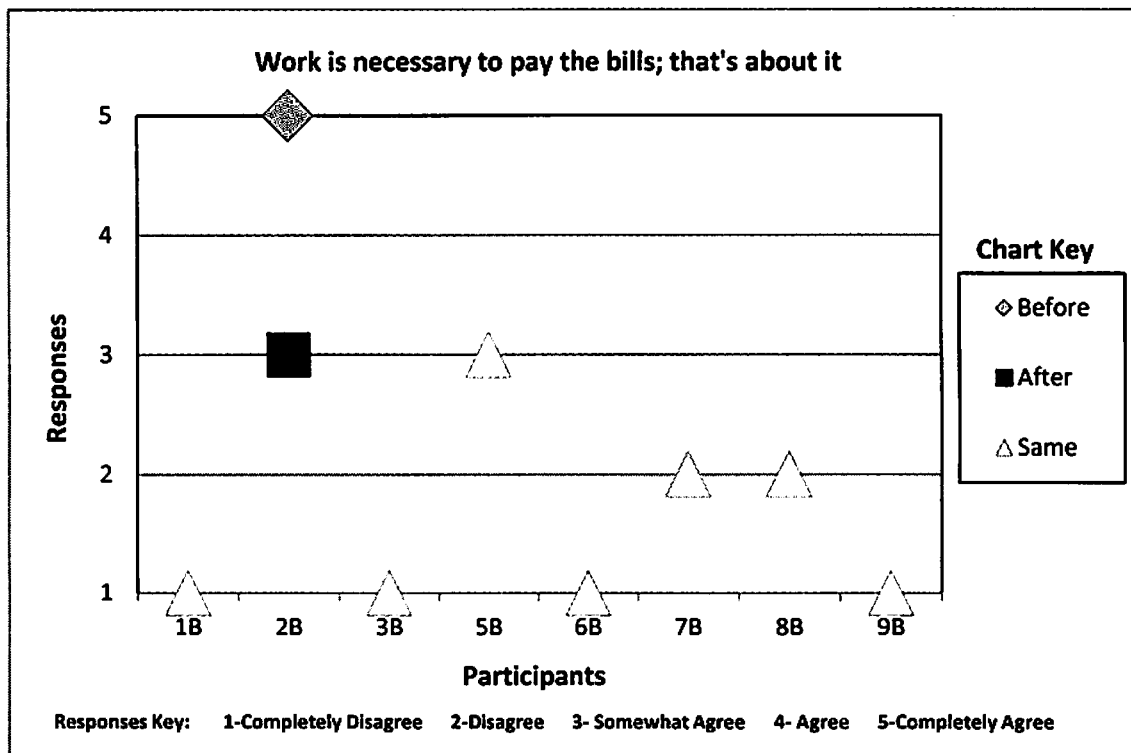
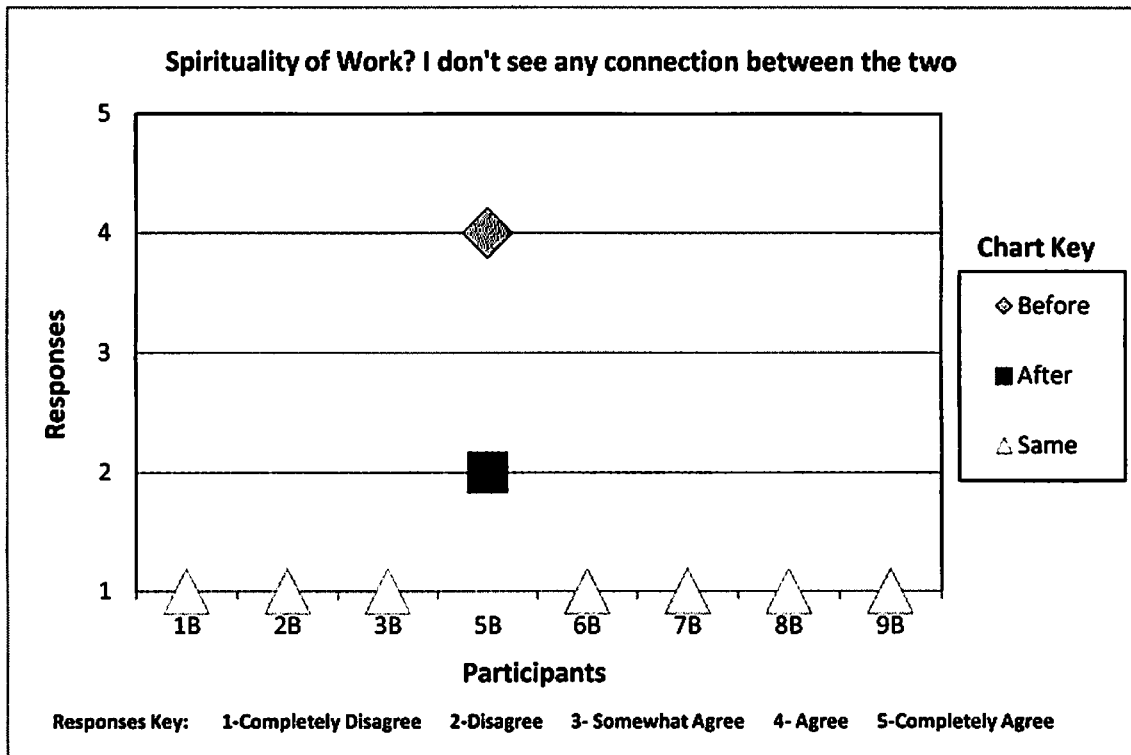
~Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

APPENDIX 14
INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS CHARTS—ICSST

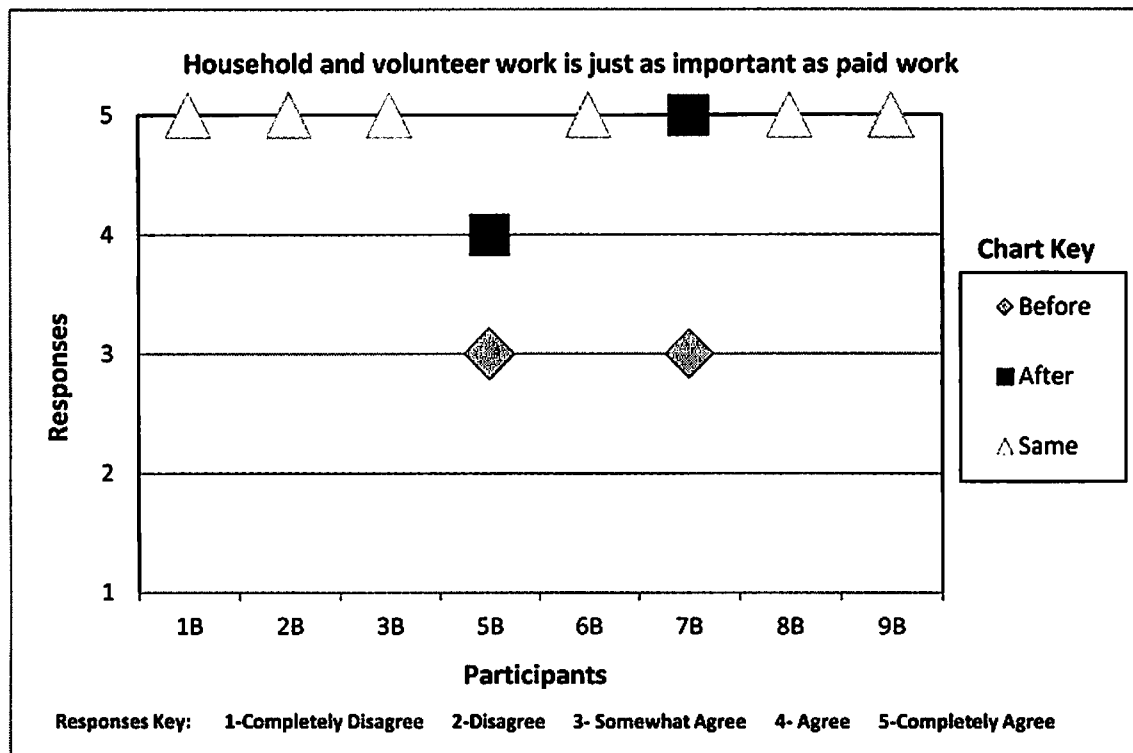
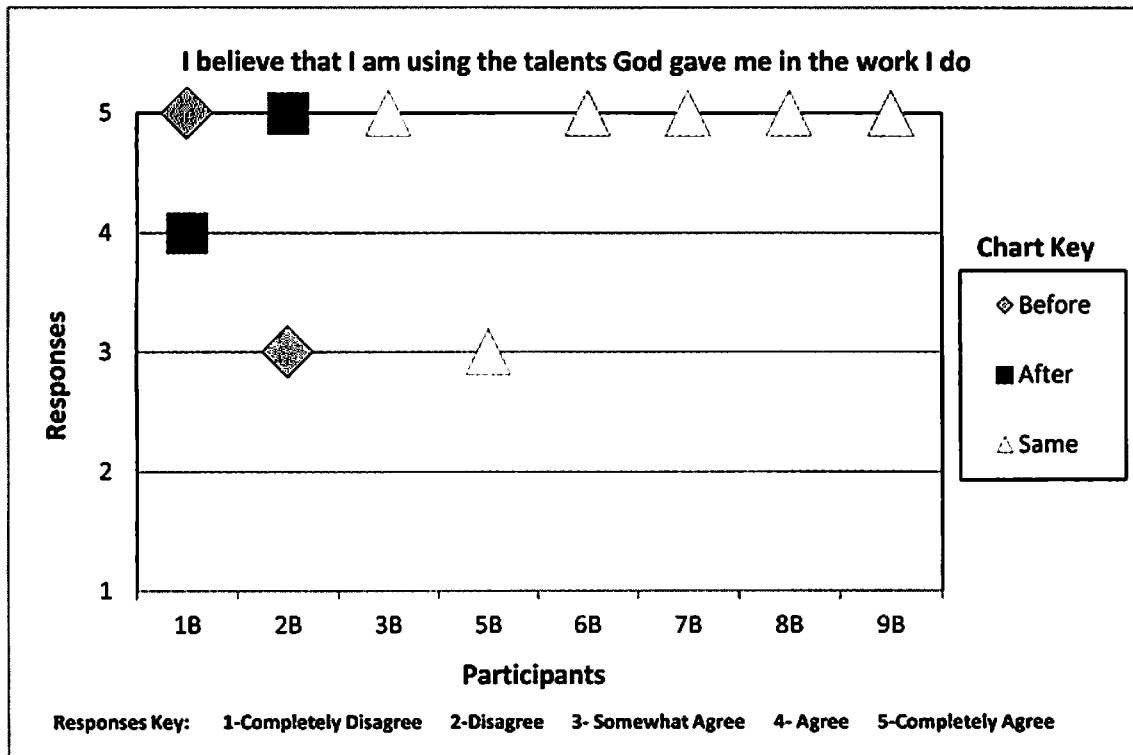
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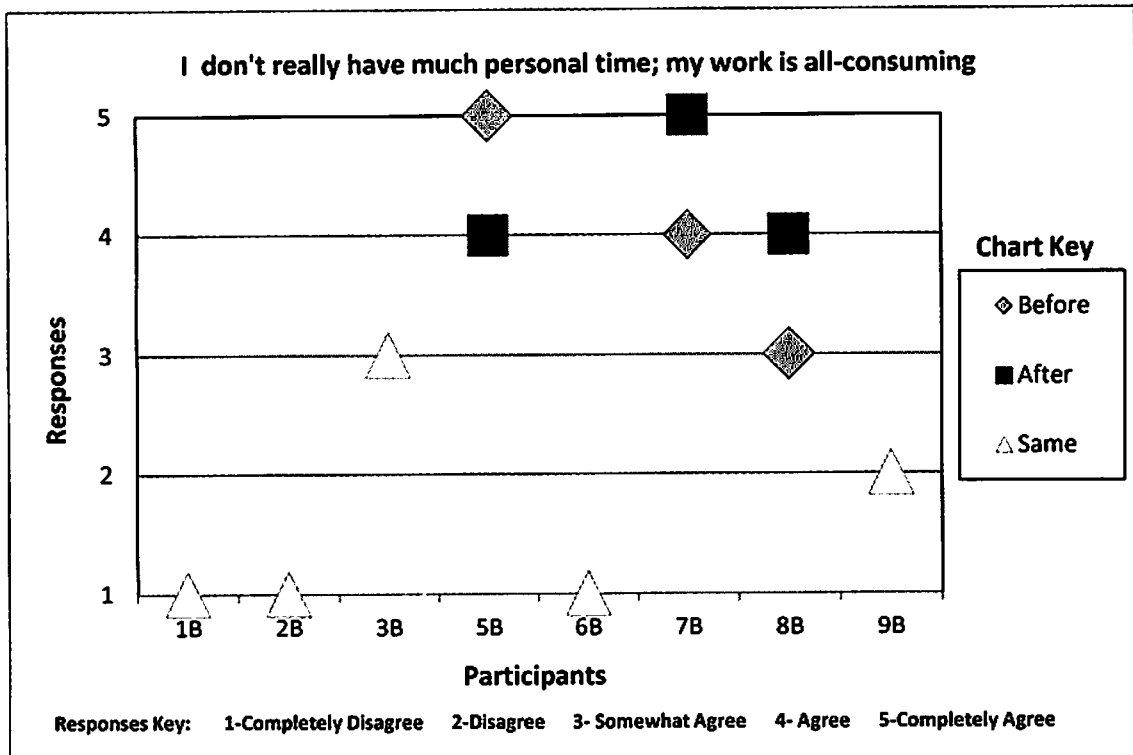
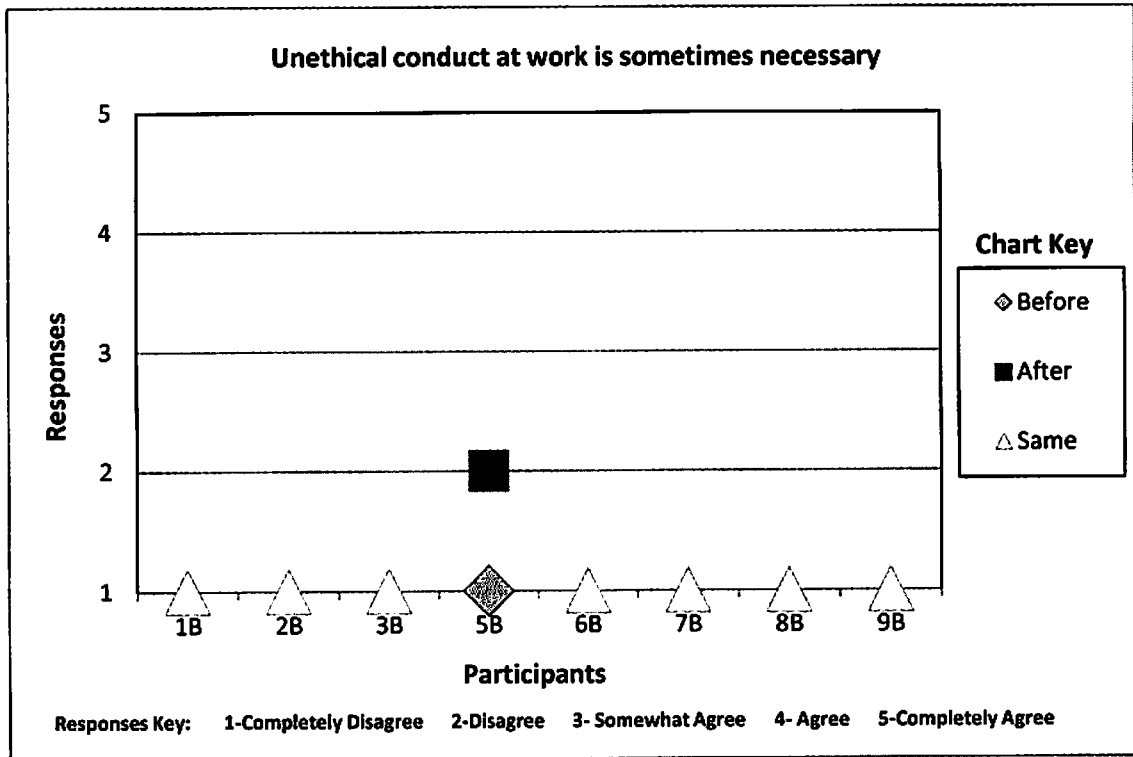
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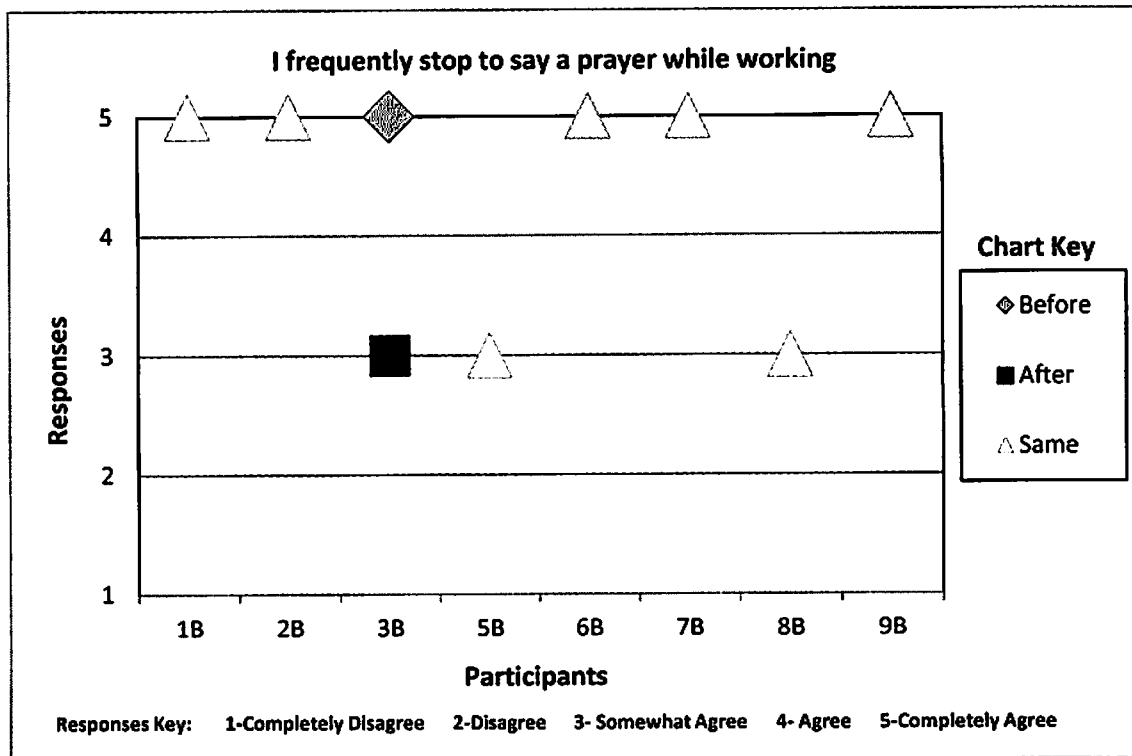
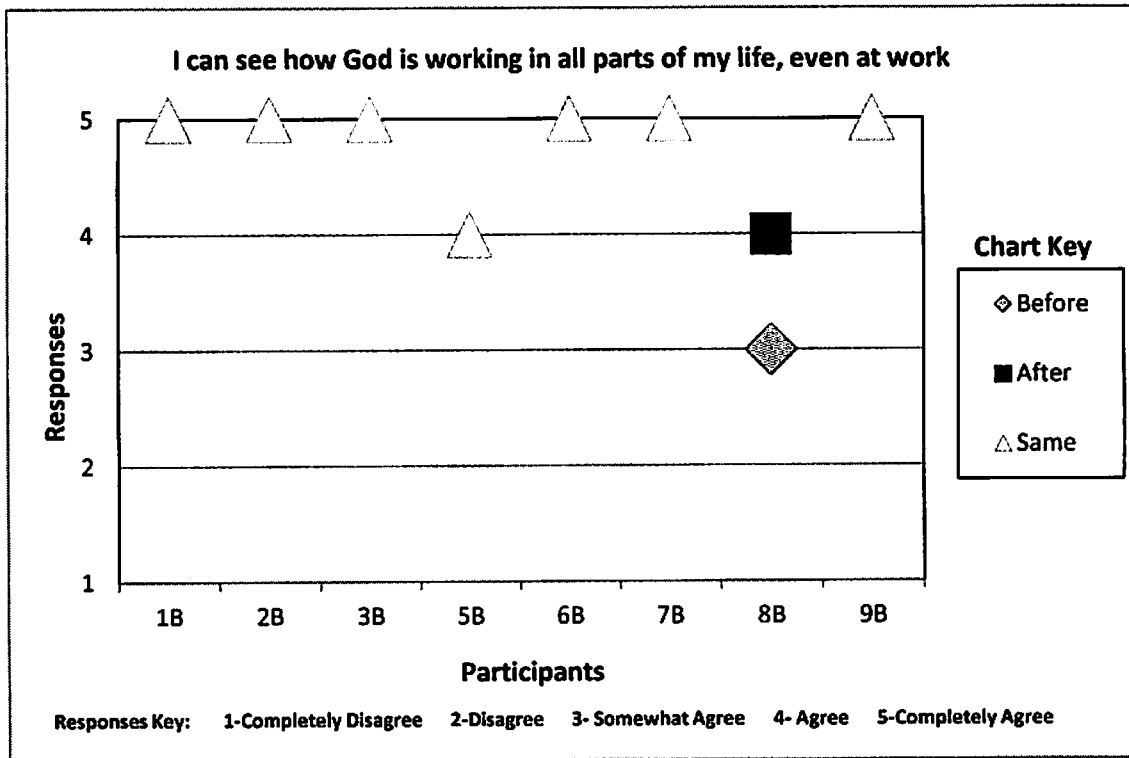
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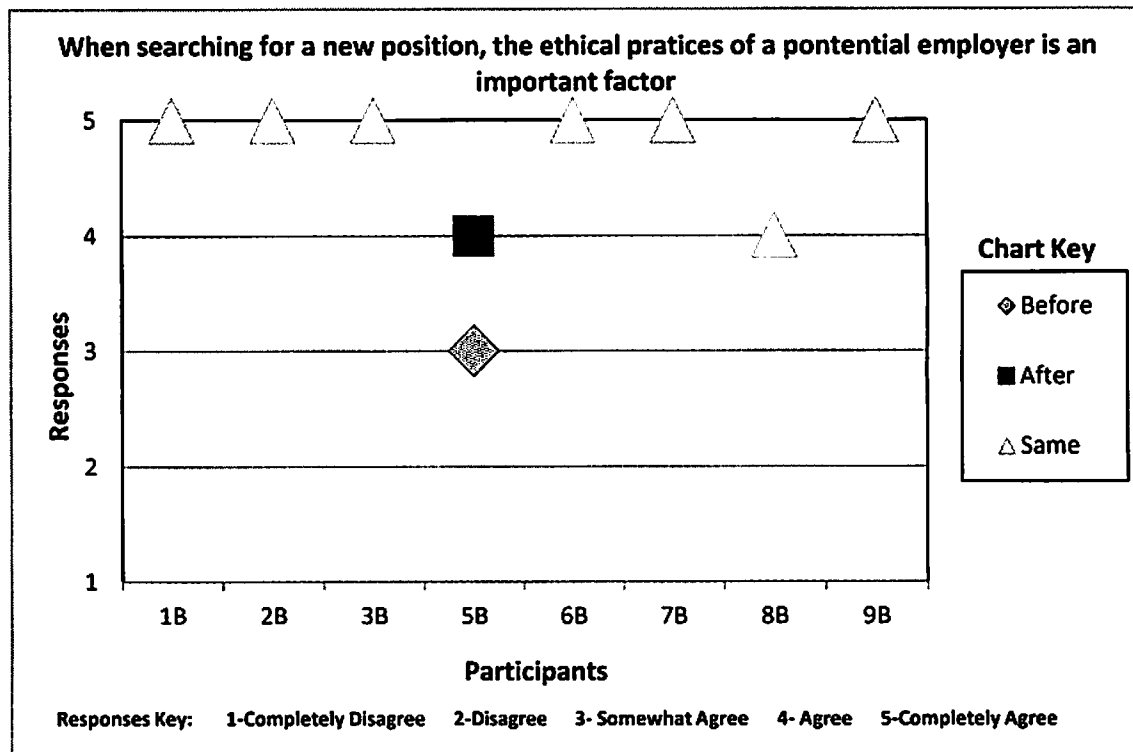
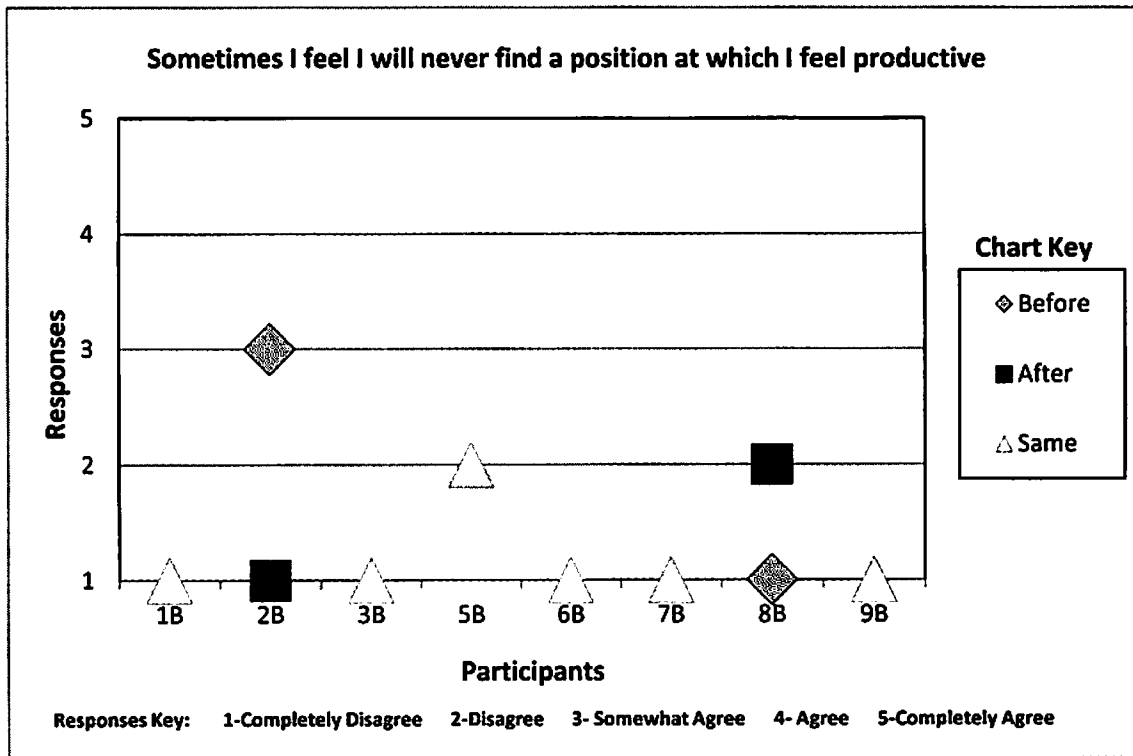
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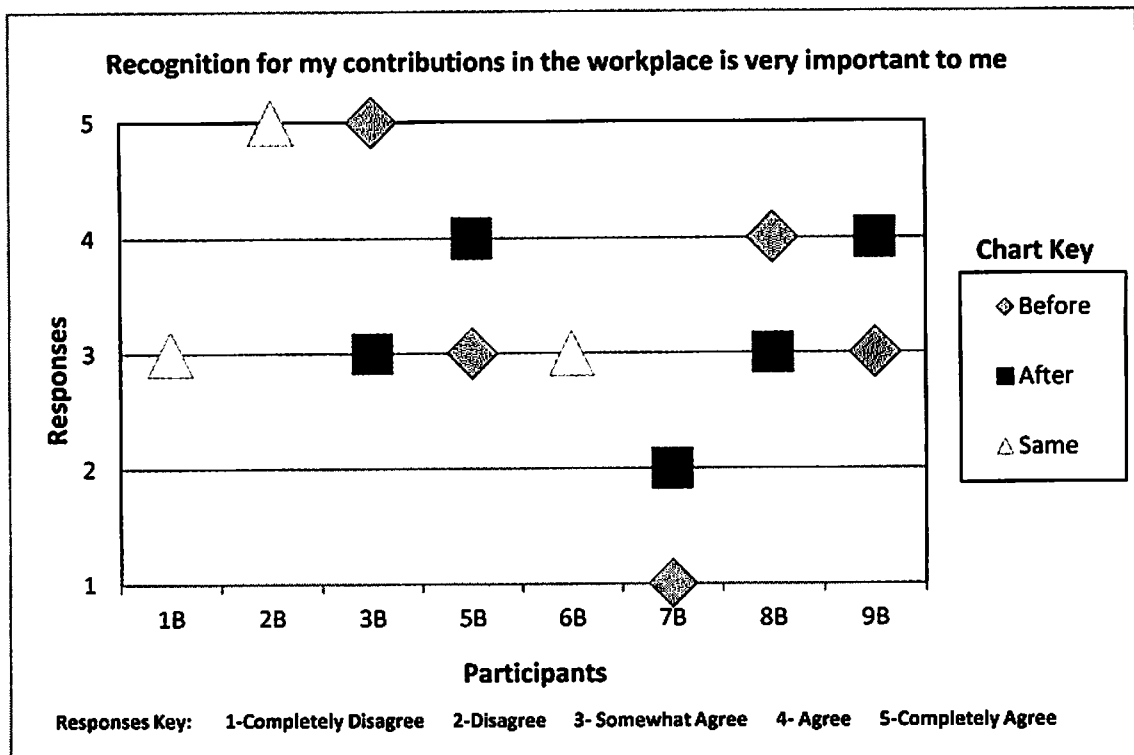
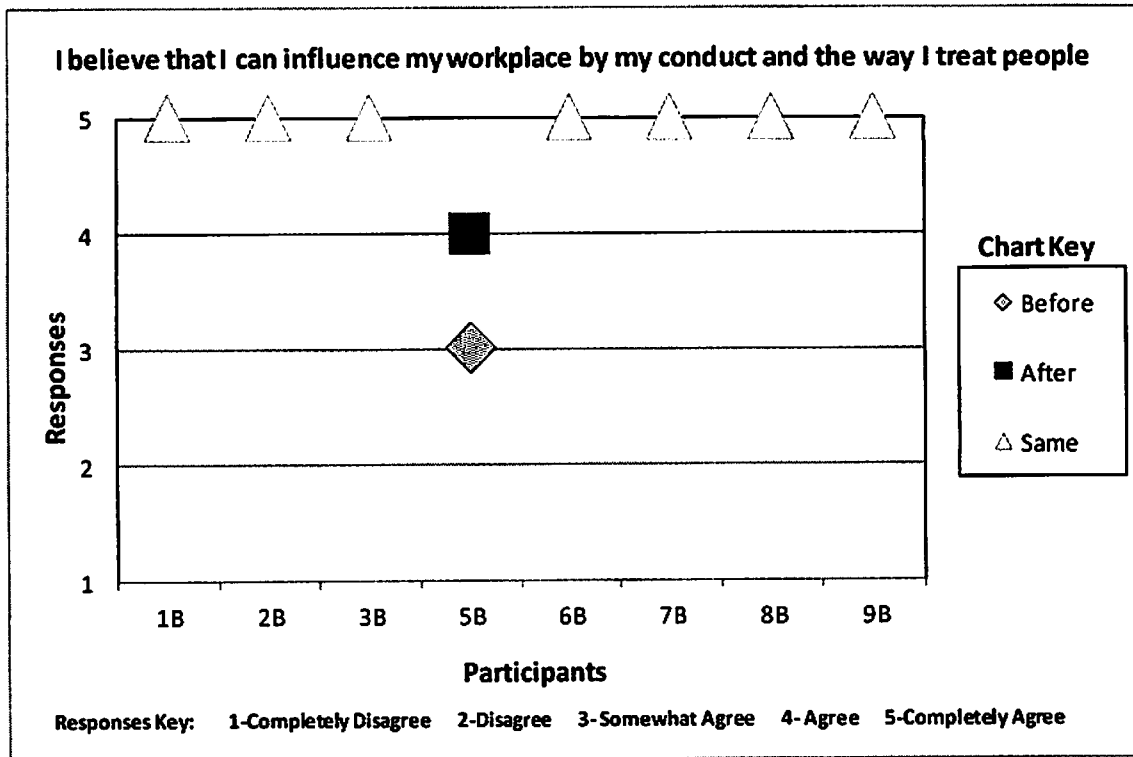
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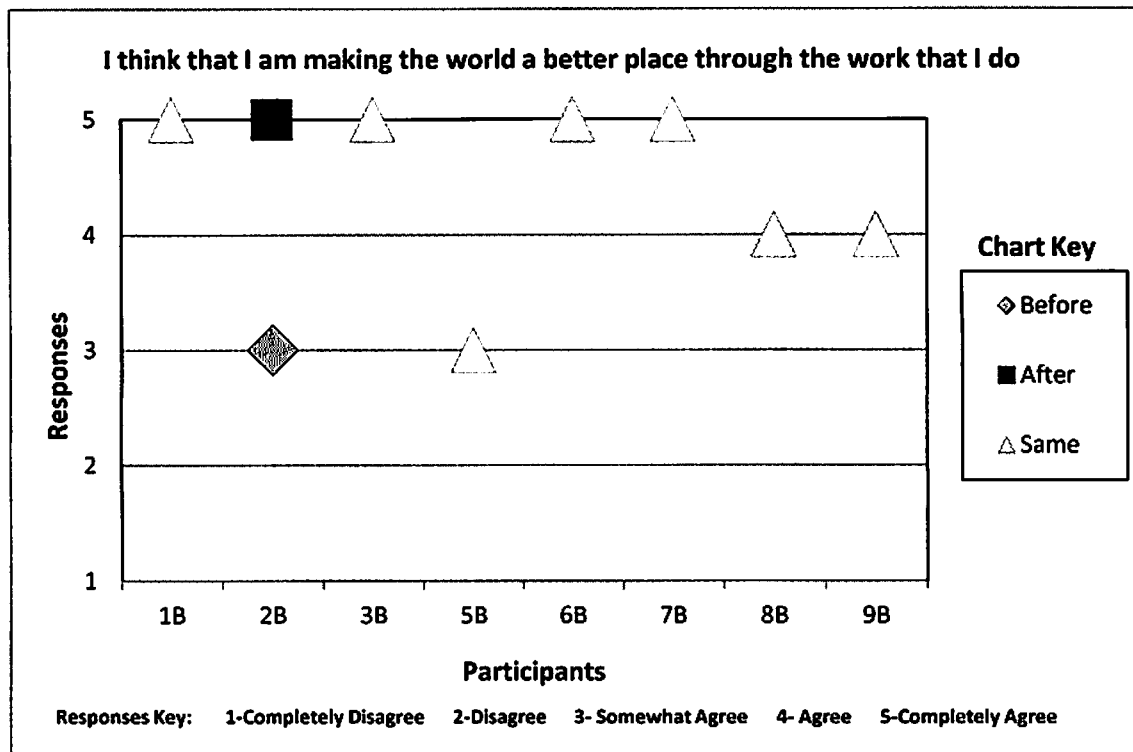
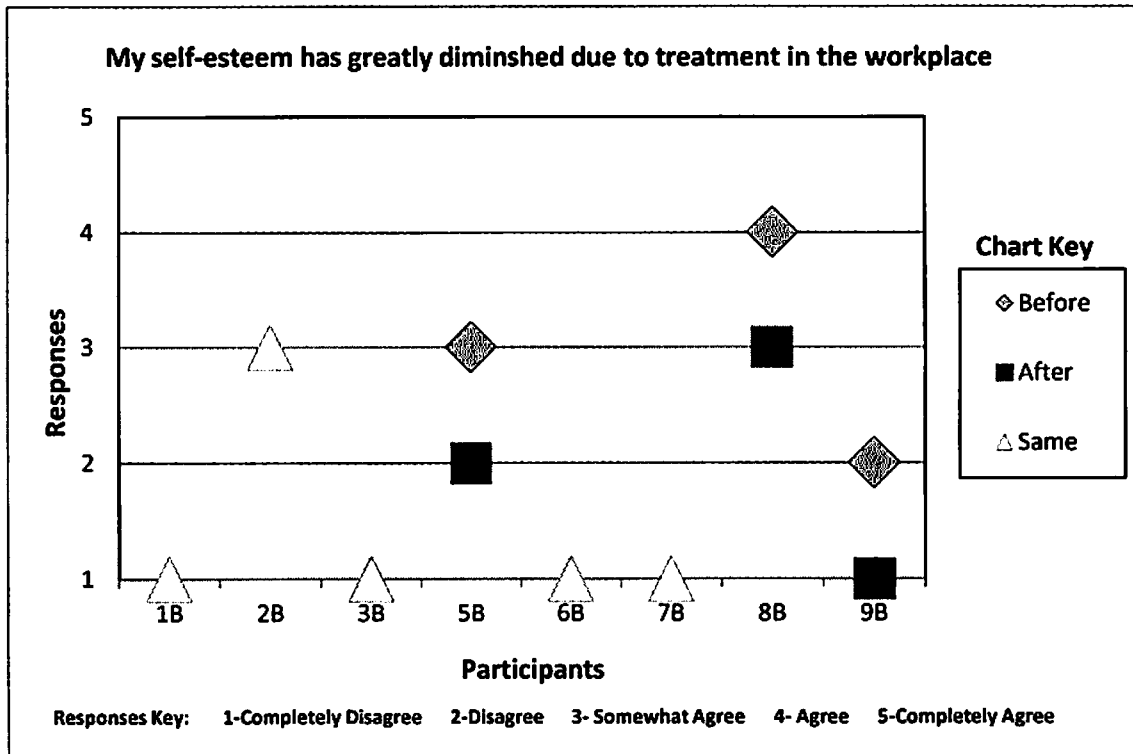
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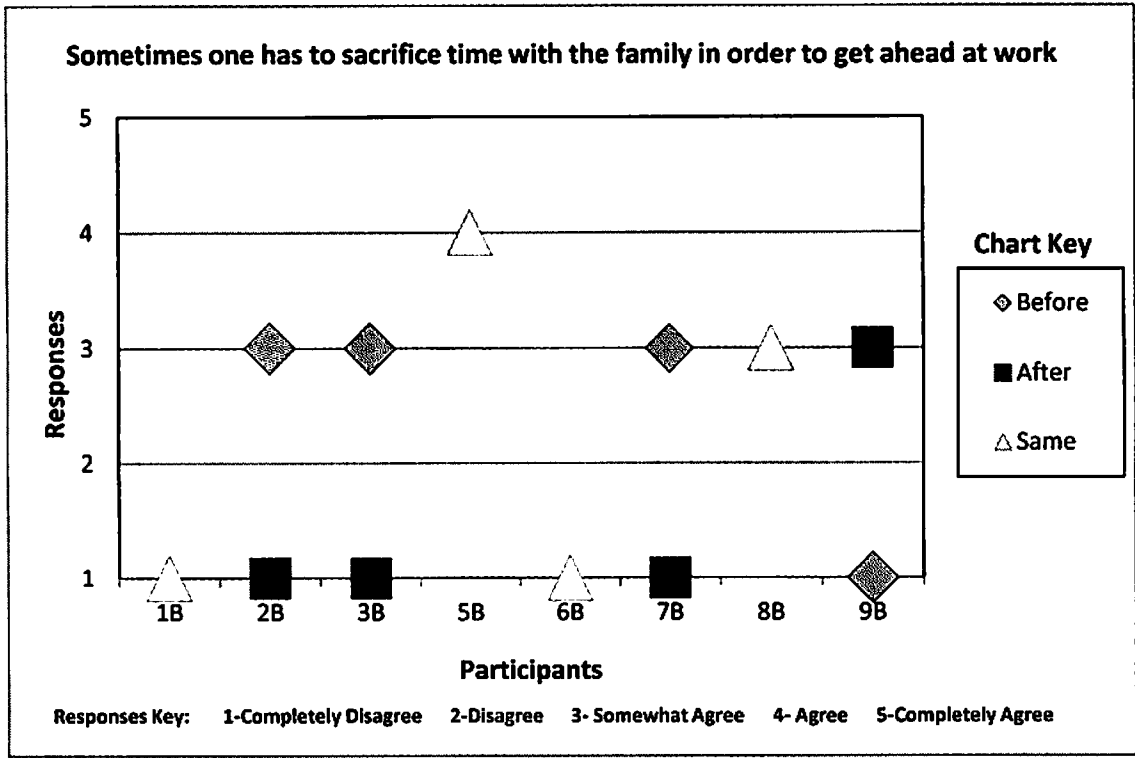
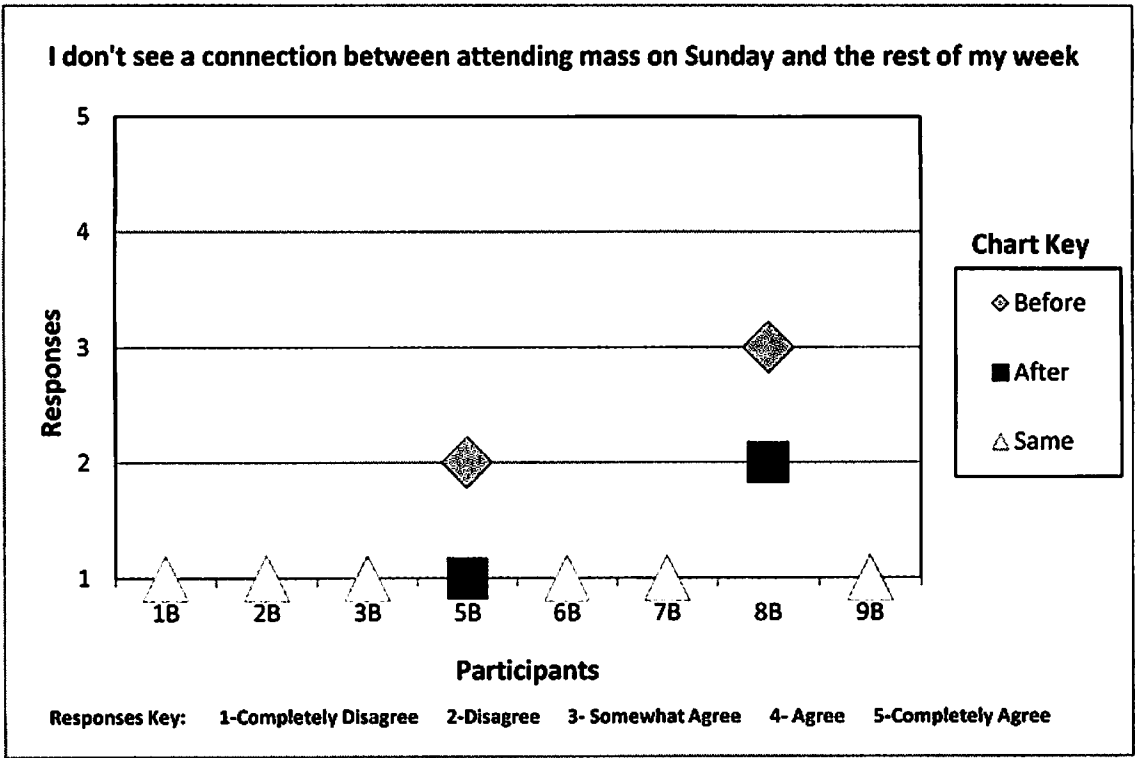
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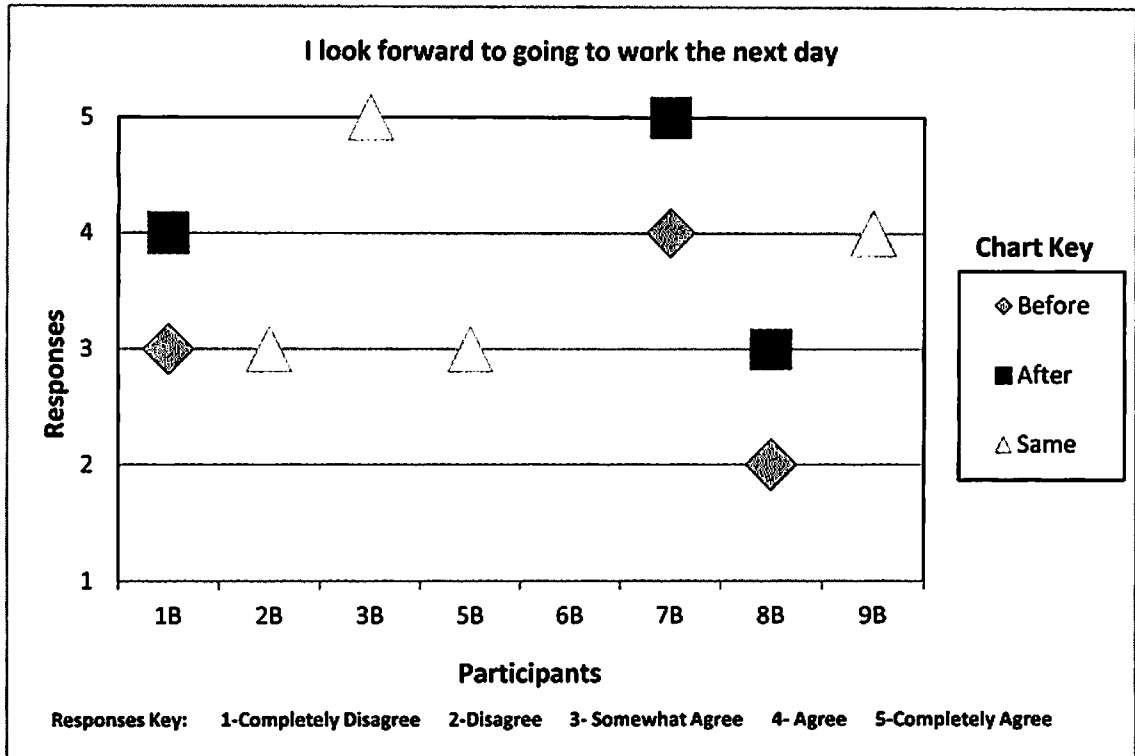
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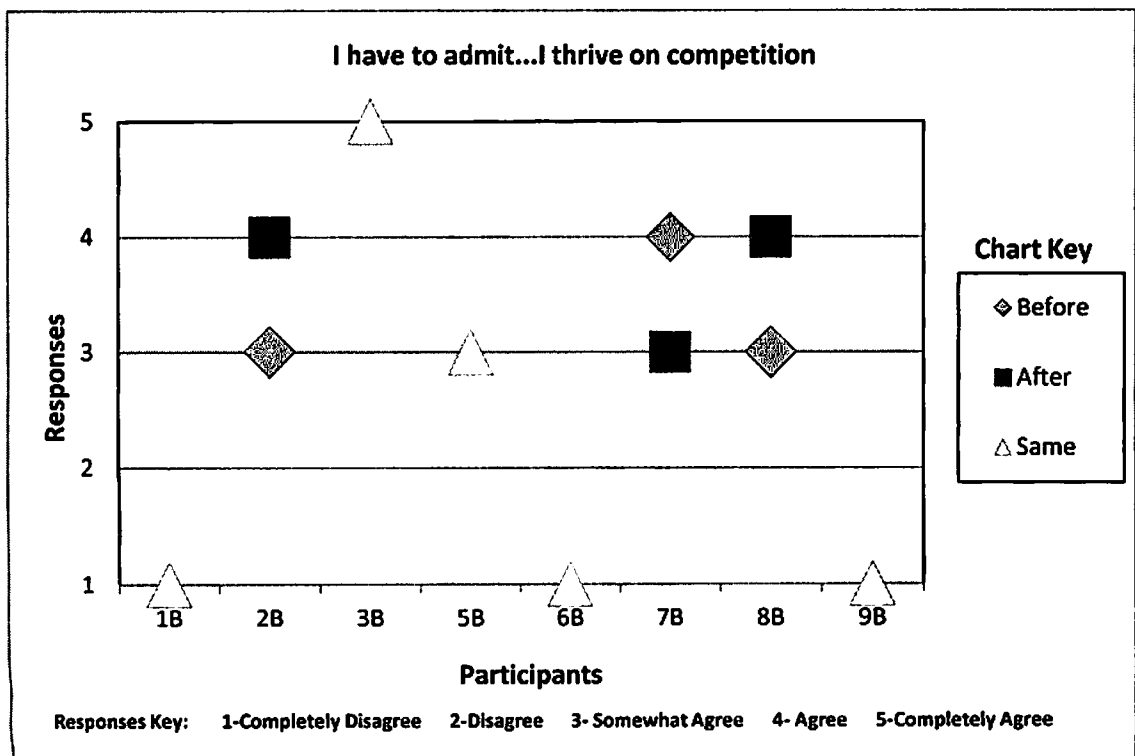
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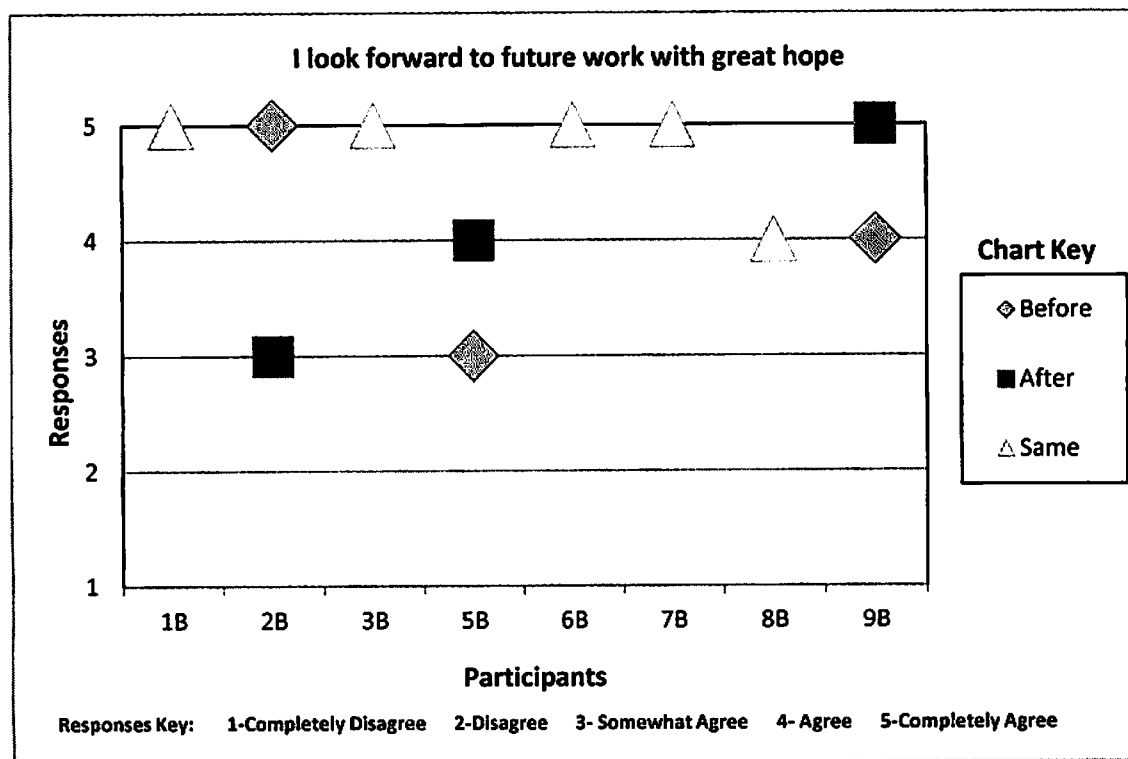
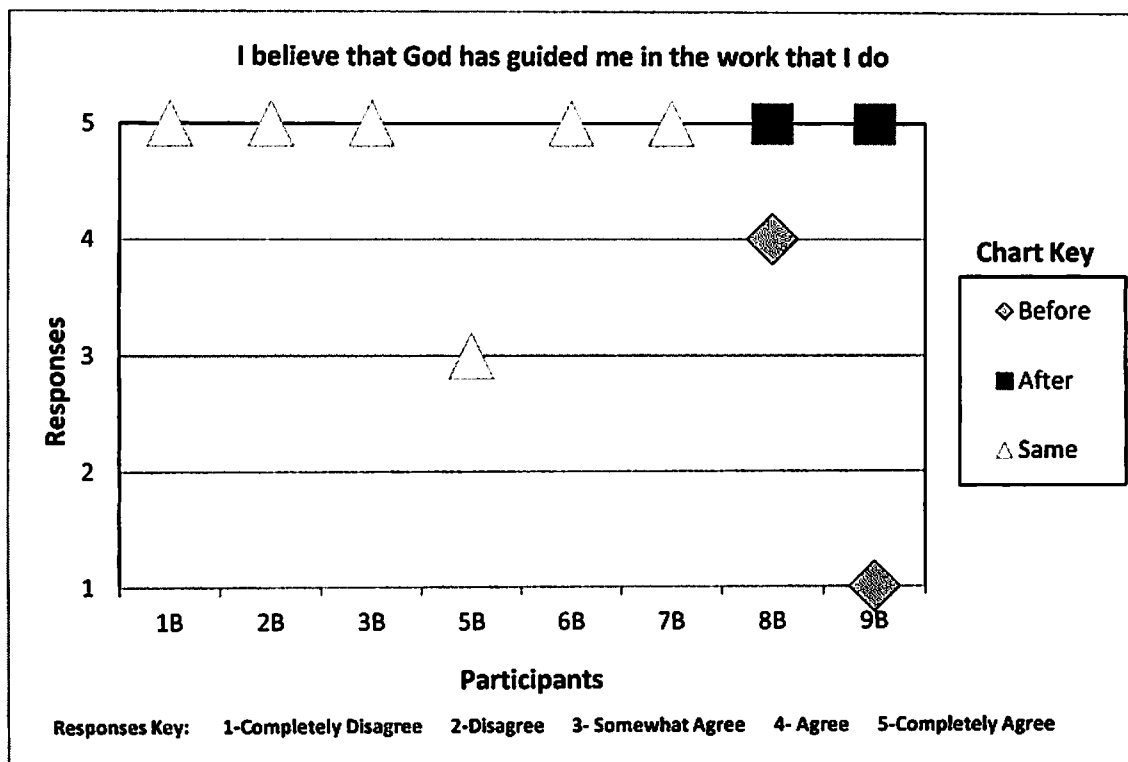
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(Participant 6A replied N/A for this statement)

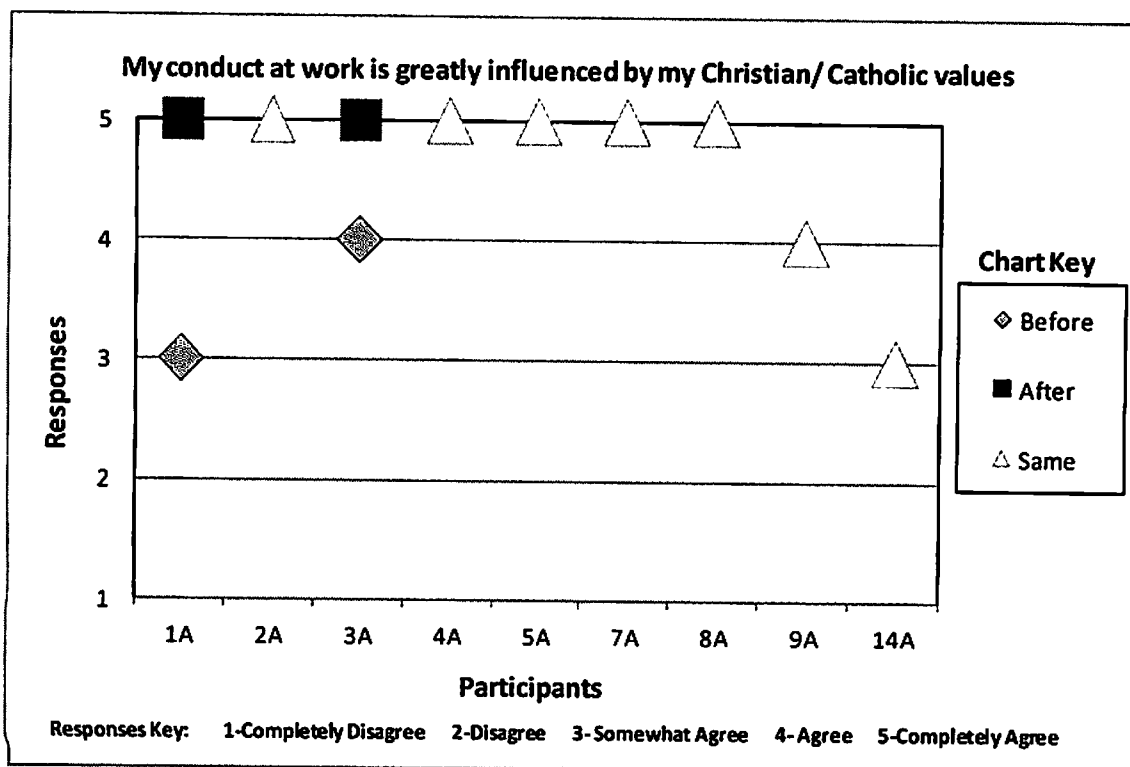
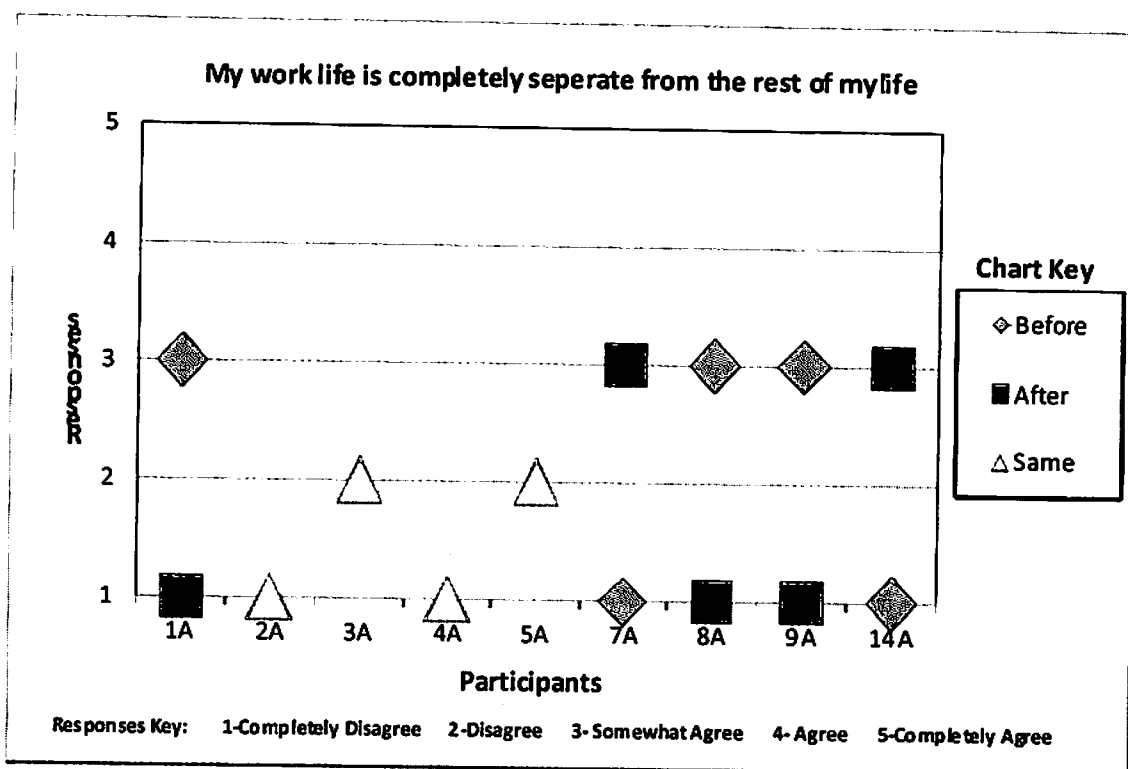


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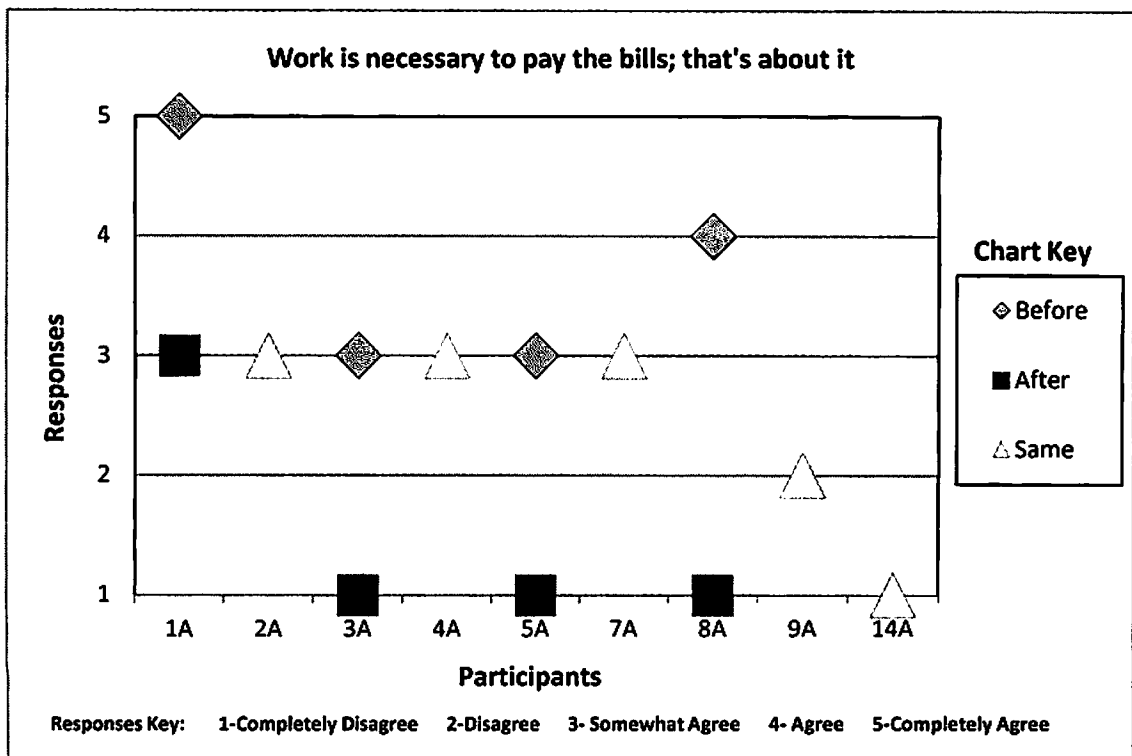
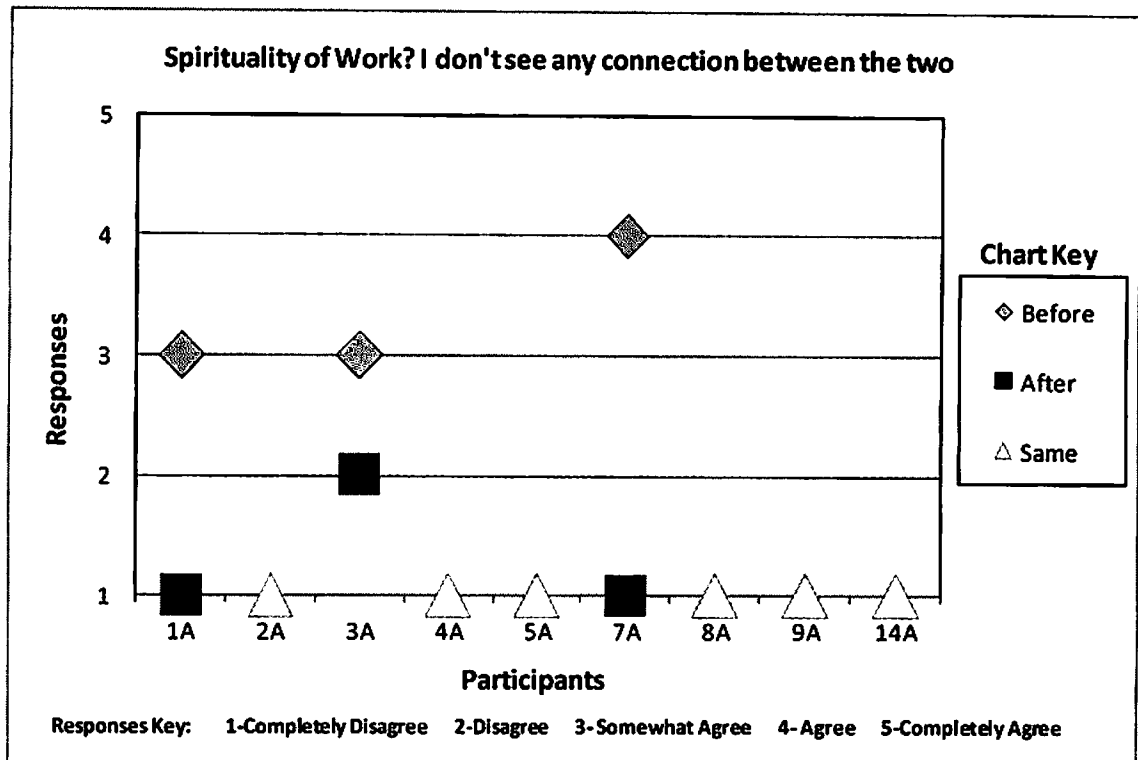


APPENDIX 15
INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS CHARTS—ST. MATTHIAS

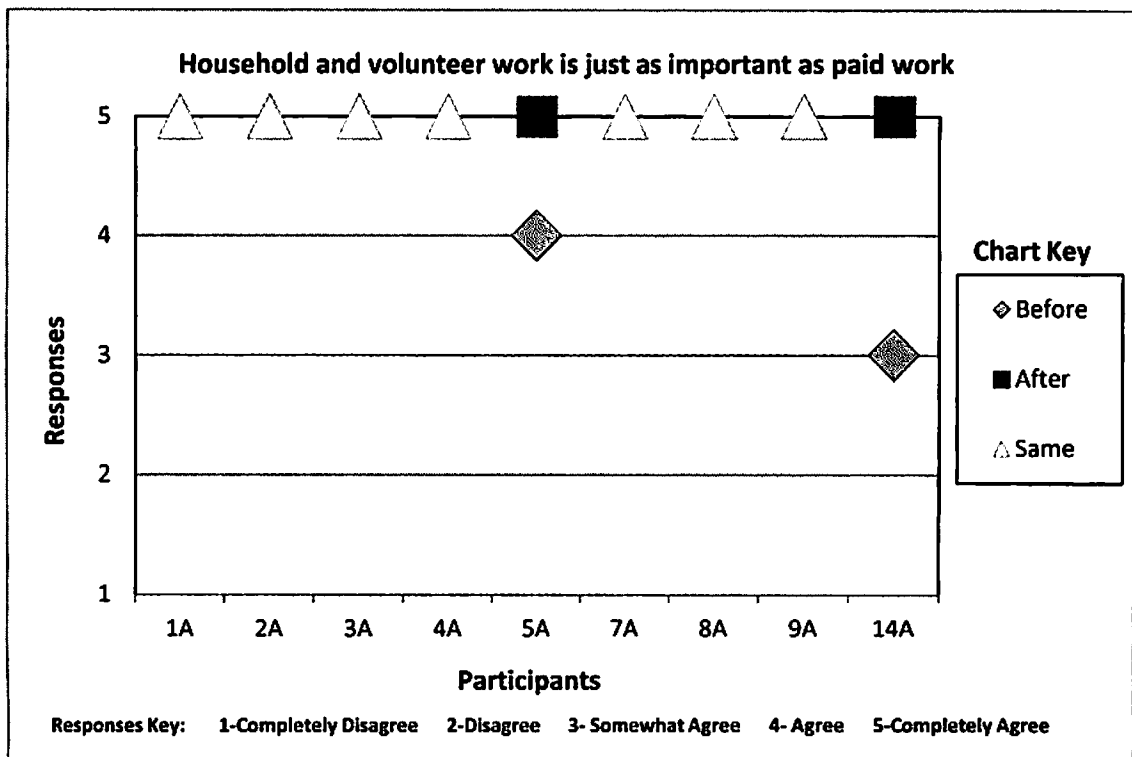
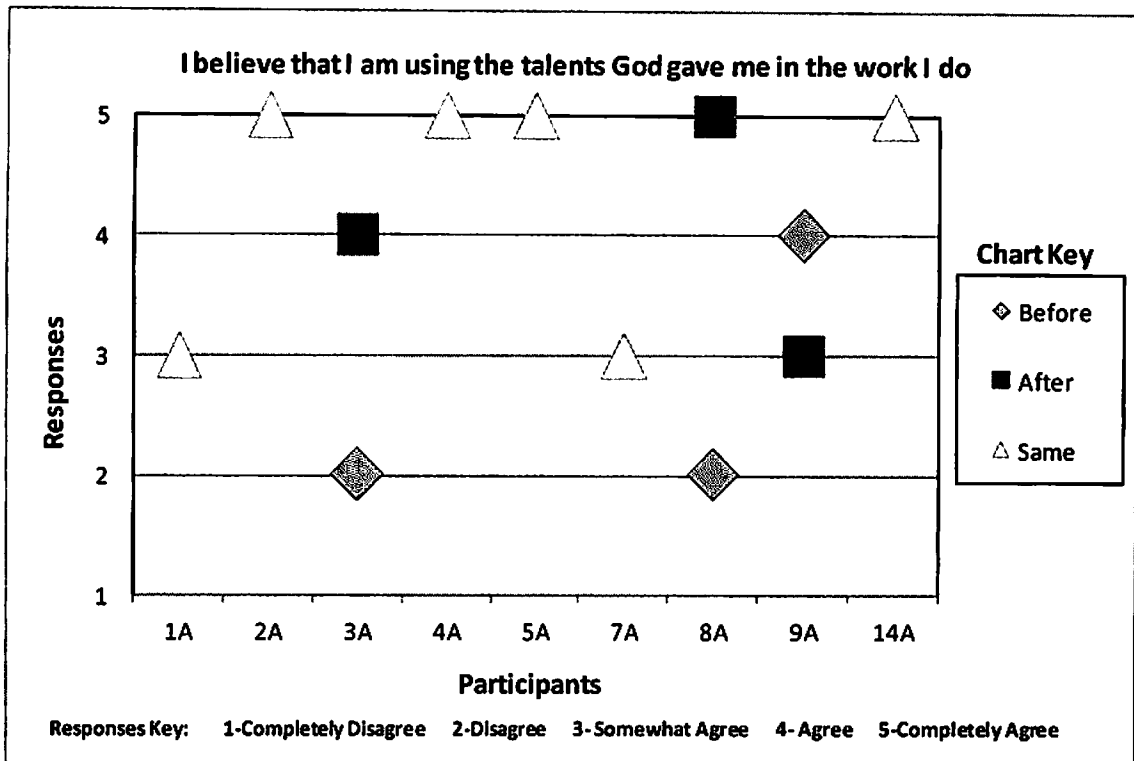
Saint Matthias Individual Results



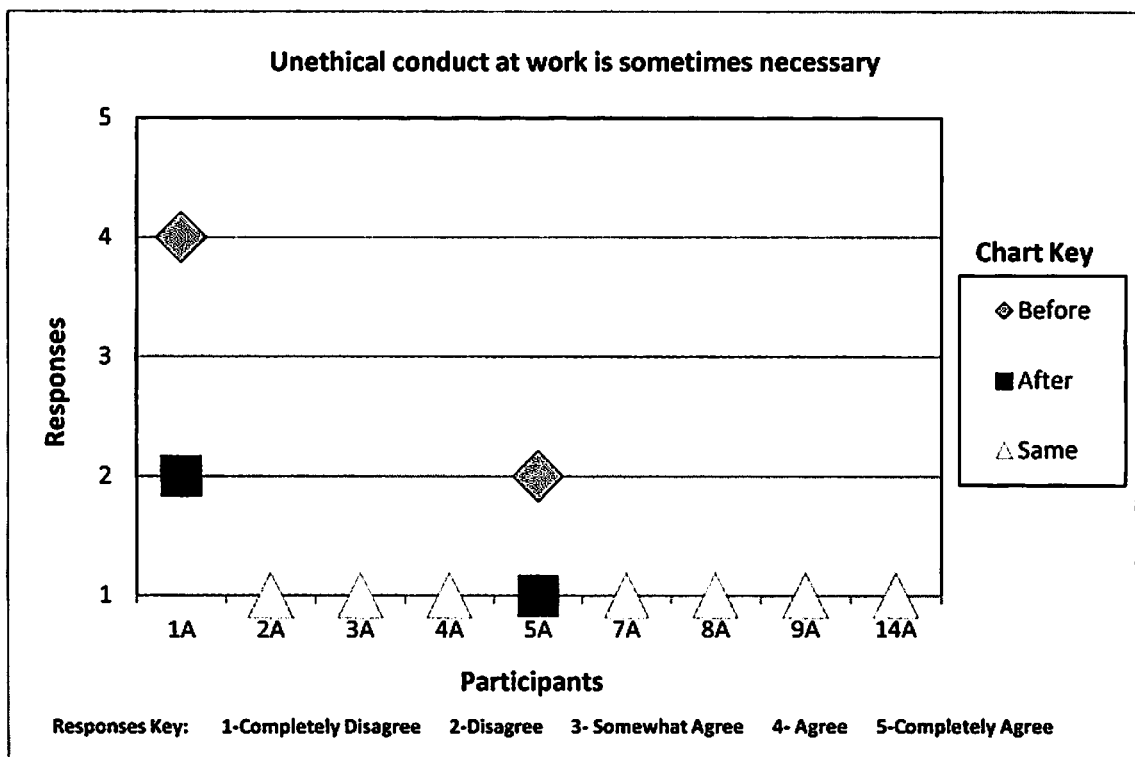
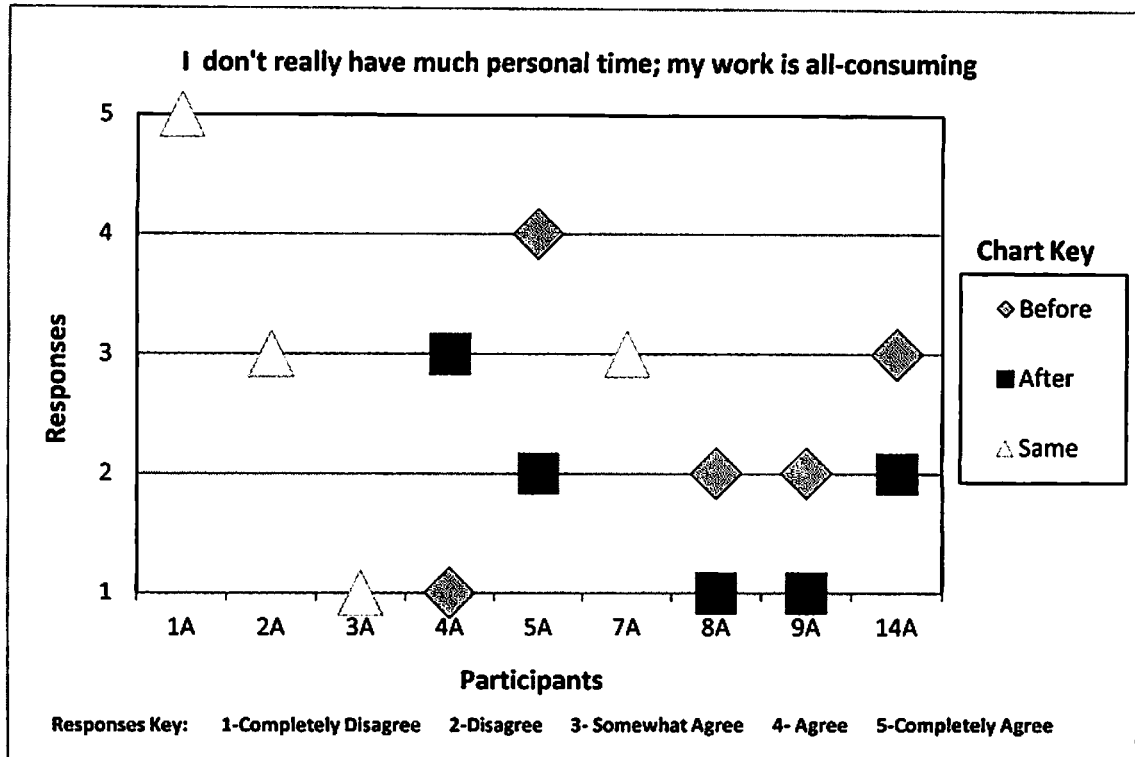
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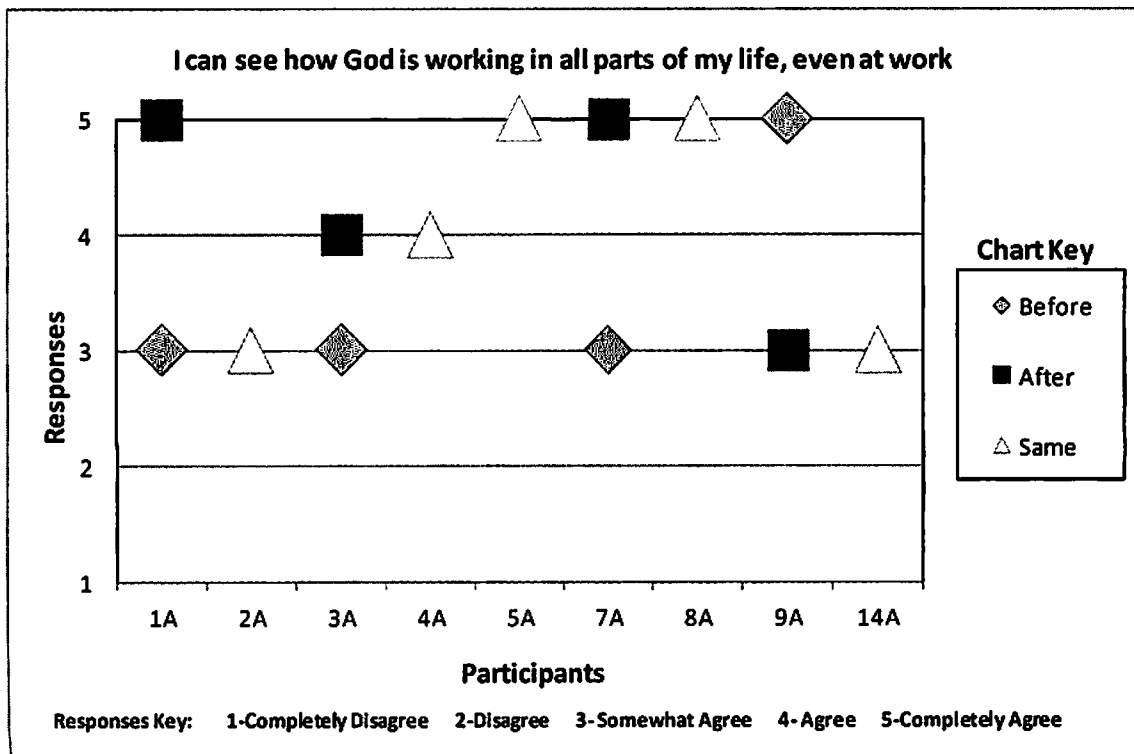
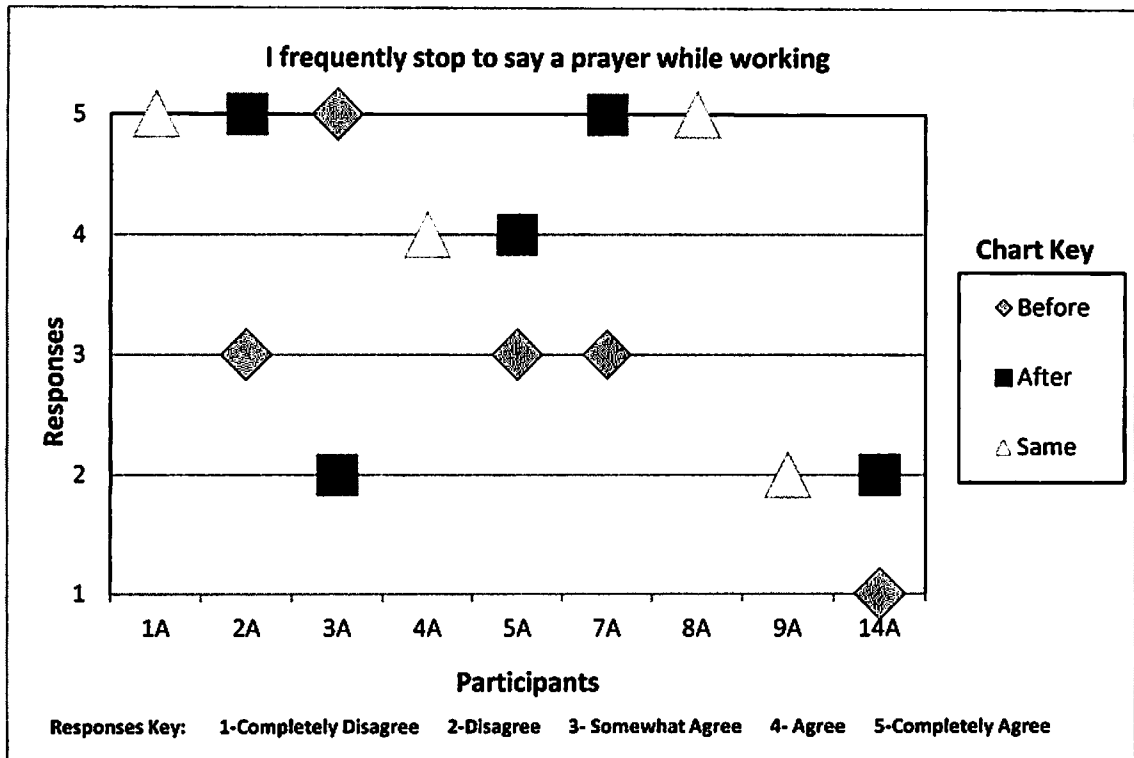
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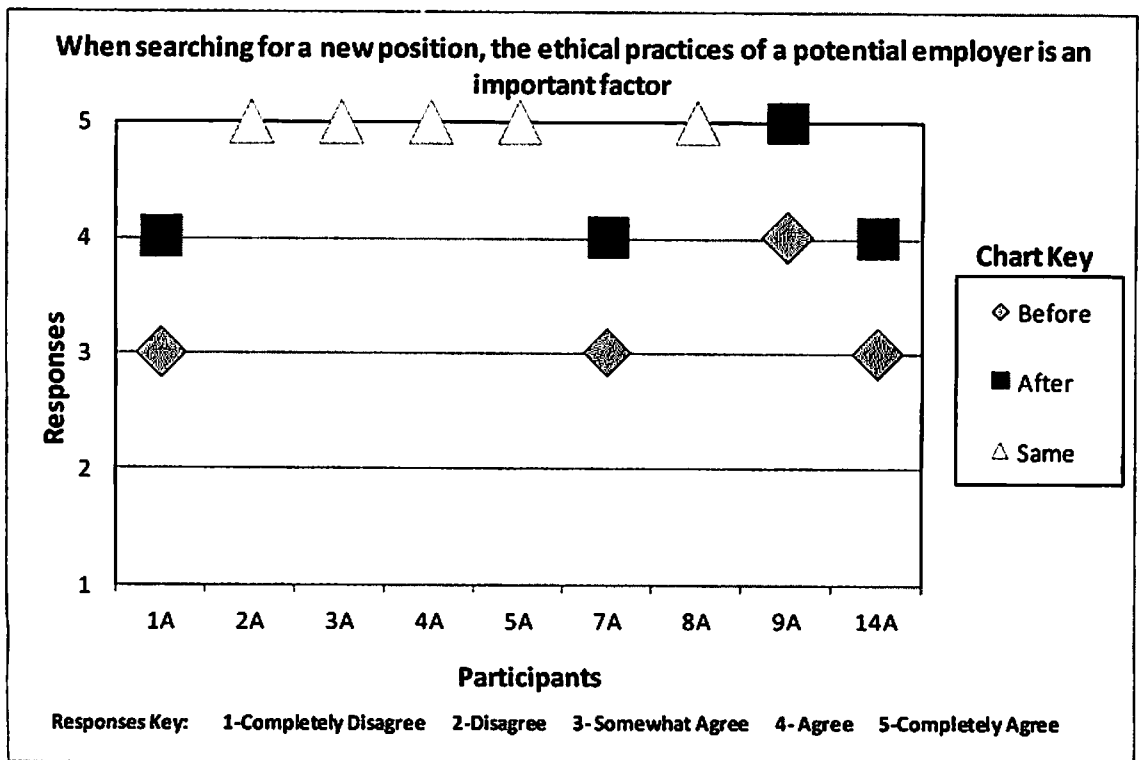
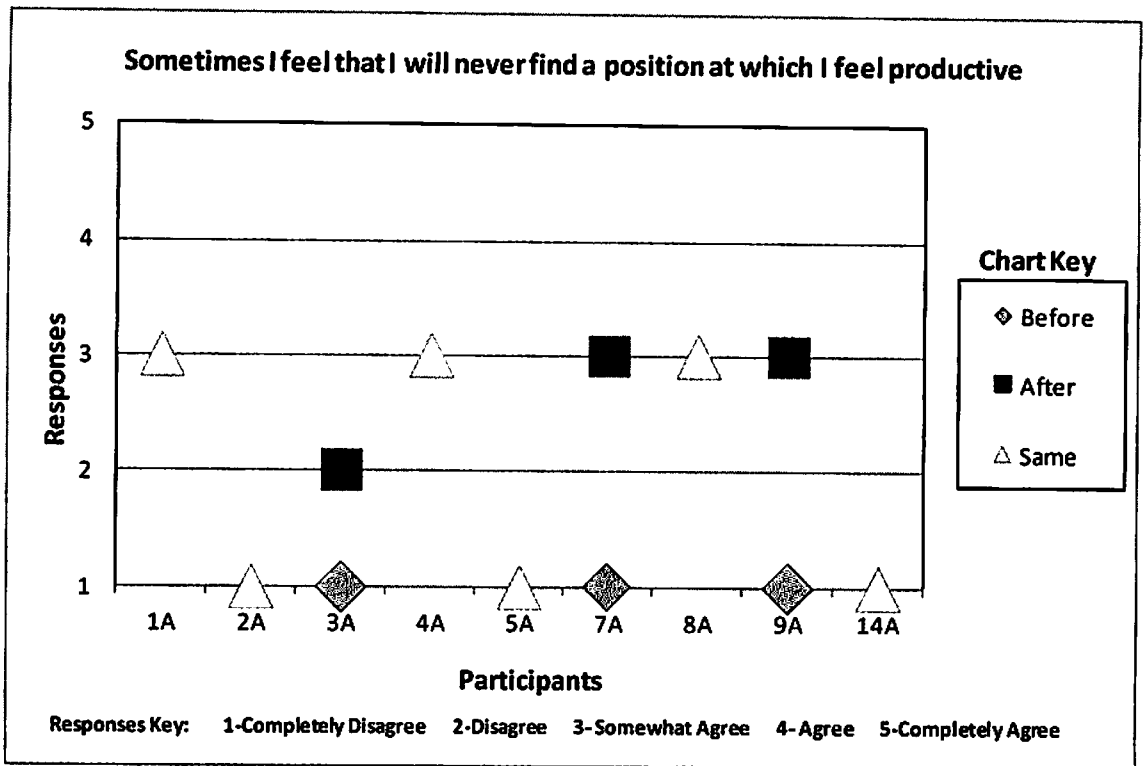
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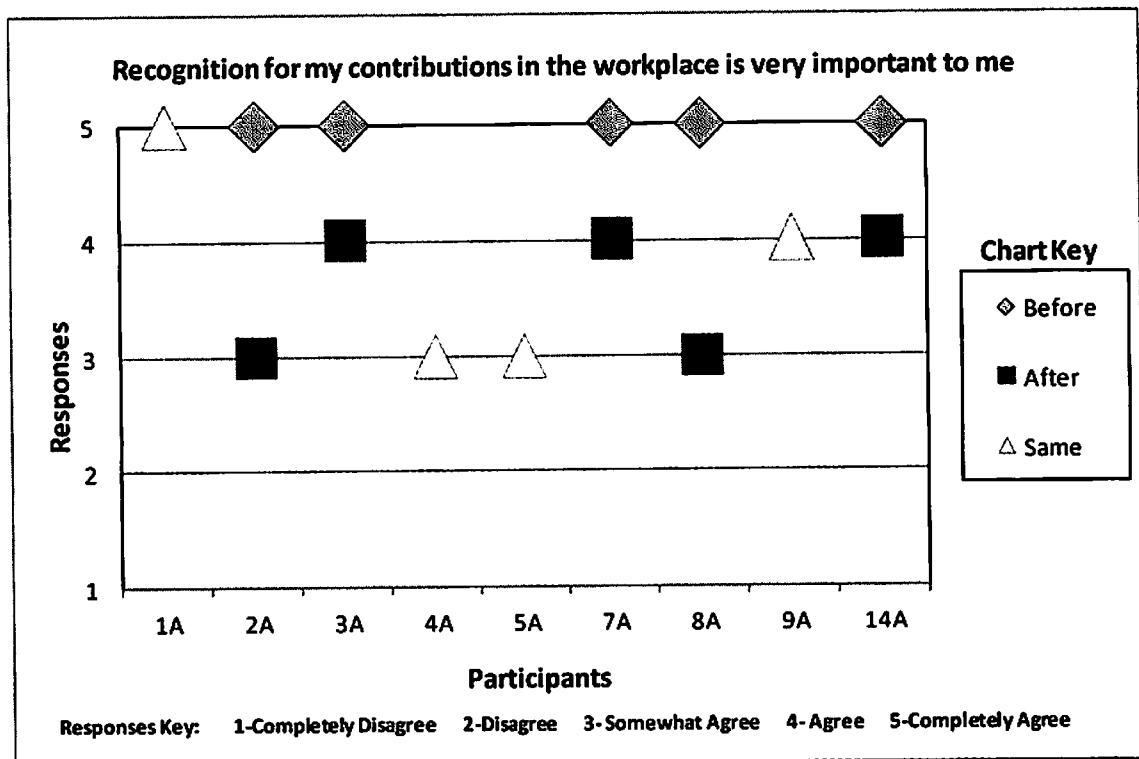
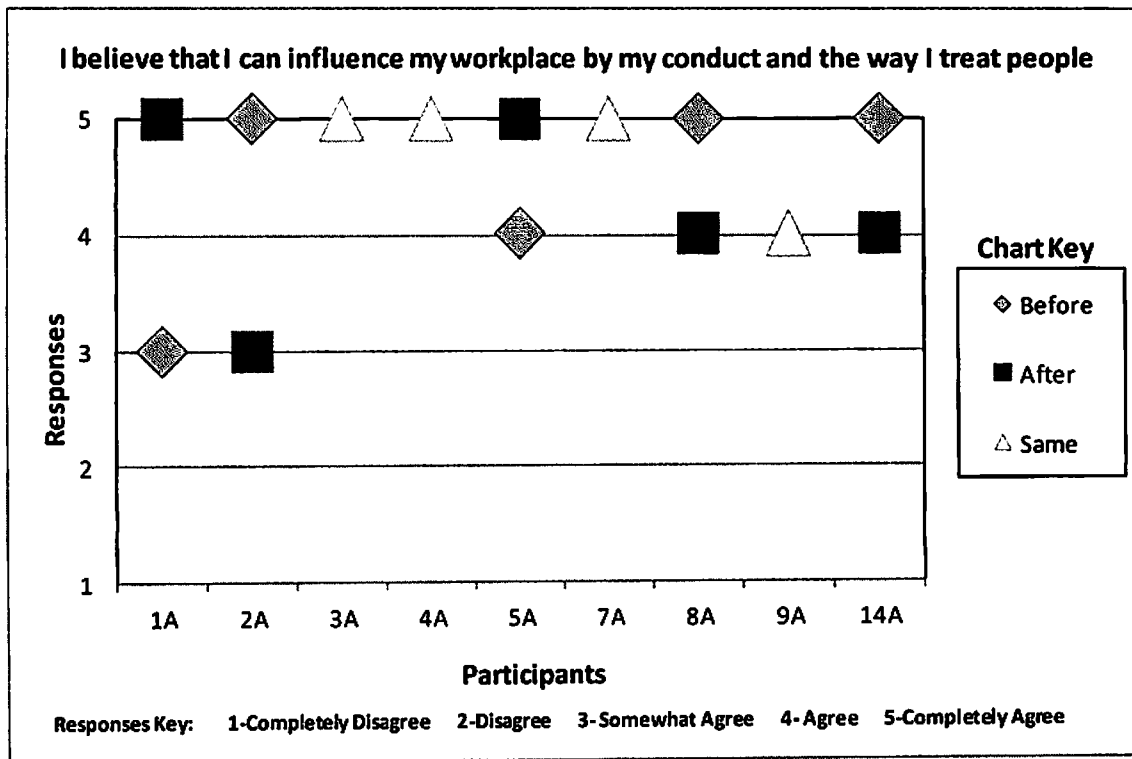
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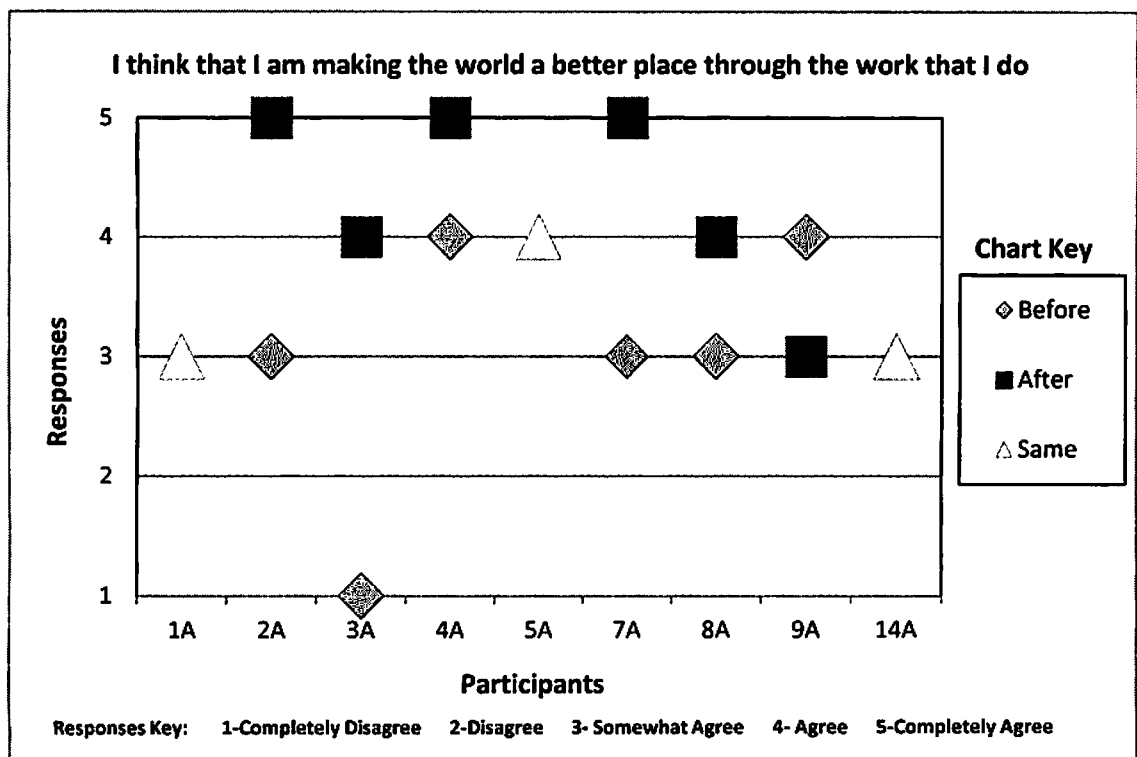
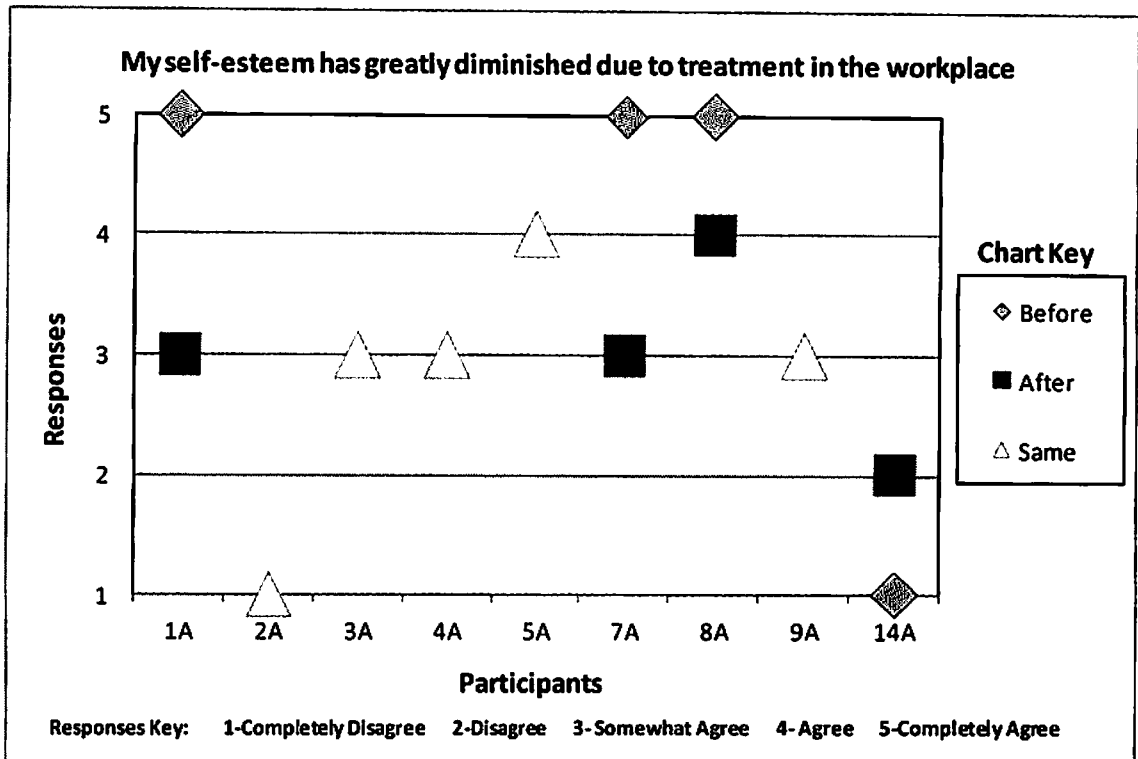
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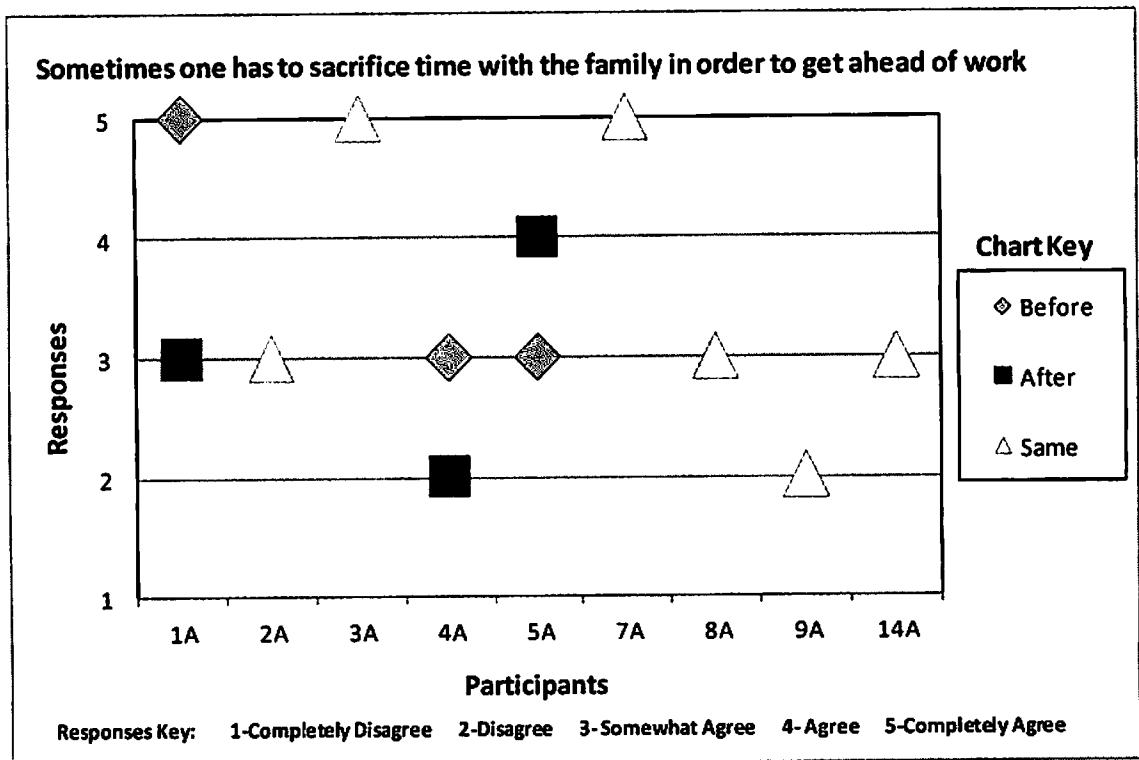
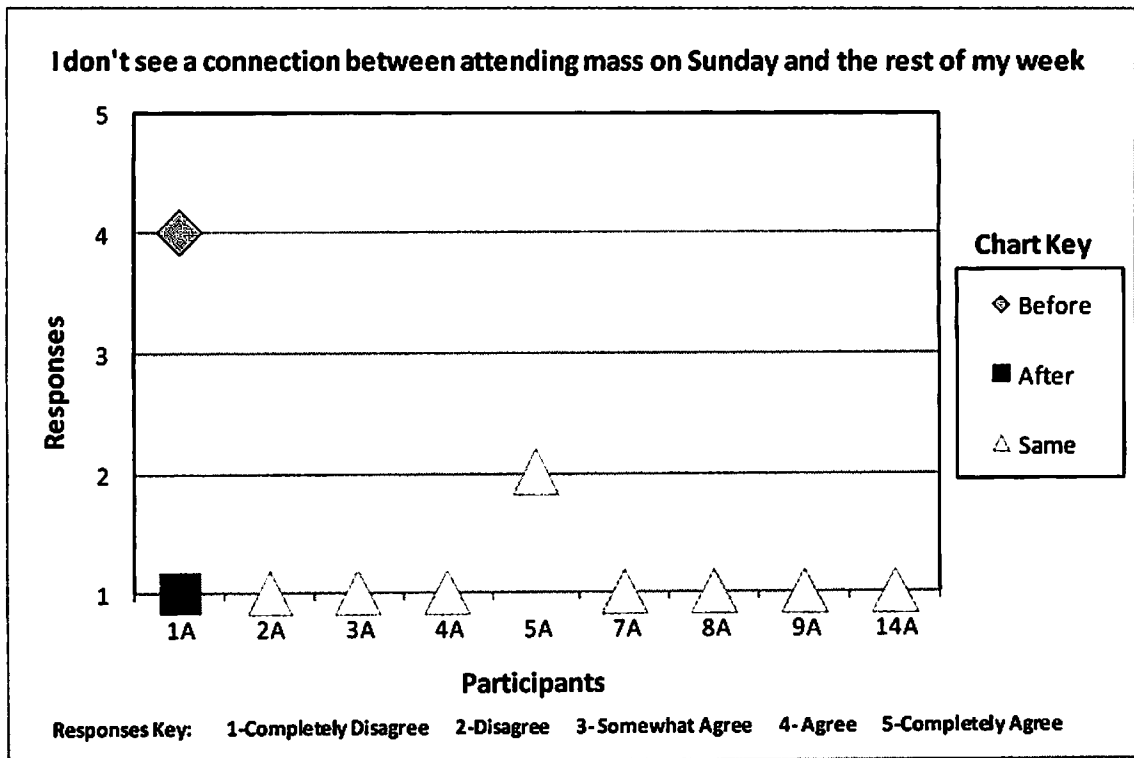
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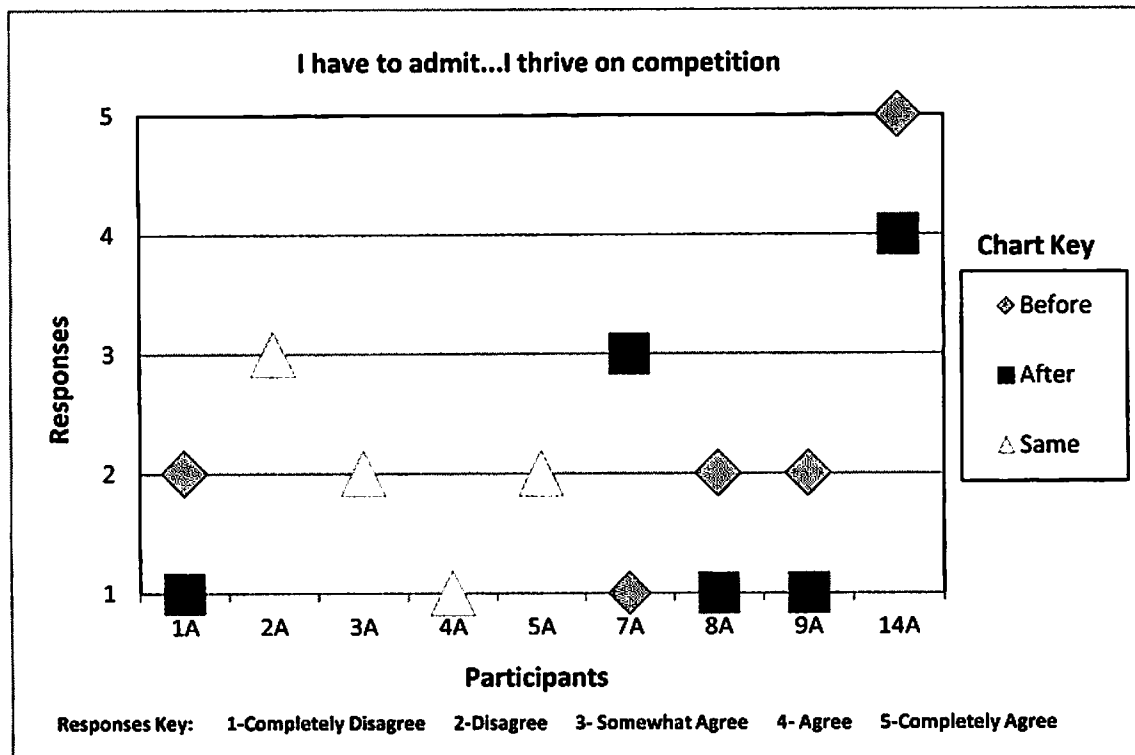
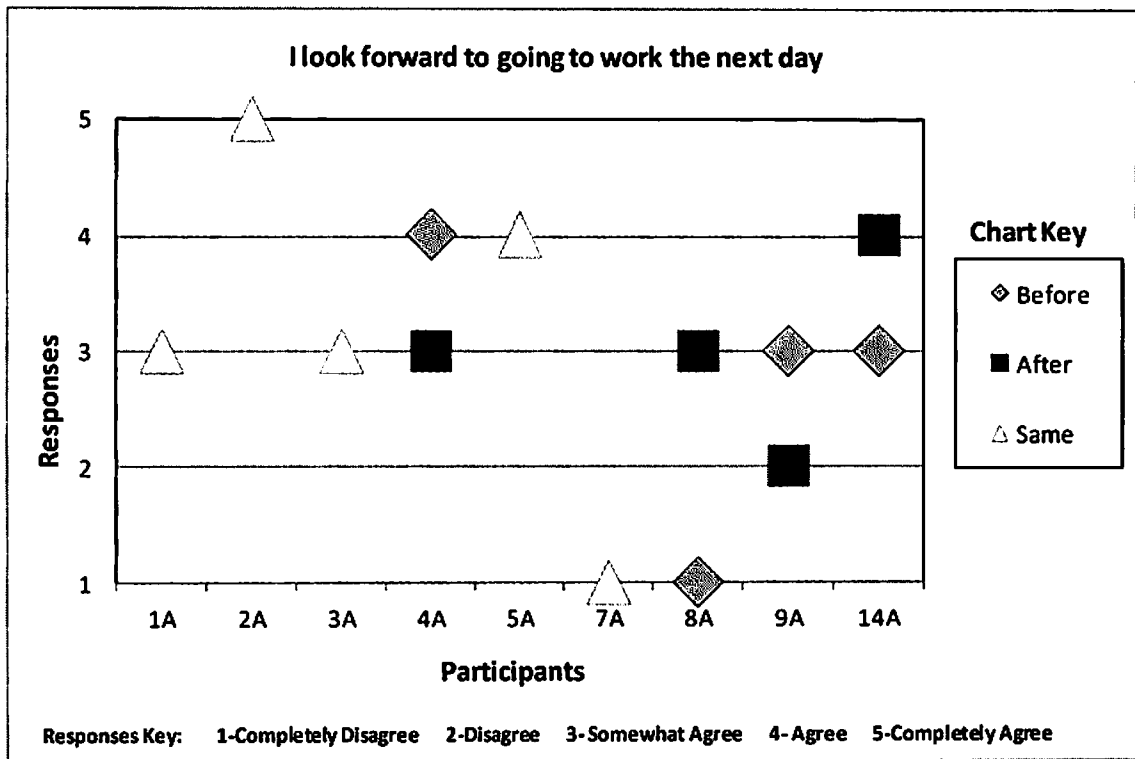
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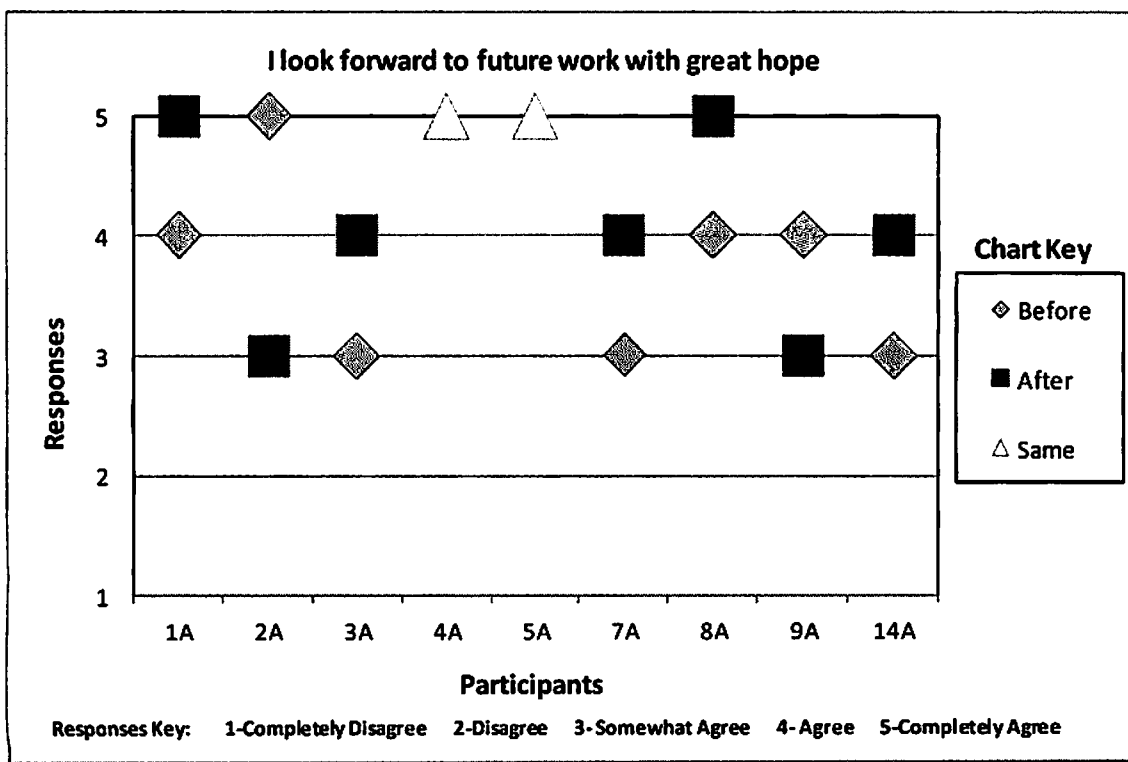
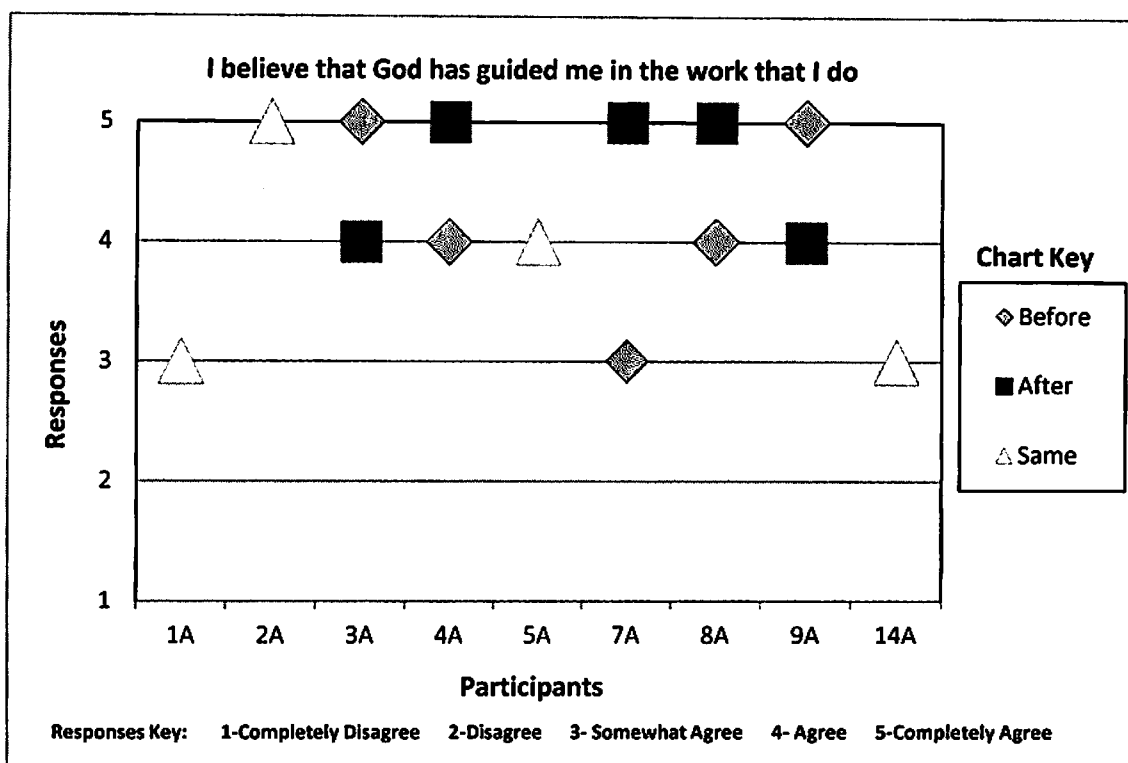
Saint Matthias Individual Results



Saint Matthias Individual Results



Saint Matthias Individual Results



APPENDIX 16
ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANT RESPSONE TO
MOTIVES/REASONS FOR WORKING
ICSST & ST. MATTHIAS

Participants at ICSST

<u>Participants</u>	<u>Responses Made Before</u>	<u>Responses Made After</u>
1B.	1.) Here am I Lord 2.) Love one another 3.) Serve as I have served you 4.) "Ora et Labora" 5.) Be steward of the earth	1.) To live as Jesus did, serving and loving others 2.) To multiply the talents He has given me 3.) To love and serve Him through the gift of Faith 4.) To reverence the earth and "materialize" gifts 5.) To bring His loving flame as best as I can with His help to light his love in the darkest places of humanity
2B.	1.) Money 2.) Self-fulfillment 3.) Challenge 4.) Mental stimulation 5.) Enjoyment	1.) Salary 2.) Interacting positively with students and having an effect in their lives 3.) Personal growth 4.) Problem solving 5.) Health benefits
3B.	1.) Passionate about my faith 2.) Love working with my husband in ministry 3.) Love working with families 4.) A feeling of giving back to the church 5.) Using the gifts God has given me	1.) Satisfaction in accomplishments 2.) Passionate about what I do 3.) Having a purpose in life 4.) Socialization 5.) Earning money
5B.	1.) Pay bills 2.) Keep my house 3.) Insufficient savings for retirement 4.) Keep self-occupied	1.) At current job- need money and security 2.) If I sat at home my mind would wonder and likely lead to worry or sin 3.) I have learned God wants me to use what He has given me for a purpose
6B.	1.) To be productive with my God given gifts 2.) To be self-sufficient and self-reliant 3.) To develop character 4.) To be of service to others 5.) To establish a sense of self worth	1.) To be productive and respond to God's command 2.) To be able to be of service 3.) To grow 4.) To be able to supply the needs of others 5.) Because I enjoy it
7B.	1.) I enjoy creating products 2.) Problem solving 3.) Providing others solutions to their challenges 4.) Building a strong team of people that is motivated, enjoys their work, and works together 5.) I am able to support my family and donate to others	1.) I believe working is an essential part of life. I am here for a purpose, to use my given talents contributing in a positive way to this world. 2.) It motivates me to fix a problem, make something better, and help others 3.) Creating something new is very energizing and motivating 4.) It brings great satisfaction seeing the fruits of my efforts 5.) The financial rewards are important to support my family and the members that work in our company
8B.	1.) Build something that benefits others 2.) Keep mentally fit 3.) Be able to work with others 4.) Support myself, be able to support family/charities 5.) Something for consistency	1.) To be of service to society 2.) Provide a structure to my day 3.) Provide a source of income for myself and for charities 4.) Use the talents that God has given me 5.) Work with others
9B.	1.) Compensation 2.) Health benefits 3.) Career goals 4.) Mission based- given back Exercise my gifts	1.) Contribution of income to family 2.) Health benefits 3.) Use my skills, experiences, talents, and to make a difference 4.) To mentor and coach my staff and others 5.) To learn, grow, and build community

Participants at St. Matthias

<u>Participants</u>	<u>Responses Made Before</u>	<u>Responses Made After</u>
1A.	1.) Money for family support 2.) Benefits 3.) Vacations 4.) Planning for Retirement 5.) Sense of obligation towards family and strong work ethic	1.) Support family (kids are in college) 2.) Benefits 3.) Vacation 4.) Sense of Contributing to workforce 5.) Retirement
2A.	1.) Financially necessary 2.) Rewarding work 3.) Interaction with diverse community 4.) Visionary leader as "boss" 5.) Opportunity to be creative and carry project to completion	1.) Necessary to provide food, clothing and shelter 2.) Enjoy my ministry 3.) Have the opportunity to share faith on a regular basis 4.) Like to be challenged 5.) Would be bored if I didn't work
3A.	1.) Financial security 2.) Role model behavior for my kids 3.) Sense of accomplishment	1.) Money 2.) Reward/fulfillment 3.) Interact with people and help people 4.) Learning opportunity
4A.	1.) To make a living 2.) To support my family 3.) To use my skills 4.) To help my clients 5.) To make a difference	1.) To earn a living 2.) To provide for my family 3.) To use my gifts 4.) To help others 5.) To make the world a better place
5A.	1.) Having fun using my gifts/ talents/ skills 2.) Variety of experiences 3.) To earn my daily bread 4.) Contact with others 5.) Keep me mentally engaged as I continue to learn new things	1.) Share my gifts/ talents/ skills 2.) Self-actualization 3.) Source of income 4.) To have fun 5.) To continue to learn
7A.	1.) Money 2.) Social Aspect 3.) Sense of Worth 4.) Good example to my kids 5.) Live comfortably	1.) Money to provide for family 2.) To continue to grow and learn 3.) to feel useful and important 4.) To be a part of a social structure 5.) To be an example to others
8A.	1.) Fulfilling /service 2.) Money 3.) Meet people 4.) Learn new things 5.) Have new experiences	1.) Doing something I love 2.) Doing service 3.) Money 4.) Occupy my time 5.) A need to help people
9A.	1.) Calling 2.) Paycheck 3.) Fulfillment 4.) Helping others 5.) To keep busy	1.) Calling 2.) Paycheck 3.) Something to do 4.) Variety 5.) Learning
14A.	1.) Personal satisfaction 2.) Ego 3.) To help others 4.) Provide for family 5.) To keep busy	1.) Help others 2.) Keep learning 3.) Social interaction 4.) Enjoy it 5.) Ego

APPENDIX 17
RETREAT ATTENDEE EVALUATIONS—ICSST & ST. MATTHIAS

**A Working Life Retreat
September 18, 2010
Evaluation Summary**

(n=9)

How would you rate the following?

1. Age:

Under 30	
30-39	
40-49	
50-65	7
Over 65	2

2. Sex:

Male	2
Female	6

3. Religious Denominations:

Roman Catholic	9
Others	0

4. Parish or Faith Community:

- St. Joseph (Lincon Parish, NJ)
- St. Michael's Church
- St. Joseph's, High Bridge
- St. Teresa
- St. Teresa of Avila (2)
- Sacred Heart-Haworth
- St. Luke's Ho-Ho-Kus (2)

Name of Diocese:

- Newark (6)
- Metuchen (1)
- Paterson (1)

Contact Person to publicize the events:

- Fr. Maurice
- Linda or Kathy
- Andy Saunders (2)

5. List the ministries in which you are involved:

- High School Scripture Teacher
- C.C.D. teacher
- Lector (2)
- Eucharistic Minister (3)
- RCIA
- Religious Education Teacher (2)
- Welcome Committee (2)
- Choir
- Worship and Prayer
- Centering Prayer

6. Educational background:

- B.S. (2)
- B.A.
- J.D.
- High School 11
- Associate Degree NJ Financial Inst.
- M.A.
- M.B.A.
- College courses

7. Occupation

- Administrator
- High School Religion Teacher
- I.T. Specialist
- Office Manager
- Shipping Manager/Supervisor
- Attorney
- Medical Social Worker (hospice)
- Retired
- Janitor, appraiser, census, etc.

8. How did you learn about this event?

Mailing	
<i>Stirrings</i> Newsletter	
Newspaper (which?)	
Church Bulletin (where?)	
Invitation (from whom?)	Friend, Julie, husband, Marcia Reina
Email (from whom?)	Steve Kass
others	Marcia, Marcia Reina, Kris Hudak

9. Please rate the following on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being excellent):

A. The event overall	5 (8); 4 (1)
B. The presenter(s) or speaker(s)	5 (8); 4 (1)
C. The moderator (if applicable)	5 (7); 3 (1)

10. What motivated you to come to today's event? What were you hoping to gain or learn by coming to today's conference?

- Faith journey. Affirmation of faith.
- Praxis credit. Didn't know.
- Reflection time
- Re-evaluate my work priorities in view of my life's priorities.
- Just started a new job. Perfect to have this time to reflect on the spiritual work.
- Supporting Julie.
- Interest-reflecting beliefs in everyday life.
- To hear others witness to the Lord's presence in their lives.
- Needed "me" time to refresh and this retreat worked for me.

11. What insight have you gained from today's event or what question did it raise?

- Some thinking moments and points
- So many, thanks!!
- Importance of sharing faith
- Commit your way to the Lord and your plans will be established.
- Integration of work and faith. Find God in everything, especially work since we spend so much time there.
- How to bring my faith into life of work.
- Not to be quiet about my faith in work.
- Many insights. Many questions. But well worth it.
- Stronger. Desire to bring my faith and belief in God to others.

12. Will you be inclined to read more about the topic of faith and work as a result of today's event?

- Yes (6)
- Possibly (2)
- Probably (1)

13. How might today's event impact your own work life, if at all?

- Feel in line with most of what already is working for me.
- I will ask questions that reveal the needs of others first.
- I will be sure to be more aware of the Lord's presence in my time working.
- Retired – make more of an effort to share faith with grandchildren.
- Trusting more God has plan for me. Makes me think about a ministry or institute of spirituality even as part of integration seminar and that I could start in the area of healthcare and/or Catholic Hospice.
- Continue to find ways to share my faith.
- View it differently.

- Less judgmental – openness to faith conversation.

14. Would you be interested in attending more workshops and retreats on the topic of work and faith in the future?

- YES (9)

Comments:

- God bless you, and all involved in this ministry.
- Interesting—well presented.
- Great job. Thanks Julie. Good luck with the rest of your stories.
- The retreat was very informative and supportive.
- After 11 years of working as social worker in children and youth to a very good organization (it was a good run); this summer God answered my prayer for a position as a medical social worker in a hospice organization. He let me know He wanted me to do this, too. Now I would like to give back. And also promote hospice and to educate people on hospice and in particular to help fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to understand the world of healthcare as informed by tradition, our experience and discerning the signs of the times.

**A Working Life Retreat
September 25, 2010
Survey Summary**

(n=25)

How would you rate the following?

1. Age:

Under 30	3
30-39	3
40-49	3
50-65	13
Over 65	3

2. Sex:

Male	7
Female	17

3. Religious Denominations:

Roman Catholic	20
Others	5

4. Parish or Faith Community:

- St. Matthias (14)
- Community Presbyterian Church, Edison
- OLOL
- St. Pauls – Williamsburg Bklyn
- St. Benedict
- St. Peters
- St. Vincent de Paul, Yardville
- Christ Church, Rockaway NJ
- Notra Dame of Mt. Carmel

Name of Diocese:

- Metuchen (16)
- Paterson
- Trenton (2)
- Brooklyn, NY
- Elizabeth

Contact Person to publicize the events:

- Deacon John (3)
- Pat Meyer
- Dee
- Pastor Paul
- Fr. Dan Swift
- Fr. Jude

5. List the ministries in which you are involved:

- Lector
- Finance council
- Cornerstone
- Spiritual direction
- Lay reader
- Altar guild
- Retreat days/ programs for groups
- Employment ministry
- Young adults small communities
- Music (3)
- Food pantry
- Pro Life
- HR Transition Group
- EM
- CCD
- RCIA
- O- Caregiver
- Elder Session
- Choir member core
- Student minister support
- Adult education
- Employment
- Cantor

6. Educational background:

- Bachelor of Commerce
- MLS Rutgers
- MS Ed. Purdue
- MS in Educ.
- Business Administration
- MA Education
- Ed. D
- MS LRHR
- BSE
- High School

- Masters in Accountancy
- MBA (2)
- Masters in Divinity
- MA Human Behavior and Org. Psych
- College Graduate

7. Occupation

- Academic Executive
- Engineer
- Part time chauffeur
- IT Consultant
- Consultant
- Writer
- IT Director
- Educator
- Human Resource Manager
- Pastoral Ministry
- Director – Finance and Accounting
- Accountant
- Accountant Assistant
- Receptionist
- HR Consultant
- School Admin
- Nurse
- Administrative Assistant
- Business Librarian
- Marketing Specialist
- Retired (2)

8. How did you learn about this event?

Mailing	
<i>Stirrings</i> Newsletter	
Newspaper (which?)	
Church Bulletin (where?)	St. Matthias (8)
Invitation (from whom?)	Mother, Deacon John
Email (from whom?)	Employment Ministry(2), Terry Seamon(2), Donna Coulsen, Dr. J. Patrick, St. Matthias Young Adults, Joe Pecoco
others	Church announcement, meeting, parishioner, Mass

9. Please rate the following on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being excellent):

A. The event overall	1(1), 4(2), 5(25)
B. The presenter(s) or speaker(s)	2(1), 4(2), 5(20)
C. The moderator (if applicable)	2(1), 4(2), 5(20)

10. What motivated you to come to today's event? What were you hoping to gain or learn by coming to today's conference?

- A desire to think through how spirituality touches my work life
- Currently unemployed looking for encouragement in job search
- For comfort and strength
- Needed to hear what was being presented maybe get a new viewpoint, be re-excited
- Topics were relevant – past – future
- The spirituality dimension
- I am a career coach – renewal and new ideas
- It couldn't do any harm. A better understanding of how all parts of life interact
- Invitation-Day for Reflection
- Growth in everyday spirituality
- A need to see why the work I do is important to others and to myself
- Interesting topic, valuable friend on team, also came to support the team.
- As a member of the ministry I was asked to participate
- Career Crises – Pending Retirement – New perspective
- Unsatisfactory work situation, trying to find meaning to my work and life
- Hope to see how Christ operates in the work place
- a greater sense of purpose fulfillment in my work, more motivation
- to strengthen my spirit as I consult to organizations that are often toxic
- guidance, support
- The value of what I can learn from others. How to be happy where I am while on my journey to the unknown in work life
- Joe Pecoco; work and god – how they mingle
- To contribute support for unemployed of the Parish. Perhaps, to redirect my own life

11. What insight have you gained from today's event or what question did it raise?

- Meditation on whether I compartmentalize my life and that impede my relationship with god and others. God's work is revealed in time and the need to long and be patient
- How to find joy at work
- That in each of us god has provided resources to contribute to the workforce and service to others. I won't "give up" but use what I have or follow my love/passion
- Faith
- Heartening to hear others grapple with these questions
- Work is pointless if it does not bring self-fulfillment. That fulfillment comes from integrating my spirituality into my work

- Saw set of common experience among attendees
- Others are in the same place we appreciated the sharing
- God is in all things, at all times – How to wait on God
- A way of looking at work differently
- Wherever I can whatever I do God is there and we are so much more connected that we know
- I need to take into account the wants and needs of others
- I'm not alone going through the challenges of work and life/spirituality questions
- Many insights – one is to remember reverence for everyone – to realize that whatever mundane Job I may have it is God's will for me
- Integrating work and spirituality
- All parts of life are connected
- I like all the stories – nice approach
- Need to reflect further on what was shared
- Discernment
- Keeping god in the equation and letting go and let God
- God is a part of all that you do – good and bad –joys and frustrations
- Sense of calm in the storm
- The concept of “pay attention”, it's okay to “break” something

12. Will you be inclined to read more about the topic of faith and work as a result of today's event?

- Yes (14)
- Possibly (1)
- Probably (1)
- Probably not (1)
- Maybe (1)

13. How might today's event impact your own work life, if at all?

- Increase reflection
- Resolving a situation at work right now—new perspective
- Look for insight from God as to how what I have to how what I have to offer minister in some way to others
- Not sure—it will unfold
- I will work harder at ways to keep myself motivated in work, which in turn will help me work harder
- Has given me perspective and things to think about when I struggle
- Love without failing
- It will cause me to stop and look at my work differently
- Connection with other's life
- Great impact—realize that where I m in life is God's will. Be ready for changes in my life that may bring difficulties but maintain faith and trust in God
- Better attitude toward unemployment
- I will be more aware of my attitude and how it carries to the different areas of my life

- Keep job seekers positive
- Prayerful end of day
- Helps me to realize that God is a part of all types of work
- More consciousness of spiritual aspect of work
- I will be more conscious of God in small actions—in all my types of work: home, office and beyond

14. Would you be interested in attending more workshops and retreats on the topic of work and faith in the future?

- YES (16)
- NO (1)
- Maybe (1)
- Sure (1)
- Absolutely (1)

Comments:

- Timing was excellent; not rushed or too slow
- I appreciate each presenter and their life story. Thanks for sharing with us.
- Thank you to all who gave their time and energy create today
- Speakers all did a very nice job and food was great
- Really appreciated the sharing
- Excellent presentations, more participations, hands on activity
- Nice job
- Excellent program. I commend every presenter
- The speakers were really excellent! Thoughtful, carefully formulated and pre-crafted. Truly great!

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