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The Relationship between the Catholic Teacher's Faith and Commitment  
In the Catholic High School

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By

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# The Relationship between the Catholic Teacher's Faith and Commitment In the Catholic High School

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Church documents recognize that the Catholic teacher's faith, mediated through a teacher's commitment, is one of the crucial factors that guarantees the success of the Catholic school (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1982, 2007). A number of researchers support this view with their findings (Ciriello, 1987; Tarr, 1992; Tiernan, 2000). However, until now, there has not been research that focused specifically on the relationship between Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment within the context of the Catholic high school. This dissertation study investigated (1) Catholic teachers' faith, (2) the relationships between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment, and (3) the school's three environmental characteristics associated with the relationships between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment in Catholic high schools.

A national sample of 751 teachers from 39 Catholic high schools in 15 archdioceses participated in a self-administered website survey. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Pearson correlation, and a multiple hierarchical regression model. The findings of this study showed that Catholic teachers generally had a strong degree of belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith. And on the whole the teachers' faith degrees were stronger than typical American Catholics. There were significant relationships between the four dimensions of Catholic teachers' faith (belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith) and the four dimensions of their commitment (commitment

to mission, the school, teaching, and students). Among the four dimensions of Catholic faith, a living faith was most influential in all the four dimensions of teacher commitment. Among the four dimensions of teacher commitment, commitment to mission was most strongly connected with all four dimensions of the faith. Lastly, the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership made significant additional contributions to Catholic teachers' commitment to the school, teaching, and students produced by their faith variables.

The findings of this study strongly suggest that Catholic teachers' living faith that is placed in the center of intrinsic motivation for their school lives and activities needs to be acknowledged as a critical predictor contributing to teacher commitment.

This dissertation by Young Kwan Cho fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in Education approved by Merylann J. Schuttloffel, Ph.D., as Director, and by John J. Convey, Ph. D., and by Kathleen C. Perencevich, Ph.D. as Readers.

  
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## **DEDICATION**

To

My God,

My parents,

My Catholic Church,

And

Committed Catholic educators

With

Deep gratitude and sincere love

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## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

Teacher commitment is a very important subject in terms of school success and students' academic achievement (Dannetta, 2002; Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington, & Gu, 2007; Firestone, 1996; Kushman, 1992; Louis, 1998; Reyes, 1990; Tsui & Cheng, 1999). Teacher commitment has also been recognized as a crucial factor influencing the effectiveness of the Catholic high school (Bempechat, Boulay, Piergross, & Wenk, 2008; Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Convey, 1992; Guerra, Donahue, & Benson, 1990; Schaub, 2000). According to studies related to the effectiveness of the Catholic high school, teachers in those schools in general are committed to their school, teaching, and students (Bryk et al., 1993; Guerra et al., 1990; Irvine & Foster, 1996; Schaub, 2000).

Guerra et al. (1990) stated that the commitment of teachers in Catholic high schools "strengthened by their perception of a shared religious mission" has a positive and powerful influence on student academic achievement (p.17). After detailed observation of teachers and students in Catholic high schools, Bryk et al. (1993) concluded that teachers in Catholic high schools are committed to high standards in classroom work, show themselves as role models for their students, and are positive about their work even though salaries are low; students recognize their teachers as patient, respectful, and happy with their teaching. Schaub (2000) also reported that Catholic high school teachers are committed to their work and their students in spite of relatively low salaries in comparison with public high school teachers. Such positive reports on teachers' commitment to the

school, teaching, and students in Catholic high schools raise the following question: Why do Catholic teachers devote themselves to their school?

Even though empirical research studies on teacher commitment in the Catholic high school are few in number, studies that dealt with Catholic high schools have indicated significant relationships among teacher commitment and constructs, such as a sense of vocation, goal and value consensus among school members, a strong sense of community, and religiosity (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Bryk et al., 1993; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Convey, 1992; Tarr, 1992; Tiernan, 2000). The essential synthesizing element among these characteristics seems to be the Catholic faith. The Church's documents have consistently emphasized that the Catholic teacher's faith is the most essential factor that guarantees the success of the Catholic school through a teacher's school commitment (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2002, 2007). Indeed, Ciriello (1987), Tarr (1992), and Tiernan (2000) infer that there is strong connection between Catholic teachers' faith and their school commitment in the Catholic high school.

The Catholic high school is, first of all, an educational institution of the Catholic Church. As a consequence, the Catholic Church's philosophy has consistently had a great impact on not only the identity and values of the Catholic high school but also the education-view, attitude, and behaviors of the Catholic high school's teachers (Groome, 1996; Jacobs, 1996). In addition, the Catholic high school is acknowledged as a faith community as well as an educating community (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Ferraro, 1990; Moore, 2000). Accordingly, the Catholic high school obviously has equally important, dual purposes for schooling: academic development and faith development of students; it pursues integration between learning and faith as its ultimate goal (CCE, 1977, 1982, 1997,

2007). In short, Catholic high schools have distinctive goals, values, and culture rooted in Catholicism and their education activities are also based on Catholic values. As a result, the climate of the Catholic high school has typically attracted Catholic teachers who have a faith (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Convey, 1992; Massucci, 1993), and the teachers' faith has been recognized as an important motive causing teacher commitment to school activities including the evangelizing mission of the Church (Convey, 1992; McLaughlin, 1996; Moore, 2000; Tarr, 1992). However, until now, there has not been research that focused specifically on the relations between Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment within the context of the Catholic high school. This dissertation study focuses on exploring the detailed concrete correlations between Catholic faith and school commitment of teachers in the Catholic high school. But, the correlation between Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment is complex because both Catholic faith and teacher commitment are not simple, but complex, multidimensional concepts.

Catholic faith is understood as a multidimensional concept having three components – belief (cognitive), intimacy with God (affective), and action (behavioral) (Groome, 1980; 2003; Kreeft, 2001). Even though these three components are essential to the life of Christians, all Christians are not likely to have all three components of faith equally developed. Some proportion of Catholic teachers would have a living faith that integrates the three components evenly whereas others would lean more toward the cognitive dimension (belief), toward the affective dimension (intimacy with God), or toward the behavioral dimension (action) than the other two dimensions. Teacher commitment is also multidimensional; it is generally categorized into three dimensions by many researchers (Danneta, 2002; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Mimi, 1999; Nir, 2002;

Park, 2005): organizational commitment, professional commitment, and commitment to student. As well, in Catholic schools teacher commitment includes another dimension, commitment to mission. This is because Catholic schools pursue the evangelizing mission of the Church as their unique, essential goal.

Also, the Catholic high school's distinctive environment related to Catholicism needs to be considered as a mediating factor that would influence the relationship between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment. Tsui and Cheng (1999) reported that school environment has not only strong interactions with personal characteristics but also great influence on teacher motivation and commitment. It seems to be obvious that Catholic teachers' faith will closely interact with the Catholic high school's environment rooted in Catholicism, and the interactions between them will influence teacher commitment. Based on research studies regarding Catholic schooling, three distinctive environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school are examined as mediating factors for this study: the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture, and the principal's spiritual leadership (Benson et al., 1986; Bryk et al., 1993; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Convey, 1992; Grace, 1996; Irvine & Foster, 1996; Schuttloffel, 1999).

In conclusion, the intent of this study is to investigate various correlations between the multi-dimensions that Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment have within the context of the Catholic high school.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment within the context of the Catholic high school. For this purpose, this study investigated the dimensions of Catholic teachers' faith, and then it examined

relationships between the four dimensions of the faith construct (belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith) and the four dimensions defining the construct of teacher commitment (mission, the school, teaching, and students) in Catholic high schools. In addition, it investigated whether or not three environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school (the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture, and the principal's spiritual leadership) have an effect on the relationships between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers.

### **Research Questions**

This study explored the following questions.

1. To what extent do Catholic teachers in Catholic high schools report that they believe the tenets of Catholicism (the cognitive dimension), have a loving relationship with God (the affective dimension), practice their faith (the behavioral dimension), and live their faith in their lives (the integral dimension)?
2. Are there significant relationships between multi-dimensions of Catholic teachers' reported faith and commitment in the Catholic high school?
  - 2-1. Which dimension of faith is most influential in teacher commitment?
  - 2-2. Which dimension among the four dimensions of teacher commitment is strongly associated with Catholic teachers' faith?
3. Do a Catholic teacher's perceptions of the three distinctive environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school (the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture, and the principal's spiritual leadership) have an effect on the relationships between the Catholic teacher's reported faith and commitment?

## **Hypothesis**

The following hypotheses were examined in conjunction with the research questions:

1. There will be significant relationships between the four dimensions (belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith) of Catholic teachers' reported faith and the four dimensions (mission, the school, teaching, and students) of their reported commitment in the Catholic high school.
  - 1-1. A living faith that means harmonious integration of belief, intimacy with God, and action will be most influential in teacher commitment.
  - 1-2. Among the four dimensions of teacher commitment, commitment to mission will be most strongly connected with faith of Catholic teachers.
2. A Catholic teacher's perceptions of the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership will have an effect on the relationships between the Catholic teacher's reported faith and commitment.

## **Conceptual Framework**

Since the main focus of this study is the relationship between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school, Catholic faith and teacher commitment become two core concepts or variables: Catholic faith as the predictor and teacher commitment as the outcome. Catholic faith and teacher commitment both are not simple but multidimensional concepts. Therefore, it is necessary to fully analyze the core components of each concept because the purpose of this study is to investigate various correlations between the multi-dimensions of each concept.

Another important concept for this study is the Catholic high school's environment. The Catholic high school's environment is the mediating variable impacting the relations between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers. This is because some distinctive characteristics of the Catholic high school such as goals and values rooted in Catholicism, faith community culture, and spiritual leadership of the principal can be intrinsic motivating forces that enable faith-filled Catholic teachers to feel connected to the school and that encourage them to be dedicated to their school.

The main characteristics of these three concepts and the relationship among them will be presented here.

### **Catholic faith.**

In general, faith is defined as "strong belief in God" (The New Oxford American Dictionary, 2005), but faith must be recognized as a multidimensional concept more than "strong belief in God" (intellectual faith). Faith contains belief, but it is beyond belief. In a psychological analysis of faith, Lewis (1974) indicated that faith has three components – the cognitive, the affective, and the active.

Catholic faith, in *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1997), is defined as "man's response to God, who reveals Himself and gives Himself to man" (p.17). In Catholicism, faith is primarily a loving action of God toward man and, at the same time, authentically a human act as a human's response to God's calling (U. S. Catholic Conference, 1997). As a human's response to God's loving invitation, Catholic faith has been recognized to have three essential components: (1) belief (the cognitive dimension), (2) intimacy with God (the affective dimension), and (3) action (the behavioral dimension) (Groome, 1980, 2003; Kreeft, 2001; Pollard, 1989).

Belief (in God and in the tenets of Catholicism) is the first component of Catholic faith. As the cognitive dimension, belief can also be called intellectual faith or head-faith (Groome, 1980, 2003; Lewis, 1974). Belief is to know and acknowledge the contents of faith with all capacities of the mind including reason (Arnold, 1964). This intellectual faith is necessary because one cannot hold faith toward God unless he or she knows God and the contents of faith (Lewis, 1974). Therefore, in one aspect, faith is a matter of understanding and intelligence (Arnold, 1964; Sokolowski, 2006). Faith clearly requires cognitive understanding and conviction about the tenets of Catholicism rooted in the revelation of the Bible and the tradition of the Catholic Church. However, head-faith alone is inadequate because faith is a mystery. All of the contents of faith cannot be completely revealed and understood by the mind and reason (Groome, 2003). Faith must be more than belief.

Intimacy with God is the second component of Catholic faith. As the affective dimension, it is called heart-faith (Groome, 1980, 2003; Lewis, 1974). Intimacy with God means for Christians to feel God's love and to love God with their hearts. Catholic faith, as more than an agreement of the mind, binds a man to God's love and makes a man enter into relations with Him (Arnold, 1964). The mysteries of faith are also accepted through a loving relationship with God beyond the understanding of reason and intelligence. Karl Rahner (1978), one of the most influential Catholic theologians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, emphasizes that Christian faith is not just to believe a collection of abstract doctrines and mysterious rituals, but is essentially responding to the deepest longings of the heart toward God. However, Catholic faith still needs one more dimension, 'action,' in order to be a

lived reality. The reason is why, in Catholicism, “faith without works is dead” (James 2:26).

Action is the third component of Catholic faith. As the behavioral dimension, action refers to hand-faith (Groome, 1980, 2003). Action is to perform the will of God, to love and serve others, and to be dedicated to the Church. Jesus consistently emphasized action following belief: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). Therefore, Christians must apply their faith to their lives through behaviors and activities. In other words, intellectual faith and heart-faith should be revealed through their devoted behaviors for their neighbors, the society, and the Church.

When both intellectual faith and heart-faith are closely connected with hand faith, the faith becomes a living faith. A living faith means the harmonious integration among the three dimensions of faith. A living faith integrating the mind, heart, and action becomes lived, personalized, and internalized within one’s life (Schuttloffel, 1999). The internalized living faith impacts one’s identity, values, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors in all aspects of life. Therefore, only if Catholic Christians have a living faith, can they live their faith fully and put their faith into practice in all aspects of life. A life of agape (unconditional love) is a paragon of a living faith because Catholic faith has its root in love (Saint-Laurent, 2007) and “being a Christian means having love” (Ratzinger, 2006, p.72). A life of agape can be expressed in a variety of ways such as unselfish love, compassion, collaboration, caring, honesty, sincerity, and generosity in a Catholic person’s attitudes and behaviors (Groome, 2003). Through the pursuit of a life of agape, a living faith becomes

the core factor that enables Catholic Christians to cultivate commitment to the Church, the neighbor, and the society.

A living faith is the most ideal model of Catholic faith. But, in reality, it seems to be impossible for all Catholics to possess a living faith. Only some proportion of Catholic Christians would have a living faith that integrates the three components evenly, and many other Catholic Christians would possess the three components of faith in considerably different degrees. That is, as the individuals' religious background, experiences, disposition, and environment vary, their inclination toward the three components of faith will differ and the strength of faith will also differ.

#### **Teacher commitment.**

Recently, a number of researchers have defined commitment as a psychological attachment or bond of an individual to someone or something that has a special meaning (Cohen, 2007; Park, 2005; Somech & Bogler, 2002; Tyree, 1996). But, in this study, commitment includes a 'behavioral' (involvement and dedication) dimension as well as an 'affective' (loyalty and bond) dimension. This study proposes that a true commitment must be a lived reality revealed through concrete actions.

Teacher commitment is multidimensional; it is generally categorized into three dimensions by many researchers (Danneta, 2002; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Mimi, 1999; Nir, 2002; Park, 2005): commitment to the school, commitment to teaching, and commitment to students. But, for this study, it is required to add one dimension, commitment to mission. This is because of the distinctiveness of Catholic high school teachers on which this study focuses. Since the Catholic high school as an educational institution of the Church pursues the evangelizing mission of the Church as its unique,

essential goal, Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school are encouraged to participate in the mission by appearing as a witness to faith and helping students develop Catholic belief and values (Convey, 1992). Therefore, commitment to mission should be acknowledged as one important dimension of teacher commitment in the Catholic high school. In this study, teacher commitment is categorized into four dimensions: mission, the school, teaching, and students.

Commitment to mission refers to commitment to religious mission rooted in Catholic philosophy and values. Since the Catholic high school is an educational institution of the Church, participating in the evangelizing mission of the Church has been recognized as the most important role required of Catholic teachers in the Catholic school (CCE, 1977, 1982; Convey, 1992). According to Convey (1992), many Catholic teachers want to work in a Catholic school because of their desire to participate in the evangelizing mission of the Church. In order to practice the evangelizing mission of the Church, the most important quality that a Catholic teacher must have is Catholic faith (CCE, 1997). In this study, commitment to mission indicates teachers' strong acceptance and participation in the evangelizing mission of their school, a willingness to appear as a witness to faith by word and deed, and helping students develop Christian beliefs and values.

Commitment to the school means loyalty, identification, and involvement to the school as a workplace (Meyer & Allen, 1997). This commitment has been generally indicated to have three components: strong belief in and acceptance of the school's goals and values, a willingness to dedicate oneself to school work and activities, and a strong intention to remain in the school (Danneta, 2002; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Park, 2005; Somech & Bogler, 2002; Tyree, 1996). Also, based on the Catholic school's climate

emphasizing the school as community (Moore, 2000; USCCB, 1972), creating a sense of community within the school should be considered as an important aspect of commitment to the school. Therefore, in this study, teacher commitment to school means a teacher's strong acceptance and support of goals and values of the school, a willingness to dedicate oneself to school work and activities, a strong intention to remain in the school, and effort toward building community within the school.

Commitment to teaching refers to teachers' strong effort and involvement in instruction and teaching subjects in order to teach effectively (Louis, 1998; Tyree, 1996). A teacher committed to teaching will express a strong orientation toward instruction and the teaching subject, spend more time and energy preparing for instruction, and try to have opportunities to broaden their professional knowledge (Nir, 2002; Zehm & Kottler, 1993). In a wide range, commitment to teaching involves a commitment to the learning of students because many teachers have a desire to make a difference in students' lives by maximizing students' learning through their effective teaching (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Somech & Bogler, 2002). But, in this study, commitment to teaching excludes the factor of teachers' concern and effort for student achievement. That factor is included in commitment to students.

Commitment to students refers to a teacher's dedication to students' learning and behavior (Park, 2005). This commitment is associated with teachers' caring for students, a willingness to help students, taking responsibility for improving students' learning and school life, and forming strong emotional bonds with students (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Park, 2005). Many teachers recognize students' academic achievement and welfare as core parts of commitment to students (Tyree, 1996). Also, teachers who are committed

to students pay particular attention to students who are academically at risk (Louis, 1998; Park, 2005).

According to a number of research studies dealing with teacher commitment, it will be increased or diminished by factors such as student behavior and background (Dannetta, 2002), teacher sense of efficacy (Rosenholz, 1989), collegial and administrative support (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Cherkowski, 2005), workplace conditions (Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Louis, 1998; Rosenholtz, 1989;), and teachers' passion, values, and belief (Cherkowski, 2005; Crosswell & Elliot, 2002, 2004). Teacher commitment should be comprehensively understood not by any single factor, but by multiple factors and by a mixture among the factors (Mimi, 1999). However, in this study, the 'faith' factor is considered as the most important predictor of teacher commitment in the Catholic high school. The critical reason is why for Catholic teachers, their strong faith is likely to be placed in the center of intrinsic motivation creating teacher commitment. In Catholic schools, Catholic teachers are encouraged to look at all aspects of life from a faith perspective. Also, when a Catholic teacher has a living faith integrating the mind, heart, and action, the faith becomes lived and internalized within the teacher's life and work. Therefore, the internalized faith of a Catholic teacher would impact the individual's identity, values, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors at his or her school work and activities and, as a consequence, the faith would be directly associated with teacher commitment.

#### **The Catholic high school.**

Thomas Groome (1996), in *What Makes a School Catholic*, indicates that the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism itself create the distinctiveness of the Catholic school because it forms a part of the Church. Like Groome's statement, the Catholic high

school, as an educational institution of the Church, has some distinctive environmental characteristics in comparison with the public high school. The distinctive characteristics that can impact the relations between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment in the Catholic high school are (1) the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, (2) the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and (3) the principal's spiritual leadership (Bryk et al., 1993; Convey, 1992; Grace, 1996; Hoffer, 2000; Irvine & Foster, 1996).

First of all, principles of Catholic faith rooted in Jesus Christ become internal motivation toward educational goals and activities of the Catholic school (CCE, 1977, 1982). The Church's leaders have consistently stressed that the Catholic school's most important task is "fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life" (CCE, 1977, #37), and its unique purpose is to seek the Church's evangelizing mission (CCE, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2002, 2007; Grochowski, 2008; USCCB, 1972, 2005). Also, religious education designed to develop students' Christian beliefs and values is recognized as the most essential activity of the Catholic school (Miller, 2005). That is, Catholic high schools' goals and values are closely connected to Catholic faith. Therefore, the relations between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment in the Catholic high school would be intensified through the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism.

The community culture based on the Gospel is also one of the crucial characteristics of the Catholic school. The Church has continually stressed the communal nature of the Church's institutions. Thus, building and living in community have been "prime, explicit goals of the contemporary Catholic school" (USCCB, 1972, #118), and mutual respect and cooperation among all school members has been considered as the

cornerstone forming the ideal school community (CCE, 1977). Catholic teachers' moral attitudes or behaviors such as compassion, collaboration, kindness, caring, and generosity that are likely to flow out from their faith seem to become the critical basis for building and developing a community culture of the Catholic school. Also, when Catholic teachers work within a strong faith community, their faith is likely to be more positively associated with their school commitment than when they work within a relatively weak faith community.

The principal's spiritual leadership is also a distinctive environmental characteristic of the Catholic high school. In terms of the religious mission of the Catholic school, principals in the Catholic high school are recognized as spiritual leaders (Carr, 2000; Ciriello, 1994; Jacobs, 2005; Wao, 2005). Their main roles as the spiritual leaders are to perform the evangelizing mission of the Church, to intensify their school's Catholic identity, to build a sense of faith community, and to foster integration between faith, culture, and life (Jacobs, 2005; Schuttloffel, 1999, 2008; Wao, 2005). In schools, the principals' leadership plays the crucial role in not only creating an environment in which teacher commitment can happen but also sustaining teachers' commitment (Cherkowski, 2005; Day et al., 2007; Schein, 2004). Similarly, in Catholic high schools, principals' spiritual leadership is likely to become an important catalytic factor that motivates Catholic teachers who have a strong faith to be dedicated to their school work and activities related to Catholic values more delightfully.

Figure 1 illustrates the formulated conceptual framework of the relationship between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school.

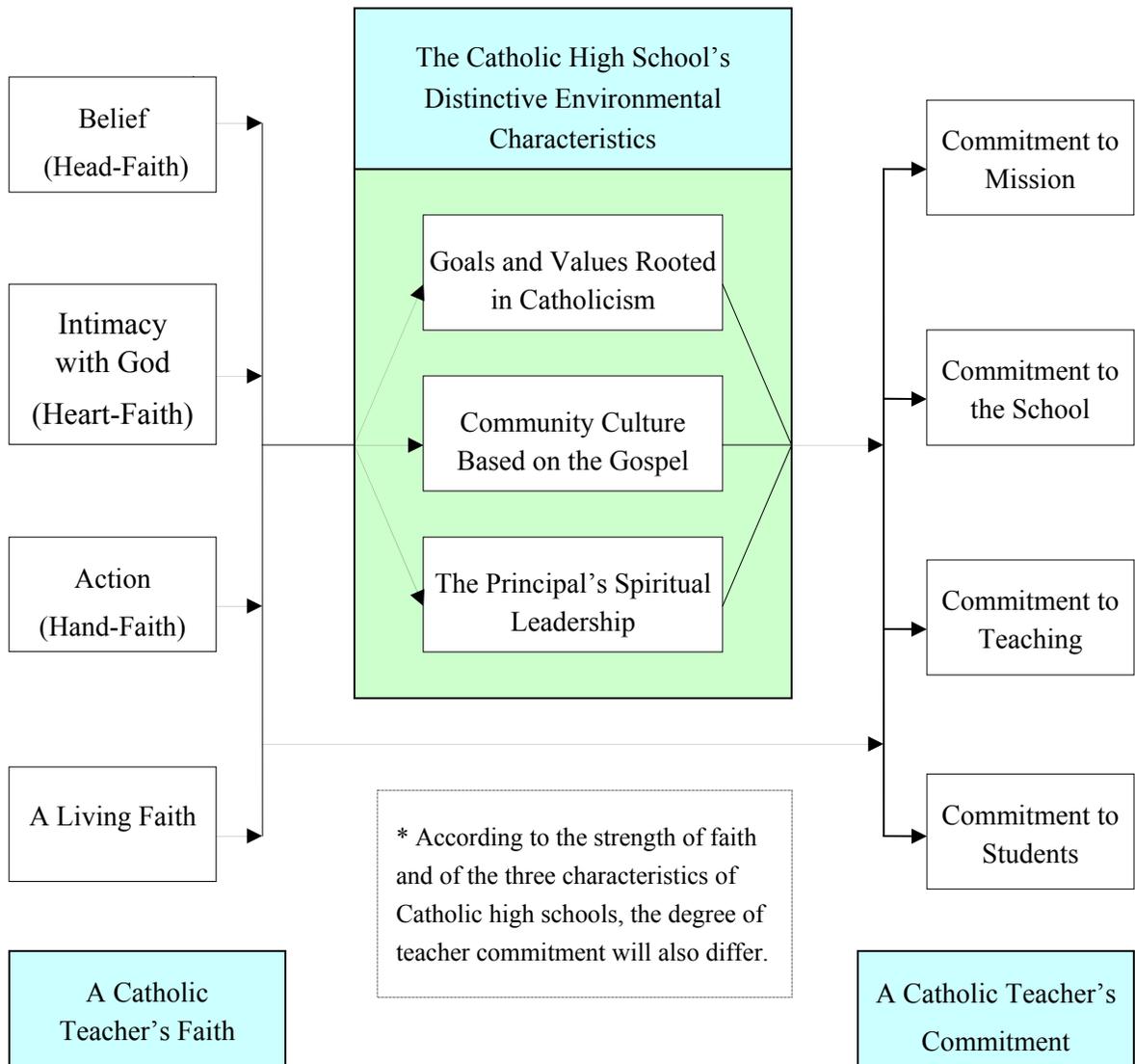


Figure 1. The formulated conceptual framework on the relationship between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school

## **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined for the purpose of this study.

**Faith**: A human's response to God's calling that has three components of the cognitive, the affective, and the active (Lewis, 1974; USCC, 1997).

**Catholic faith**: Catholic Christians' belief, intimacy with God, and action based on Catholicism as the response to God's calling (Groome, 1980, 2003; Kreeft, 2001; USCC, 1997).

**Head-faith (intellectual faith)**: Belief in God and the tenets of Catholicism as the cognitive dimension of Catholic faith (Groome, 1980, 2003).

**Heart-faith**: Intimacy with God or close relationship with God as the affective dimension of Catholic faith (Groome, 1980, 2003).

**Hand-faith**: Devotional attitudes and behaviors toward neighbors, the society, and the Church as the behavioral dimension of Catholic faith (Groome, 1980, 2003).

**A living faith**: A faith having all three dimensions of head, heart, and hand evenly. It is the most ideal model of Catholic faith (Groome, 1980, 2003).

**Faith-sense**: Understanding of life in the light of God as a sense of fitting one's life into the pattern of faith values, beliefs, and ideals that have been handed on from previous generations (Kinast, 1999).

**Spirituality and Religiousness (or religiosity)**: Two concepts closely tied to Catholic faith.

**Spirituality** refers to the personal, subjective dimension of faith related to Catholics' personal relationship with God, religious experiences, and direction in life (Bacik, 2002; Teasdale, 1999).

**Religiousness (or religiosity)** refers to the institutional, formal dimension of Catholic faith associated with formal belief, religious dedication, and religious activities such as performance of rituals, attendance at services, church membership, and commitment to the Church (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005).

**Commitment**: A psychological attachment and devoted behaviors of an individual to someone or something that has a special meaning (Cohen, 2007; Somech & Bogler, 2002).

**Teacher Commitment**: As a multidimensional concept, a Catholic teacher's commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students in the Catholic school (Convey, 1992).

**Commitment to mission**: A teacher's commitment to religious mission rooted in Catholic philosophy and values such as teachers' strong acceptance and participation in the evangelizing mission of their school, a willingness to appear as a witness to faith by word and deed, and helping students develop Christian beliefs and values (Convey, 1992).

**Commitment to the school**: A teacher's bond to and involvement in the school as a workplace linked with a teacher's strong acceptance and support of the goals and values of the school, dedication to the school including spending extra time on school work, a willingness to remain in the school, and effort toward building a school community (Mowday et al., 1979).

**Commitment to teaching**: A teacher's strong involvement in instruction and teaching subjects, such as expressing a strong orientation toward instruction and teaching subject, spending more time and energy preparing for instruction, and trying to have opportunities to broaden their professional knowledge (Tyree, 1996).

**Commitment to students**: A teacher's dedication to students' learning and behavior associated with teachers' caring for students, a willingness to help students, taking

responsibility for improving students' learning and school life, and strong emotional bonds with students (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1998).

**The Catholic school:** An educational institution of the Catholic Church actualizing the identity and values of the Catholic Church rooted in Jesus Christ (CCE, 1977).

**The School's community culture based on the Gospel:** On the basis of principles of the gospel, to build and live the school as a community through faith sharing, mutual respect, and cooperation among all school members (CCE, 1977; USCCB, 1972).

**The principal's spiritual leadership:** The function of the principal to foster the spiritual or religious mission of Catholic high schools, such as to perform the evangelizing mission of the Church, to intensify their school's Catholic identity, to build a sense of faith community, and to actualize integration between faith, culture, and life (Jacobs, 2005; Schuttloffel, 1999, 2008; Wao, 2005).

### **Significance of the Study**

Currently, a number of research studies have been created with regard to teacher commitment. However, until now, no study directly deals with the relationship between faith and commitment of teachers in the Catholic high school. This study will be able to contribute to the body of research by including faith as one of the personal and intrinsic predictors influencing teacher commitment.

Secondly, this study will show whether there is a gap between the Church's expectation for Catholic school teachers and teachers' actual faith as demonstrated in Catholic high schools. The Church's leaders believe that Catholic teachers' living faith is essential for achieving school success and maintaining the unique identity of the Catholic school. In the U. S., the Church's bishops also have consistently emphasized that Catholic

school teachers “should be grounded in a faith-based Catholic culture, have strong bonds to Christ and the Church, and be witnesses to the faith both in their words and actions” (USCCB, 2005, p.9). In reality, how do Catholic teachers believe, have a relationship with God, practice their faith, and live their faith in their lives as manifested in the Catholic high school? Do they have strong faith? This study provides detailed concrete information about Catholic teachers’ faith in the Catholic high school.

### **Limitations**

This study focuses on Catholic teachers’ faith and commitment in the Catholic high school. Therefore, it is uncertain that teachers’ faith discussed within the context of the Catholic high school will have the same meaning with teachers’ faith in high schools from other Christian denominations or different religions even though most worldwide religions have commonly shared aspects in regard to the concept of faith. For example, Catholicism emphasizes tradition and community, whereas evangelical Protestantism in the United States stresses individualism in faith (Paloutzian & Park, 2005). Accordingly, this study has the limitation of generalizing the relationship between faith and commitment of teachers in high schools related to other religions.

It is also uncertain that the results of this study will exactly reflect the relationship between faith and commitment of Catholic elementary school teachers. This is because there seem to be some differences in teacher identity, school goals, and school environment between Catholic high schools and Catholic elementary schools even though Catholic high school teachers and Catholic elementary school teachers share same Catholic faith. For example, the Catholic elementary school is likely to be more Catholic mission oriented than the Catholic high school. According to Hunt, Joseph, and Nuzzi (2004),

recognition of their vocation and the role as Catholic teachers on the spiritual and faith formation of students is likely to be higher in the Catholic elementary school than in the Catholic high school. The reason is that while Catholic high schools pursue integration between academic development and religious formation of students, Catholic elementary schools, because of their association with parishes, often seek religious formation of students as their primary goal (Tichy, 2004). Therefore, this study also has a limitation of generalizing the relationship between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers in Catholic elementary schools.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

In the previous chapter, an overview of the research problem, the purpose and hypotheses of this study, and a conceptual framework for this study were introduced. This chapter will review the literature that provides the rationale for this study and demonstrate why this study is valuable. The contents this chapter will explore are: (1) the nature of Catholic faith and Catholic high school teachers' faith, (2) the nature of teacher commitment and faith as a critical intrinsic motivation for teacher commitment, and (3) major characteristics of the Catholic school revealed in the Church's documents and three distinctive environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school. Finally, as the synthesis of all the discussions the relationship between a teacher' faith and commitment in the Catholic high school will be argued.

#### **Catholic Faith and Catholic High School Teachers**

##### **The nature of catholic faith.**

What is meant by Catholic faith is not just a global concept or general religious attitude that embraces various religious contents. James Fowler, who created a theory of faith development, understands the term faith very broadly (Astley, 1992). He insists that faith may or may not be religious (Fowler, 1981, 1992); faith is a quality of the person, an orientation of life as "a generic feature of human beings" (Fowler, 1996, p.55). However, Catholic faith has its unique and exclusive contents and character. It is determined by what Catholic Christians believe (Guardini, 1998). First of all, Catholic faith is fundamentally

rooted in Jesus Christ. For Catholics, Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6) for the world’s salvation. Therefore, a total acceptance of Jesus as “the Son of God, the Son of Mary, Word Incarnate, Savior of the world, and head of the church” in faith becomes the fundamental response of Catholics (Rigali, 2003, p.38). Also, Catholic Christians essentially believe in the living God who is love, one and triune: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Catholic Christians worship “one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in unity” (USCC, 1997, p.79, #266). The loving God as the Holy Trinity is the central content of Catholic faith.

In Catholicism, faith means the human person’s response to God’s love (Singer-Towns, 2004). Faith is basically a matter between God and man (Arnold, 1964). Faith is primarily an action of God. Catholicism values the grace of God rather than reason or will of man in regard to faith (Sokolowski, 2006). In order to be a faithful person, man first needs the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit who moves the heart to God and makes the truth of faith believable (USCC, 1997). But, at the same time, the Catholic faith is authentically a human act (USCC, 1997). In addition to a supernatural gift of God, faith also requires human acts such as the agreement of reason, the voluntary act of choice, and behaviors of love (Arnold, 1964). In short, Catholicism stresses the harmony of God’s grace toward man with man’s response to God. The love of God toward man and the response of man to God’s love are the essential aspects of Catholic faith.

Catholic faith is neither simple nor uniform, but multi-dimensional and complex (Baggett, 2009; Groome, 1980, 2003; Kreeft, 2001). For some Catholics, having faith means first believing in God through acquiring knowledge about the truths of Catholicism. On the other hand, there are Catholics who are convinced that the action part in their faith

is more important than a simple belief based on knowledge. Also, there are Catholic Christians who emphasize the heart-faith experience and fully entering into a loving relationship with God rather than a strong belief or action. Basically, belief in God, a loving relationship with God, and action are essential factors of Catholic faith. In other words, as the response of man to God's calling, the Catholic faith has fundamentally three components: (1) belief (head-faith), (2) intimacy with God (heart-faith), and (3) action (hand-faith). According to Groome (1980, 2003), Catholic faith is a way of the head (to believe), a way of the heart (to love), and a way of the hands (to serve) and all three are essential to the life of Catholic Christians. Kreeft (2001) emphasizes that the Catholic faith can be completely understood when the mind is opened, the heart is touched, and the action is performed.

The first component of Catholic faith is belief (head-faith) as the cognitive dimension. In the dictionary, faith is generally defined as "belief in God or in the doctrines or teachings of religion" (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/faith>). Belief refers to an intellectual agreement, acknowledging the tenets of the Church with all capacities of the mind including reason (Arnold, 1964). There is a very famous saying by Anselm of Canterbury: faith seeks understanding. It means that faith is a matter of understanding or intelligence (Arnold, 1964; Bacik, 2002; Sokolowski, 2006). Catholicism emphasizes the harmony of faith with reason since "right reason demonstrates the foundations of faith ... and pursues the understanding of divine things" (Neuner & Dupuis, p.49, #135) even though faith is above reason. With reason, one can know the truth and contents of faith enough to live as a good Christian. Also, the more one understands the truths of faith, the deeper his or her faith will be (Singer-Towns, 2004). A strong intellectual belief makes

faith-sense, an understanding of life in the light of God. Through the faith-sense, Christians can look at all aspects of life from a faith perspective and put one's faith into practice (Kinast, 1999; Sokolowski, 2006). However, all truths of faith cannot be completely understood by mind and reason (head-faith) because faith is a mystery (Arnold, 1964; Groome, 2003). The Catholic faith is more than belief.

The second component of Catholic faith is intimacy with God (heart-faith) as the affective dimension. Intimacy with God is to feel the loving God and to love God with the heart. In Catholicism, God is described as unconditional love toward man. When people realize how much God loves them, their natural response is to love because they are so grateful to God (Baggett, 2009). Fundamentally, believing in God means not only believing what is said of God as true, but also placing one's trust in Him with a heart of love (Arnold, 1964; Pollard, 1989). Accordingly, faith is not merely knowing and believing Catholic doctrine, but having unshakable trust of the heart, having a close connection with God, and loving God with one's heart. Actually, belief (intellectual faith) and intimacy with God (heart-faith) cooperate and interrelate for cultivating one's faith (Arnold, 1964; D'Eyepnon, 1964). Faith is both "an attitude of soul and an assent of the mind" (D'Eyepnon, 1964, p.124), and one requires the other. Belief makes intimacy with God deeper and the close relationship with God makes belief stronger. Only faith which combines the mind and the heart can absolutely understand and accept all mysteries of faith (Arnold, 1964; Rahner, 1984). Prayer is the fundamental act for the heart-faith (Bacik, 2002). Through prayer, Christians can raise their minds and hearts to God, dialog with God, and touch the loving God. Personal religious experiences also motivate Christians to have

close relations with God. A strong heart-faith creates faith-attitude and the pure passion for the loving commitment to God, the Church, and the neighbor.

The third component of Catholic faith is action (hand-faith) as the behavioral dimension. In the New Testament, Saint James emphasized that “faith without works is dead” (James 2:26). First of all, Catholic Christians must recognize their identity as members of the Church and accept their responsibilities being involved in Catholic community life and serving the Church’s saving mission (USCC, 1997). Also, loving our neighbor unselfishly is the most essential testimony of the Christian as the responsibility before God (Rahner, 1993). Basically, the Catholic faith as hand-faith refers to involvement in Catholic community life, participation in the Church’s evangelizing mission, loving others, and living moral life based on the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes (Bacik, 2002; Singer-Towns, 2004). In sum, the Catholic faith as hand-faith involves a personal commitment to the Church, to others, and to the society (Pollard, 1989).

Catholic faith is not the act of any one component, but the product of the harmony of the previous three components. That is, Catholic faith is to believe in God through reason, to have a relationship with God in the heart, and to love God and neighbors by one’s behavior. The three components forming Catholic faith cooperate and are closely inter-related with one another in the life of a Christian person (Groome, 2003). In the Catholic Christian’s life, a strong belief in God not only makes intimacy with God deeper but also provides fundamental reasons (faith-sense) for behaviors of faith; a close relationship with God creates the pure passion (faith-attitude) for the commitment of the hands as well as makes belief in God stronger; in the same way, the commitment to the Church and to the neighbor through faithful loving behaviors makes the understanding of

the truths of faith deeper and the relationship with God closer. Like the internal unity of the Holy Trinity, the three components (head-faith, heart-faith, and hand-faith) are distinctive from one another, but reciprocally cooperate with one another within the faith of a Christian person.

Catholic faith is the synergy of the three components motivated by the Grace of God (D'Eyepnon, 1964). The harmonious integration among the three components of Catholic faith is called “a living faith” (Groome, 2003). A living faith is the most desirable faith style of Catholic Christians. The Catholic Church has consistently emphasized that Catholics must live their faith in their lives. That is, Catholics are encouraged to live faith fully and to put their faith into practice in all aspects of life (Kinast, 1999). Only if Catholic Christians have a living faith, can they live their faith fully and put their faith into practice in all aspects of life. The Catholic faith as a living faith especially emphasizes a life of agape (unconditional love). Since Catholic Christians believe that God is love for them, they indispensably seek a life of agape and strive to practice sincere love for God and their neighbors. In other words, they can only believe in God through a life of agape in which they love God and their neighbors (Guardini, 1998) because “whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love” (I John 4: 8). A life of agape can be expressed in a variety of ways such as love, reconciliation, justice, compassion, collaboration, patience, kindness, caring, sacrifice, honesty, sincerity, and generosity in a Catholic person’s values, attitudes, and behaviors toward the Church, the neighbor, and the society. Through the pursuit of a life of agape, a living faith becomes the core factor that enables Catholic Christians to cultivate commitment to the Church, the neighbor, and the society.

A living faith contains both religiousness and spirituality. Religiousness refers to the institutional, formal dimension of faith associated with formal belief, religious dedication, and religious activities; spirituality refers to the personal, subjective dimension of faith related to an individual's relationship with God, ultimate meaning and purpose to life, and direction in life (Bacik, 2002; Lindholm & Astin, 2006; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005). Catholic faith clearly involves not only religious elements such as believing Catholic doctrine, belonging to the Church, and participating in the Church's mission but also spiritual elements such as having a close relationship with God with a heart of love, providing meaning and purpose to life, and improving an inner quality of the person. Also, the two dimensions interrelate for cultivating one's faith. However, today, many Americans including Catholics are likely to tend to separate spirituality from religiosity and prefer to be called spiritual rather than religious (Bagette, 2009; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2005; D'Antonio et al., 2006; Hill, Pargament, Hood, McCullough, Swyers, Larson, & Zinnbauer, 2000; O'Toole, 2008; Pargament, 1999; Williams & Davidson, 1996). Also, in many writings, there seems to be a tendency to describe religion negatively as the doctrine, the ritual, and the institution and spirituality positively like the personal, the experiential, and the thoughtful (Hill et al., 2000; Pargament, 1999; Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2005). But, in the religious life of a faithful person religiousness and spirituality generally co-occur (Hill et al., 2000) and they are "not mutually exclusive" (Teasdale, 1999, p.20). Teasdale (1999) explains the relationship between religiousness and spirituality as follows:

Being religious connotes belonging to and practicing a religious tradition.

Being spiritual suggests a personal commitment to a process of inner

development that engages us in our totality. Religion, of course, is one way many people are spiritual. Often, when authentic faith embodies an individual's spirituality the religious and the spiritual will coincide. Still, not every religious person is spiritual (although they ought to be) ... (p.17)

When one's faith is a living faith, the faith becomes both religious and spiritual.

A living faith as religiousness accepts the Church as the primary way that Catholic Christians can meet God and fulfill their salvation (USCC, 1997). Therefore, Catholics who have a living faith first recognize their identity as members of the Church and take their responsibilities being involved in Catholic community life, attending Mass, and participating in the Church's evangelizing mission. Also, a living faith contains spirituality. A living faith as spirituality interacts with one's inner identity, values, meaning, and purpose and contributes to one's inner landscape. As a consequence, Catholics who have a living faith value a close relationship with God, seek their lives' identity, values, meaning, and purpose in terms of the faith, and improve their inner quality through the faith.

Catholic faith is also understood as "an existential developmental reality" (Groome, 1980, p.57). It means that faith is not fixed, but grows up like living creatures. All Christians have a faith history involving their individuality, temperament, experiences, and environment, and their personal faith history influences their faith development or retrogression (Guardini, 1998). Based on a faith history, each person has either a strong and mature faith or a weak and immature faith. Although to some degree all Catholics try to live a living faith, their individual faith type might be different. For example, theologians might have a tendency of the faith life focused on the intellectual faith, religious people might pursue a close relationship with God rather than other dimensions,

and social activists might emphasize actions more than belief or the relationship with God (Groome, 1980). Therefore, based on the individuals' religious background, experiences, disposition, and environment, Catholic high school teachers also might have different degrees of the three components of faith, their individual faith style might be different, and the strength of their faith might also differ.

To summarize, Catholic faith means the human person's response to God's love. Belief in God (cognitive dimension), a loving relationship with God (affective dimension), and action (behavioral dimension) become essential factors of Catholic faith and the three dimensions cooperate and are closely inter-related with one another in the life of a Christian person. When the three components of Catholic faith are integrated in harmony, it becomes a living faith, the most desirable faith style of Catholic Christians. A living faith becomes lived, personalized, and internalized in one's life. The internalized faith impacts one's identity, values, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors in all aspects of life as the basic intrinsic motivation. The living faith always pursues a life of agape which is expressed in ways such as unselfish love, compassion, collaboration, patience, kindness, caring, honest, and generosity in one's values, attitudes, and behaviors toward the Church, the neighbor, and the society. Also, the living faith contains both religiousness and spirituality. Catholics who have a living faith would not only believe Catholic doctrine, belong to the Church, and participate in the Church's mission, but would also have a close relationship with God, seek meaning and purpose to life within the faith, and improve their inner quality through the faith. However, in reality, all Catholics cannot possess the living faith because of differences of their faith background, experiences, disposition, and environment. Their possession of the three components of faith might vary from one another and their faith

level might be also different. These features the Catholic faith has become the crucial rationale explaining the relationships between Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment in the Catholic high school.

### **Catholic high school teachers' Catholic faith.**

In the Catholic high school, one of the most important qualities required of teachers seems to be a strong Catholic faith because Catholic teachers' strong faith has been accepted as the most essential factor that guarantees the success of Catholic schools (CCE, 1977, 1982, 2002, 2007). The Church leaders in the U.S. have consistently emphasized that Catholic school teachers "should be grounded in a faith-based Catholic culture, have strong bonds to Christ and the Church, and be witnesses to the faith both in their words and actions" (USCCB, 2005, p.9).

In the United States, one of the most dramatic transitions for teachers in the Catholic school is the shift in the composition of Catholic school faculties that began in the 1950s. In a fifty-year period, teachers in Catholic schools completely changed from religious teachers to lay teachers. In 1960, religious teachers comprised 73.8% of Catholic school faculties, but in 2008-2009, a full-time professional staff in Catholic elementary and secondary schools was made up of 96.0% laity and 4.0% religious (Convey, 1992; McDonald & Schultz, 2009). This dramatic transition has become a very important challenge to the Church and the Catholic high school because lay teachers might be less faithful and less mission oriented than religious and clergy teachers. This study has responded to the question if lay teachers are less faithful and less mission oriented than religious and clergy teachers.

However, there are some positive reports on the faith of lay people at the present time. Bacik (2002) stated that over 90% of Catholics feel that God loves them, over 80% believe that they have a close personal relationship with God, and about 85% of Catholics remain committed to the church. In a study on the connections between the laity, their faith, and the Church, D'Antonio, Davidson, Hoge, and Gautier (2006) found that 85% of Catholics agreed that Catholic identity is a very important part in their life and that for the most part, lay people are proud to be Catholic. O'Toole (2008) also reported that American lay people have fully absorbed the idea that they are People of God and the Church is best for them.

Also, there is one positive report on the faith of Catholic high school teachers even though it was studied twenty-five years ago. In a study on the beliefs and values of teachers in 45 Catholic high schools, Benson and Guerra (1985) found that the majority of high school teachers place high value on religion and faith; to seventy-five percent of teachers, religion is the most important or one of the most important influences in their life; two-thirds of teachers place strong emphasis on prayer, worship, and listening to God. In one important conclusion, Benson and Guerra stated that, "to a much greater degree than the average American Catholic, the teacher in the Catholic high school is a believer, a churchgoer, and a person who prays" (p. 28). According to that study, the majority of teachers in Catholic high schools possess a balanced and full faith and they are strong believers, closely attached to the Church.

On the other hand, negative reports in regard to the faith of lay people have also been shown. As stated before, involvement in the Church's activities and participation in the Church's evangelizing mission are very important aspects of the Catholic faith. But,

currently in the United States the level of Church commitment of the laity is likely to have moved gradually downward, and many young Catholics are not likely to view the church as an essential component of their faith (Bagette, 2009; D'Antonio et al., 2006; Kennedy, 1988; O'Toole, 2008; Williams & Davidson, 1996). According to Williams and Davidson (1996), while lay people who were born before Vatican II put the primary place of their faith on participation in the sacraments and overall commitment to the church, the generation that was born between 1961 and 1976 places more emphasis on having a personal relationship with God than on involvement in the Church. D'Antonio et al. (2006) also reported that currently many Catholics believe that one's personal relationship with God is more important than involvement in the institutional Catholic Church; the percentage of high-commitment to the church of American Catholics declined from 27% in 1987 to 21% in 2005. Baggett (2009) also stated that today many Catholics prefer to be called spiritual rather than religious; they seek personal meaning and spiritual growth rather than follow the teaching of the Church and participate in the church's activities.

Twenty-five years ago, Benson and Guerra concluded that teachers in the Catholic high school overall have a stronger faith than average Catholics and are closely attached to the Church. Still today, have Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school remained stronger in their faith than average American Catholics, or not? Is their faith also changing from religious life to spiritual pursuit, from involvement in the Church to a personal relationship with God? At the present time, to what extent do Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school believe in God and the tenets of the Church, have a loving relationship with God, practice their faith, and live their faith fully in their lives? This study has sought to find the answers.

## **Teacher Commitment**

Teacher commitment is a very important subject in terms of school success and students' academic achievement as shown in a saying of Day et al. (2007), "no school has improved without the commitment of teachers" (p.1). What is commitment of the teacher? How and why do teachers devote themselves to their school, to their teaching, or to their students? What are critical predictors of teacher commitment? How is teacher commitment associated with school success or students' academic achievement? These questions have been very essential for studies regarding teacher commitment. Considering the connection with a teacher's faith in the context of the Catholic high school, this study has also explored these major questions.

### **The nature of teacher commitment.**

A number of researchers have defined commitment as a psychological attachment of an individual to someone or something that has a special meaning (Angle & Perry, 1981; Cohen, 2007; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Park, 2005; Somech & Bogler, 2002; Tyree, 1996). For them, commitment means loyalty, identification, and involvement (Ciriello, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Tyree, 1996). Loyalty connotes a sense of duty or the feeling of devotion to something or someone; identification means acceptance as one's own of the values and goals of a social group; involvement indicates a sense of concern with something or someone (<http://dictionary.reference.com>). This definition obviously focuses on the affective dimension of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

But, commitment also has a behavioral dimension (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Riehl & Sipple, 1996; Tyree, 1996). Behavioral commitment refers to concrete engagement, extra investment of

personal resources such as time and effort, and a show of caring for the individual (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004; Louis, 1998; Tyree, 1996). With affective commitment, the behavioral dimension of commitment needs to be critically considered in a study on commitment because a true commitment must be a lived reality revealed through concrete actions. Louis (1998) emphasized that commitment must be indicated by specific behaviors such as personal and professional investment and extra effort. Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) argued that affective commitment and behavioral commitment are a cyclical relationship in which affective commitment leads to behavioral commitment and in turn behavioral commitment reinforces affective commitment. That is, the two dimensions of commitment are reciprocally related and reinforce each other. Therefore, in this study, teacher commitment contains both an affective dimension such as loyalty, identification, and involvement and a behavioral dimension such as engagement, extra investment of personal resources, and caring.

Commitment in the organization has been also discussed in a normative view (Etzioni, 1975; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Peterson & Martin, 1990; Sergiovanni, 2007; Wiener, 1982). Wiener (1982) has defined commitment as “the totality of internalized normative pressures to act in a way that meets organizational goals and interests” (p.421). The normative view on commitment generally emphasizes the importance of an individual’s morals, values, and beliefs as internalized motivation. Firestone and Pennell (1993) indicated that the normative nature of commitment is closely associated with intrinsic motivation such as personal morals and values. Cohen (2007) also stated that normative commitment tendency would be strongly influenced by personal values and beliefs and closely associated with affective commitment.

Among various occupational commitments, teacher commitment has been given a higher priority in a normative approach. A number of researchers have emphasized that teacher commitment strongly takes on a moral character because teaching has a moral dimension symbolized as a calling (Buzzelli, & Johnston, 2002; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Sirotnik, 1990; Thomas, 1990). Goodlad et al. (1990) stated that professional status for teachers requires motivation and dedication not limited to the special knowledge and technical skills exclusively because teaching is a calling. Buzzelli and Johnston (2002) argued that teaching is a moral activity because it is action that influences the social, emotional, intellectual, and moral development of students in a teacher's care. Therefore, based on their identity, values, morality, and competence, committed teachers have a strong belief that they can make a difference in students' lives and a desire to become the best teacher and provide the best teaching (Crosswell & Elliott, 2002; Day et al., 2007; Nieto, 2005). This normative nature of teacher commitment becomes the crucial basis for explaining commitment of Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school in terms of faith.

Teacher commitment is a multidimensional construct (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004; Day et al., 2007; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Somech & Bogler, 2002; Tyree, 1996). Passion for teaching (Day, 2004), identification and emotional attachment to the school (Meyer & Allen, 1997), intrinsic motivation (Kushman, 1992; Rosenholtz, 1989), extra investment of personal resources (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004), moral responsibility (Wiener, 1982), and caring for students (Ancess, 2003; Noddings, 2005) have been the main subjects discussed in regard to teacher commitment. Also, teacher commitment has been explored in multiple ways according to differences of

objects to which teachers are committed. Many researchers generally categorize teacher commitment into three dimensions according to differences of the objects that reflect conditions of commitment and different kinds of teacher behavior: commitment to the school, commitment to teaching, and commitment to students (Danneta, 2002; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Mimi, 1999; Nir, 2002; Park, 2005). But, for this study, it is required to add another dimension, commitment to mission. This is because of the distinctiveness of Catholic high school teachers on which this study focuses. As stressed throughout this study, Catholic high schools have a unique purpose participating in the evangelizing mission of the Church because the Catholic school is a genuine instrument of the Church. Therefore, teachers in the Catholic high school are encouraged to participate in the mission through appearing as a witness to faith in their words, actions, and lives. Therefore, commitment to mission must be accepted as one important dimension of teacher commitment in the Catholic high school.

This study categorizes teacher commitment into four dimensions: mission, the school, teaching, and students. The four dimensions that demonstrate distinctive characteristics of teacher commitment and different kinds of attitudes and behaviors of teachers have been explored with regard to a teacher's faith factor.

#### **Commitment to mission.**

Commitment to mission refers to commitment to the Catholic school's religious mission rooted in Catholicism. Commitment to mission indicates teachers' strong belief and acceptance of the evangelizing mission of their school, a willingness to appear as a witness to faith by word and deed, and helping students develop Christian beliefs and values.

Since the Catholic high school is an educational institution of the Church, the most important role required of Catholic high school teachers by the Church is to carry out the evangelizing mission of the Church. The Church, in *The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium* (1997), stated that “teachers and educators fulfill a specific Christian vocation and share an equally specific participation in the mission of the Church” (#19). For lay Catholics, the most normal and natural way to become involved in missionary activity is through their work place (Rahner, 1993). According to *Dogmatic constitution on the Church* (1965), one of the Vatican council II documents, lay Catholics “are principally and expressly ordained to the sacred ministry by reason of their particular vocation” (p.388, #31), “have the vocation of applying to the building up of the Church” (p.390, #33), and “should profess their faith to the life of faith” (p.392, #35).

Therefore, for Catholic teachers, the evangelizing mission to the Church means “educating in faith” or “expressing Christian values in education” (CCE, 1977, #9, #53). In order to practice the evangelizing mission of the Church, Catholic teachers in the Catholic school are encouraged to appear as a witness to faith (Congregation, 1997). As a consequence, faithful Catholic teachers are religiously motivated in accepting their task and responsibility in their Schools. According to researchers who have studied Catholic school education, Catholic teachers share common views in terms of the school’s religious mission and philosophy and are very mission-oriented (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Bempechat, 1988; Bryk et al., 1993; Convey, 1992). Benson and Guerra (1985) found that most teachers agree that Catholic high schools should put high value on religious mission and faith, and that 76% of teachers in the Catholic high schools feel a responsibility to develop the religious faith of their students. Convey (1992) reported that many Catholic

teachers hope to work in a Catholic school because of their desire to participate in the evangelizing mission of the Church. It is clear that commitment to mission of Catholic high school teachers would be closely associated with their strong Catholic faith.

#### **Commitment to the school.**

Commitment to the school refers to affective and behavioral commitment of a teacher in relation to the school as a workplace. This organizational commitment has been generally indicated to have three components: a strong belief in and acceptance of the school's goals and values (identification), a willingness to dedicate oneself to school work and activities (involvement), and a strong intention to remain in the school (loyalty) (Danneta, 2002; Mowday et al., 1982; Park, 2005; Reyes, 1990; Somech & Bogler, 2002; Tyree, 1996). Also, extra investment of personal resources must be included in this commitment because a committed teacher will exert extra effort on school tasks and activities to make the school effective. In addition, based on the Catholic school's climate intending the school as community, effort toward building community within the school should be considered as an important aspect of commitment to the school for Catholic high schools. This is because one of the prime explicit goals of all Catholic schools including the Catholic high school is to build and live community based on the spirit of the Gospel (CCE, 1997; USCCB, 1972). Therefore, in this study, teacher commitment to school has been determined by a teacher's strong belief in and acceptance of the goals and values of the school, a willingness to dedicate oneself to school work and activities, a strong intention to remain in the school, extra investment of personal resources for the school, and effort toward building community within the school.

Several researchers have demonstrated that clear goals and values of the organization, shared norms, values, and beliefs among members, value-driven culture, collaboration, and the principal's leadership are likely to foster organizational commitment of teachers (Chan, Lau, Nie, Lim, & Hogan, 2008; Etzioni, 1975; Kushman, 1992; Mowday et al., 1982; Park, 2005; Peterson & Martin, 1990; Ross & Gray, 2006; Schein, 2004). A number of researchers have reported that collaboration is strongly associated with organizational commitment (Cherkowski, 2005; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Graham, 1996; Kushman, 1992; Louis & Smith, 1991). Mowday et al. (1982) insisted that congruence between the organization's values and the employee's own, a strong belief in the value of work, high expectations about the job, and job choice are likely to lead to high levels of employee's organizational commitment at least initially. Chan et al. (2008) stated that a teacher who is socialized into the school culture and shares its values would value schoolwork, feel a sense of belonging to the school, and continue working as a teacher. A number of researchers have consistently reported that Catholic high schools have clear goals and values rooted in Catholicism, shared norms and values among teachers, a value-driven community culture, and collaboration that would contribute to school success and teachers' school commitment (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Bryk et al., 1993; Convey, 1992; Convey & Ciriello, 1996; Reyes & Pounder, 1993 ). These characteristics will be clearly associated with the schools' Catholic culture and teachers' Catholic faith (Gallagher, 1996; McLaughlin, 1996). Obviously, in the Catholic high school, teachers who have a strong faith would willingly accept the goals and values of the school based on Catholicism, strive to dedicate themselves to school work, prefer to remain in the school, give their extra effort on school tasks and activities, and try to foster a community atmosphere within the school

through their positive attitudes and behaviors such as unselfish love, collaboration, honesty, caring, and sincerity flowing out from their faith. That is, in Catholic high schools commitment to the school is likely to be strongly related with a teacher's faith.

### **Commitment to teaching.**

Commitment to teaching refers to the affective and behavioral commitment a teacher makes regarding teaching as a career. The main indicators of this commitment are a teacher's affective acceptance of, a willingness to dedicate oneself to, a strong intent to remain with, and extra investment to instruction and teaching subjects (Chan et al., 2008; Louis, 1998; Tyree, 1996). A teacher committed to teaching would express a strong orientation toward subject-matter instruction, spend more time and energy searching for information on the subject and preparing for instruction, and strive to have opportunities to broaden their professional knowledge and growth as a teacher (Graham, 1996; Nir, 2002; Tyree, 1996; Zehm & Kottler, 1993).

The fundamental reason that teachers are committed to their teaching is why they have a desire to make a difference in students' lives by maximizing students' learning through their effective teaching (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Somech & Bogler, 2002; Tyree, 1996). Therefore, in a wide range, commitment to teaching includes not only a commitment to the subjects but also a commitment to the learning of students (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988). In this study, commitment to teaching excluded the factor of teachers' concern and effort for the student. That factor has been included in commitment to students because teachers' concern and effort regarding the learning of students is more related to their commitment to students than commitment to teaching in a precise meaning.

According to studies related to professional commitment, a teacher's belief and acceptance of the goals and values of the school, a sense of efficacy, high expectation, internalized motivation, conviction to teaching as a calling, learning opportunities for professional growth, collegiality, and the principal's support are the main factors that would influence commitment to teaching (Bredson, Fruth, & Kasten, 1983; Dannetta, 2002; Fickel, 2000; Firestone, 1996; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Serow, 1994; Singh & Billingsley, 1998). Riehl and Sipple (1996) found that teachers who are committed to their school's mission are likely to also be committed to their teaching and that administrative support and instructional support from colleagues are likely to be strongly associated with professional commitment. Fickel (2000) insisted that collegiality is essential to teachers' commitment to teaching because teachers devote themselves to quality instruction and work hard when they experience peer interactions, support, and care. Dannetta (2002) reported internalized motivation as critical factors that would contribute to commitment to teaching.

For Catholic high schools, the strong faith of a teacher is also likely to become an important predictor that contributes to commitment to teaching directly or indirectly. Many Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school have recognized their school work as a calling (vocation) or a ministry on the basis of their faith (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Convey, 1992). This recognition of one's calling has a strong connection with professional commitment as an intrinsic motivation (Seligman, 2002; Sergiovanni, 2007). Seligman (2002) argues that "a calling (or vocation) is a passionate commitment to work for its own sake; individuals with a calling see their work as contributing to the greater good, to something larger than they are" (p.168). In addition, because Catholic high school teachers

who have a strong faith would willingly accept the goals and values of the school based on Catholicism and would prefer to have collaboration with other teachers within the school community, they are more likely to be committed to teaching. Through this study, the relationship between the faith factor and commitment to teaching of Catholic high school teachers has been explored.

### **Commitment to students.**

Commitment to students refers to a teacher's dedication to and responsibility for students' learning and behavior (Park, 2005). This commitment is associated with teachers' caring for students, a willingness to help students, taking responsibility for improving students' learning and school life, and strong emotional bonds with students (Dannetta, 2002; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Park, 2005). Many teachers recognize students' academic achievement and welfare as core parts of commitment to students (Tyree, 1996). Also, teachers who are committed to students particularly pay attention to students who are academically at risk (Kushman, 1992; Louis, 1998; Park, 2005). For them, love for students means "having genuine respect, high expectations, and great admiration for their students" (Nieto, 2005, p.207).

According to large numbers of researchers, Catholic high school teachers are generally likely to be dedicated to their students (Bempechat, 1998; Bempechat, Boulay, Piergross, & Wenk, 2008; Bryk et al., 1993; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Greeley, 1982; Hoffer, 2000). Bryk et al. (1993) found that in Catholic high schools teachers are committed to high standards of students' academic performance and students recognize their teachers as patient, respectful, caring, and happy with their teaching. Bempechat (1998) indicated that Catholic high school teachers are likely to have high expectations,

hold a high standard, and provide academic support to their students, especially minority students. Recently, Bempechat et al. (2008) reported that teachers in urban Catholic high schools have been dedicated to developing both the emotional and academic aspects of students coming from low-income families.

A number of research studies have reported sense of teacher efficacy, intrinsic rewards, strong belief and acceptance of organizational goals, and respectable relationships with students as major factors that would influence commitment to students (Dannetta, 2002; Fickel, 2000; Kushman, 1992; Rosenholtz, 1989). Dannetta (2002) indicated that teachers' intrinsic rewards, self efficacy, collegiality, strong belief and acceptance of the school's goals contribute to their commitment to student learning. Commitment to students of Catholic high school teachers would have a close relationship with the faith factor of teachers. Catholic faith as a living faith values a life of agape. A life of agape is expressed through attitudes and behaviors such as unconditional love, compassion, patience, kindness, and caring. Therefore, Catholic teachers who have a living faith might provide caring and academic support to students, especially those at risk, and try to have a mutual relationship with students through their words, gestures, and behaviors in their school lives.

#### **Faith as a critical intrinsic motivator for teacher commitment.**

There is no single factor that impacts teacher commitment. Teacher commitment results from the combination of multiple factors. The multiple factors can be split into three categories: personal, extrinsic, and intrinsic (Measor, 1985). Each category contains many factors, some factors within the three categories affect one another over each category, and the combination of some factors has a big influence on teacher commitment.

In the personal category, teachers' age, gender, marital status, educational level, and years of total experience have been reported as major factors that influence their school commitment (Alutto, Hrebiniak, & Alonso, 1973; Chan et al., 2008; Reyes, 1989; Tsui & Cheng, 1999). In the extrinsic category, the main factors indicated as predictors that contribute to teacher commitment are student behavior and background, the school's mission, the principal's leadership, administrative support, collegiality, collaboration, autonomy, feedback, learning opportunities, and resources (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Cohen, 1999; Dannetta, 2002; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Firestone & Rosenblum, 1998; Louis, 1998; Rosenholtz, 1989; Singh & Billingsley, 1998). With regard to the intrinsic category, there are also many factors reported as predictors influencing teacher commitment: personal identity, values, morality, religiosity, emotion of a teacher, a teacher's sense of efficacy, and passion (Cherkowski, 2005; Crosswell & Elliot, 2004; Day, 2004; Donahue & Nielsen, 2005; Fickel, 2000; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Jackson, Boostrom, & Hansen, 1993; Kelchtermans, 2005; Nias, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1989; Ross & Gray, 2006; Smylie, 1990; Thomas, 2002; Ware & Kitsantas, 2007).

It is clear that a teacher's faith is not a single factor that influences teacher commitment in the Catholic high school. The faith factor clearly belongs to the intrinsic category among the three categories. Also, the faith factor is likely to combine with various predictors among multiple factors of the three categories and through the combinations contribute to teacher commitment. However, for the Catholic high school, a teacher's faith needs to be acknowledged as a critical factor contributing to teacher commitment. That is

because for Catholic high school teachers the faith is likely to be placed in the center of intrinsic motivation for their commitment.

Intrinsic motivation has a close relationship with commitment. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation coming from the internal rewards of an individual rather than from any external or outside rewards (Woolfolk, 2007). Intrinsic motivation is clearly “based upon the value received from the work itself” (Sergiovanni, 2007, p.128). A number of researchers have reported that intrinsic rewards such as meaningfulness, purposefulness, and significance are closely associated with commitment (Bredeson, Fruth, & Kasten, 1983; Crosswell & Elliot, 2004; Day, 2004; Thomas, 2002). According to Thomas (2002), people have a desire to be engaged in meaningful work providing purpose because meaningfulness of the work creates a feeling that they are on a valuable mission. It is obvious that when people recognize their work as being meaningful, purposeful, and significant, their commitment and extraordinary performance will be produced (Sergiovanni, 2007).

Intrinsic motivation is especially tied to teachers’ commitment (Ancess, 2003; Ball & Goodson, 1985; Bredeson, Fruth, & Kasten, 1983; Crosswell & Elliot, 2004; Day, 2004; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Martinez-Pons, 1990; Reyes & Pounder, 1993; Sergiovanni, 2007; Weiner, 1982). With regard to teacher commitment, teachers’ identity, beliefs and values, morality, passion, and emotions have been indicated as critical components of their intrinsic motivation. Parmer (2007) paid great attention to personal identity, vocation, and the inner life of the teacher with regard to teacher commitment. He emphasized that “good teaching comes from identity, not technique” (p.66). Day et al. (2007) also insisted that “teachers’ sense of professional and personal identity is a key

variable in their motivation, job fulfillment, and commitment” (p.103). Ancess (2003) indicated a close relationship between commitments and teachers’ personal ethos, caring, and bonding with others. Teachers’ passion has been also accepted as the basic intrinsic motivator having a strong connection with their beliefs, values, and meaningfulness in work with regard to their school commitment (Cherkowski, 2005; Crosswell & Elliot, 2004; Day, 2004; Thomas, 2002). Thomas (2002) reported positive emotions as one important intrinsic motivator closely associated with teacher commitment. Emotions that reflect a person’s identity and values affect the ways teachers work with their colleagues and students in their schools (Klaas van Veen, 2005; Kelchtermans, 2005).

Faith also needs to be recognized as one of the most critical components of intrinsic motivation associated with commitment. At its most basic, faith means a person’s inner quality that affects one’s identity, beliefs, values, passion, emotions, morality, attitudes, and behaviors (Astley, 1992; Fowler, 1981; Gallagher, 1996; Geyer, & Baumeister, 2005; Matthews & Clark, 1998). According to Fowler (1981) who understood the term ‘faith’ broadly, faith is “an orientation of the total person, giving purpose and goal to one’s hopes and strivings, thoughts and actions” (p.14). Likewise, for genuine Christians, faith is the most reliable way to make life meaningful, as giving purpose to one’s life (Matthews & Clark, 1998; Park, 2005), is the source of morality (Geyer & Baumeister, 2005), and is the deepest of passions (Thomas, 2002). That is, faith is the primary and basic intrinsic motivator for strong believers.

Also, a number of researchers who have studied the relationship between religiosity and human behaviors have consistently reported that faith (or religiosity) is closely associated with positive human values, emotions, morality, attitudes such as

forgiveness, trust, honesty, altruistic love, self-control, compassion, gratitude, passion, joy, and collaboration (Begue, 2002; Geyer & Baumeister, 2005; Donahue & Nielsen, 2005; Duffy & Blustein, 2005; Emmons, 2005; Macaskill, 2007; Pargament, Ano, & Wachholtz, 2005; Perrin, 2000). Forgiveness is a core value within Christianity (Macaskill, 2007). People who have strong faith generally place forgiveness as a higher priority in their personal value systems (McCullough, Bono, & Root, 2005; Roberts, 1995). Religious belief and practices are also associated with lower levels of depression in dealing with stressful situation (Murphy, Ciarrocchi, Piedmont, Cheston, Peyrot, & Fitchett, 2000; Pargament, Ano, & Wachholtz, 2005) and positively correlated with interpersonal trust (Begue, 2002), honesty (Perrin, 2000), willingness to volunteer (Sappington & Baker, 1995), helping others (Donahue & Nielsen, 2005), high levels of satisfaction with one's life (Eungi Kim, 2003), and sacred emotions (Emmons, 2005). These positive values, emotions, morality, attitudes that result from the faith factor would strongly contribute to the committed lives of believers.

Therefore, the faith as the primary and basic intrinsic motivator for believers is likely to contribute to commitment strongly. Cartwright (1962), who claimed a close relationship between the confession of faith and a life commitment, stated that when people believe in God with all their heart, faith reaches wholehearted commitment to God and it influences all the interests and relations of their total life. As mentioned earlier, Catholics are encouraged to embrace the whole of life and to look at all aspects of life from a faith perspective. Because a living faith becomes lived, personalized, and internalized within the whole life of a faithful person, the faith affects one's identity, values, emotions, and attitudes positively, so that it functions as the basic intrinsic motivator that causes the

committed lives of the faithful. Consequently, for Catholic school teachers who have a living faith, Catholic faith would be their orientation to life and would be closely linked to their commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students as the crucial intrinsic motivator.

According to Benson and Guerra (1985)'s study on the beliefs and values of teachers in Catholic high schools, many Catholic teachers believe that religion has one of the most important influences in their life, desire to work in a Catholic environment, and hope to have opportunities to witness to their faith. The teachers have also recognized their school work as a calling (vocation) or a ministry on the basis of their faith (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Convey, 1992). That recognition would have a strong connection to teacher commitment as an intrinsic motivation. Seligman (2002) emphasized that a calling (or vocation) having a religious connotation brings about "a passionate commitment to work for its own sake" (p.168). Sergiovanni (2007) argued the following:

The calling, sense of mission, and commitment to religious ideals are important enough to carry teachers despite the difficulties they encounter in the workplace.... Clearly, these teachers are motivated not only by individual self-interest but also by a sense of what is morally good (p.42).

By the faith placed in the center of intrinsic motivation for commitment, Catholic high school teachers would perform their evangelizing mission, dedicate themselves to school work and activities, improve their professionalism, and devote themselves to students.

### **Distinctive Characteristics of the Catholic High School**

In order to fully examine the subject regarding the relationship between a Catholic teacher's faith and commitment in the context of the Catholic high school, it is indispensable to explore the identity and characteristics of the Catholic high school. The critical reason is that the Catholic high school, as an educational institution of the Catholic Church, has several distinctive characteristics rooted in the Catholic Church's philosophy in comparison with the public or other private high school, and that the distinctive aspects of the Catholic high school would considerably contribute to the relationship between a teacher's faith and commitment. The best way of exploring the identity and characteristics of the Catholic high school is to examine the Church's documents related to the Catholic school because the Church's documents become the philosophical foundation for the identity and characteristics of the Catholic high school. After investigating the Church's documents, the Catholic high school's three distinctive environmental characteristics that are likely to influence the relations between faith and school commitment of Catholic high school teachers will be discussed: (1) the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, (2) the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and (3) the principal's spiritual leadership.

#### **The Catholic school revealed in the Church's documents.**

The important documents regarding the Catholic school promulgated by the Catholic Church are *Declaration on Christian education* (Vatican council II, 1965), *The Catholic school* (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977), *Lay Catholic in schools: Witness to faith* (CCE, 1982), *The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium* (CCE, 1997), *Educating together in Catholic schools* (CCE, 2007), *To teach as Jesus did:*

*A pastoral message on Catholic education* (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1972), *In support of Catholic elementary and secondary schools* (USCCB, 1990), and *Renewing our commitment to Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the third millennium* (USCCB, 2005). These documents all have consistently claimed that the Catholic school must have a distinctive identity and characteristics that make a school Catholic.

According to the Church's documents, what makes a school Catholic is the Christian value centered on Jesus Christ because the Catholic school is obviously an educational institution of the Catholic Church and because "all human values find their fulfillment and unity in Christ" (CCE, 1997). In *the Catholic School* (1977), the Congregation clearly stated that "Christ is the foundation of the whole educational enterprise in a Catholic school" (#34). Therefore, in the Catholic school, principles rooted in Jesus Christ become "its internal motivation and final goal", and all members of the school community share Christian vision and values in their individual ways (CCE, 1977, #34). In short, the fundamental identity of the Catholic high school is found in Jesus Christ, the core vision and value of the Catholic Church; as a consequence, the ultimate goal of the Catholic high school is acknowledged as providing a sound education rooted in the message of Jesus Christ in all areas of a school's life. Thus, the distinctive characteristics of the Catholic high school basically result from its ecclesial nature centered on Jesus Christ.

The first distinctive characteristic of the Catholic high school is its evangelizing mission of the Church. The Catholic school is "a genuine instrument of the Church" as "a

place of real and specific ministry” (CCE, 1997, #11). As a consequence, all Catholic schools including the Catholic high school have a unique purpose participating in the Church’s evangelizing mission (CCE, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2007). The evangelizing mission of the Church means essentially proclaiming to all people the good news of salvation which gives full meaning to a person’s life (CCE, 1977). For Catholic schools, the evangelizing mission of the Church refers to “educating in faith” or “expressing Christian values in education” (CCE, 1977, #9, #53). Catholic high schools play an important role in the evangelizing mission of the Church by proclaiming the Good News to students through education in faith (USCCB, 2005). First of all, religious education is recognized as the most essential activity of the Catholic high school. Catholic schools were fundamentally founded to provide a religious education as well as an academic education for Catholic students. In *The Catholic school* (1977), the Church clearly stated that religious education is “the fundamental element in the educative process” of the Catholic school (#49). Through religious education, Catholic schools seek a clear goal to “foster the growth of good Catholic human beings who love God and neighbor” (Miller, 2005, p.4). Also, Catholic teachers are encouraged to participate in the evangelizing mission of the Church through “appearing as a witness to faith” in their words, actions, and lives (CCE, 1982, #29).

The second distinctive characteristic of the Catholic high school is an integral formation of the person. The integral formation is a very important theme in Catholic education because Catholics believe that “all human values discover their fulfillment and unity in Christ, the Perfect Man,” (Congregation, 1977, #35). According to Archbishop J.

M. Miller (2005), secretary for the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic education, a Catholic school is Catholic because "it undertakes to educate the whole person, addressing the requirements of his or her natural and supernatural perfection" (p.7). That is, education of the Catholic school is intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person (Miller, 2005; Grochowski, 2008). The Church's documents on the Catholic school have consistently stressed the integral education that pursues fulfillment of all the needs of the human person: his or her intellectual, physical, psychological, moral, and religious dimensions (CCE, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2007). As a consequence, the Catholic high school pursues a synthesis between faith, culture, and the life of students as its prime educational goal (CCE, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2007; USCCB, 1972, 2005). The synthesis of faith, culture, and life means integrating in the light of the Gospel all aspects of students' knowledge, values, attitudes, and behavior (CCE, 1977).

The third distinctive characteristic of the Catholic high school is the school's community culture resulting from its ecclesial nature. The Catholic Church is concerned with all believers' salvation through the Church rather than individual salvation by one's belief, so that the Church values worshipping God of love in the community, having a relationship with others within the community, and being open to the world (Groome, 1998; Rohr & Martos, 1989; Vanier, 1989). In general, organizational culture is closely associated with a school's vision, values, and belief system (Acess, 2003). Therefore, community culture has become the basic frame of the Catholic school, and to build and live community based on the spirit of the Gospel have been a primary explicit goal of all Catholic schools including the Catholic high school (CCE, 1997; USCCB, 1972).

According to the Church's documents, the Catholic school is actually a community of faith as well as an educating community. The Church recognizes that the Catholic school must be an educating community because "education can be carried out authentically only in a relational and community context" (CCE, 2007, #12). However, because of its ecclesial roots and identity, this community must be a community of faith (CCE, 2007). When faith sharing and mutual support based on the communion of love are main parts of the community experience of the members, the community becomes a faith community (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2001; CCE, 2007). In *The Catholic school* (1977), the Church claimed that the Catholic school is a genuine faith community because its mutual respect and collaboration are given in the spirit of the Gospel, and it helps its members to follow a Christian way of life.

The fourth distinctive characteristic of the Catholic high school having the root in its ecclesial dimension is "the special attention to those who are weakest" (CCE, 1997, #15). According to the Church's documents, promoting common good and social justice becomes one of the crucial tasks Catholic high schools must perform (CCE, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2007; USCCB, 1972, 1990, 2005). Catholicism always stresses solidarity and social justice in favor of the poor who have been a top priority of the Church (Groome, 1996; O'Keefe, 1996). Since the Church believes that education is a crucial mean of improving the social and economic condition of the poor and the disadvantaged, the Catholic high school has been dedicated to offering educational service to the poor or disadvantaged (CCE, 1977). In *To Teach as Jesus Did* (1972), the U. S. bishops emphasized, "the unfinished business on the agenda of Catholic schools includes the task of providing

quality education for the poor and disadvantaged of our nation” (#121). The bishops were also convinced that Catholic high schools work for the common good of American society (USCCB, 1990) and “make a major impact in closing the achievement gap for poor and minority students in inner-city environments” (USCCB, 2005. p.6).

The fifth distinctive characteristic of the Catholic high school coming from its ecclesial nature is the emphasis on the faith of Catholic teachers. In the Church’s documents, a strong faith has been claimed as the most important quality required of teachers because Catholic teachers’ strong faith becomes the most critical factor that enables Catholic high schools to participate in the evangelizing mission of the Church, build and live community culture, and promote common good and social justice. Thus, the Church has continually emphasized that Catholic teachers’ faith is the most essential factor that guarantees the success of Catholic schools (CCE, 1977, 1982, 2002, 2007). A document of the Church, *Lay Catholic in schools: Witness to faith* (CCE, 1982), well indicated importance of faith of lay teachers in the Catholic school:

The lay Catholic educator is a person who exercises a specific mission within the Church by living, in faith, a secular vocation in the communitarian structure of the school: with the best possible professional qualifications, with an apostolic intention inspired by faith, for the integral formation of the human person, in a communication of culture, in an exercise of that pedagogy which will give emphasis to direct and personal contact with students, giving spiritual inspiration to the educational community of which he or she is a member, as well as to all the different persons related to the educational community (#24).

According to this document, in faith and by faith, Catholic teachers can entirely perform their evangelizing mission and foster a community atmosphere within the school. Therefore, the Church's leaders have consistently claimed that Catholic school teachers "should be grounded in a faith-based Catholic culture, have strong bonds to Christ and the Church, and be witnesses to the faith both in their words and actions" (USCCB, 2005, p.9). Also, the Church's leaders firmly believe that the educational commitment of teachers results from their strong faith.

Catholic educators need to be led to that encounter with God in Christ which awakens their love and opens their spirits to others, so that their educational commitment becomes a consequence deriving from their faith, a faith which becomes active through love (CCE, 2007, #25)

To summarize, as revealed through the Church's documents above, the unique identity of the Catholic high school is definitely the Christian value centered on Jesus Christ. Based on that ecclesial identity of Catholic high schools, participation in the evangelizing mission of the Church, the integral formation of the student, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, promotion of common good and social justice, and emphasis on the faith of lay teachers have been suggested as the critical distinctive characteristics of the Catholic high school. The Church's views on the Catholic high school are likely to greatly contribute to actual characteristics of Catholic high schools in the United States (Massucci, 1993). Empirical studies on the Catholic high school in the U.S. have reported very similar results to the Church's views in regard to the distinctive characteristics of the Catholic high school.

### **Three distinctive environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school.**

In empirical studies regarding the effectiveness of the Catholic high school, some characteristics of the Catholic high school have been continually reported as the critical factors contributing to the academic achievement of students. Since the 1980s, a number of research studies have reported that Catholic high schools outperform public high schools in academic achievement of students, especially of minority and low-income students (Bempechat, 1998; Bempechat et al., 2008; Benson, Yeager, Wood, Guerra, & Manno, 1986; Bryk et al., 1993; Cattaro, 2002; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Greeley, 1982; Hoffer, 2000; Irvine & Foster, 1996; Manno & Graham, 2004; Polite, 1992). The researchers who found positive results regarding the effectiveness of Catholic high schools raised the following questions: What do Catholic high schools do differently from public high schools? Why are Catholic high schools effective? Their overall findings and conclusions were that in comparison with public high schools Catholic high schools have several distinctive characteristics, and the distinctiveness makes the Catholic high school effective. The main distinction reported by researchers were the rigorous academic structure (Benson et al., 1986; Coleman et al., 1982; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Guerra, 1998; Hoffer, 2000; Irvine & Foster, 1996), shared clear educational goals and values rooted in Catholicism (Bryk et al., 1993; Convey, 1992; Irvine & Foster, 1996), the school's community culture based on the Gospel (Benson et al., 1986; Bryk et al., 1993; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Greeley, 1982; Hoffer, 2000), teacher commitment to students, especially disadvantaged students (Bempechat, 1998;

Bempechat et al., 2008; Bryk et al., 1993; Guerra et al., 1990; Irvine & Foster, 1996; Schaub, 2000;), and the principal's spiritual leadership (Bryk et al., 1993; Grace, 1996).

Among these distinctive characteristics of Catholic high schools, the shared clear educational goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership seem to impact greatly the relations between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment in the Catholic high school. In other words, the three distinctive environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school are likely to be important mediators contributing to the relations between faith and commitment of teachers in Catholic high schools because the three characteristics are not only closely associated with Catholic faith but also significantly related to teacher commitment. Peterson and Martin (1990), who studied the relationship between the culture of the organization and the commitment of individuals, stated that specific cultural factors of organizations such as organizational mission, consensus on shared values, beliefs, and norms, and leadership are likely to be mediators and predictors which influence the development of commitment. Tsui and Cheng (1999) argued that the school's environment, teachers' personal characteristics, and the interactions between them must be considered in order to fully investigate teacher commitment.

Therefore, in order to thoroughly investigate the relationship between Catholic teachers' faith and their school commitment in the context of the Catholic high school, understanding how the three distinctive environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school are associated with school commitment of Catholic teachers who have a strong faith seems to be very important.

***The school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism.***

The primary function of Catholic schools is to provide students with an excellent education rooted in Catholic truth and Catholic values (Haldane, 1996; McClelland, 1996). This is because what make a school Catholic are the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism itself, and “these characteristics should be reflected in the whole curriculum of Catholic schools” (Groome, 1996, p.107). As examined above, the major distinctive characteristics of the Catholic school revealed in the Church’s documents are participation in the evangelizing mission of the Church, the integral formation of the person, the school’s community culture based on the Gospel, promotion of common good and social justice, and emphasis on teachers who have a strong faith. These five characteristics form the critical values that U.S. Catholic high schools must pursue and become the primary goals that they have to perform. In reality, the goals and values of Catholic high schools in the U.S. seem to perfectly correspond with the contents of the Church’s documents. In *CHS 2000*, a descriptive report resulted from a survey of 1,015 Catholic high schools in the United States, Guerra (1998) presented common goals and values shared in all Catholic high schools in the United States as the following (p.5):

- The Catholic school is an integral part of the church’s mission to proclaim the Gospel, build faith communities, celebrate through worship and serve others.
- The commitment to academic excellence, which fosters the intellectual development of faculty and students, is an integral part of the mission of the Catholic school.
- The Catholic school is an evangelizing, educational community.

- The spiritual formation of the entire school community is an essential dimension of the Catholic school's mission.
- The Catholic school is a unique faith-centered community which integrates thinking and believing in ways that encourage intellectual growth, nurture faith and inspire action.
- The Catholic school is an experience of the church's belief, tradition and sacramental life.
- The Catholic school creates a supportive and challenging climate which affirms the dignity of all persons within the school community.

As seen above, Catholicism becomes the fundamental basis of the Catholic high school's goals and values and permeates "the whole life of the school and all aspects of the curriculum" (Gallagher, 1996, p.286). The goals and values rooted in Catholicism of Catholic high schools would positively impact the educational view, attitude, and behaviors of Catholic teachers. The school's goals and values become a critical reason why lay teachers choose to teach in a Catholic school, how they make sense of their school work and their roles, and why they are devoted to the mission of their school (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Bryk et al., 1993; Convey & Ciriello, 1996). Benson and Guerra (1985) reported that Catholic teachers who have a strong faith choose Catholic high schools because of a desire to teach in a Catholic environment, belief in God's choice for his/her life, view of teaching as ministry, and opportunity to witness to his/her faith and to be part of a faith community. Also, Convey (1992) indicated that most Catholic school teachers recognize and agree with the Catholic school's philosophy and vision because Catholic

teachers' faith would produce the consensus of the Catholic school's values and goals based on Catholicism.

Sergiovanni (2007) indicated that in schools "when shared meaning and significance are present, teachers respond with increased motivation and commitment" (p.75). Reyes and Pounder (1993) reported that there is a close relationship between a Catholic school's clear value orientation and teacher commitment. Therefore, when the school's goals and values are strongly connected with Catholic philosophy, faith-filled Catholic teachers would foster a sense of mission of the Church, come to view their teaching as a vocation and ministry, and strive to build an ideal school community having both an academic nature and an ecclesial nature. In short, the relationship between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment in the Catholic high school would be more intensified through the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism.

***The community culture based on the gospel.***

The school as a community based on the Gospel has been recognized as the most important and unique characteristic of Catholic high schools in both the Church's documents and empirical studies (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Bryk et al., 1993; CCE, 1977, 1982, 1997, 2007; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Convey, 1992; Francis & Egan, 1990; Groome, 1996; USCCB, 1972). Also, the majority of Catholic teachers have accepted the Catholic school as not only an academic community but also a faith community grounded in a faith-based Catholic culture (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Ferraro, 1990; Moore, 2000).

A functional community is an interesting concept that describes the community character of the Catholic high school. According to Coleman, who first described the Catholic high school as a functional community, Catholic high schools are functional

communities because the Catholic school has not only value consistency but also close relationship among administrators, teachers, students, and parents with one another inside and outside of the school (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). Coleman and Hoffer (1987) claimed that Catholic high schools are more effective than public high schools because Catholic high schools as functional communities have produced social capital resulting from a close relationship between school members. Social capital means the productive social resource that facilitates certain actions of persons within a social structure (Coleman, 1988). The functional community concept of the Catholic high school is also likely to be strongly associated with the religious nature of the Catholic high school and its members (Convey, 1992; Groome, 1996). One reason why is that faith sharing among school members would not only produce the consensus of their school's values and goals based on Catholicism, but also lead the members together to be dedicated to their school's goals.

According to Whitehead and Whitehead (2001), who studied *community in faith*, what makes a community is first of all a sharing of significant interests, values, and goals. The shared interests and values lead people to come together and to be dedicated to common goals. Vanier (1989), who deeply studied the characteristics of community, indicated that essential elements of the true community are belonging, openness, and caring rooted in love. That is, members in a true community are deeply bound to one another, share together their values and goals, seek mutual support and encouragement, and try to practice love and care toward their community and the world (Ancess, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1994; Vanier, 1989; Whitehead & Whitehead, 2001). Therefore, a true Christian faith community holds faith sharing, common goals, mutual support, collaboration, and caring as its main characteristics (Vanier, 1989; Whitehead &

Whitehead, 2001). Whitehead and Whitehead (2001) stated the essential characteristic of a Christian community as the following:

A Christian community is not a passive place where individual believers assemble, but a positive place where members live together in a shared response to God's invitation by justice and love. A Christian vocation is a calling, an invitation from God to do something special with our life.

When we are joined to a faith community, we are called to follow Christ.

The call is heard in our heart that leads us toward lives of commitment with others and service to the world (p.75-76).

In these views, the Catholic high school seems to be a true educational and faith-filled community because Catholic high schools clearly have common educational values and goals rooted in a faith-based Catholic culture and because teachers in Catholic high school share common values and goals, experience mutual support and caring, and try to accomplish the shared goals. As a concrete example, through a full observation and investigation of seven selected Catholic high schools, Bryk and his colleagues (1993) reported that Catholic high schools as communal organizations produce face-to-face personal interactions between teachers and students through numerous school activities and high levels of participation, enjoy high collegiality among teachers by mutual trust and collaboration, and share common values and goals on education.

Similar to the school's values and goals rooted in Catholicism, the community culture based on the Gospel is also likely to be strongly associated with commitment of Catholic teachers who have a strong faith. Because community is at the heart of the Catholic Christian's faith and life, Catholics who have a deep faith would prefer to work in

a strong community environment and try to develop their work place into a true community. Also, the strong community culture of the Catholic high school would lead faithful teachers to be willingly dedicated to their school work and activities. Bryk (1996) reported that the communal culture of the Catholic high school produces high levels of teacher commitment such as teachers' caring for students and teachers' satisfaction with their work. When Catholic high school teachers' values, attitudes, and behaviors rooted in their faith combine with the strong community culture of their school, the combination is likely to very positively impact teachers' commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students.

***The principal's spiritual leadership.***

Researchers have consistently identified that effective leadership of the principal is one of the primary factors contributing to school excellence, teacher commitment, and student achievement (Anderman, Belzer, & Smith, 1991; Anderson, 2004; Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Chubb & Moe, 1990; Cotton, 2003; Day et al., 2007; Geijsel, Slegers, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2003; Ross & Gray, 2006; Singh & Billingsley, 1998; Ware & Kitsantas, 2007; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). With regard to Catholic schools, spiritual (faith) leadership has been viewed as a distinctive characteristic of effective principals contributing to school excellence and teacher commitment (Carr, 2000; Ciriello, 1989, 1994; Convey, 1992; Jacobs, 2005; Wallace, 2000). In studies on the effective leadership of the public school principals, the principal's leadership has been mostly discussed in two dimensions: instructional leadership and managerial leadership (Cotton, 2003). On the other hand, in studies on the Catholic school sector, the principal's leadership has added one dimension; it is spiritual (faith) leadership (Belmonte & Cranston,

2009; Bryk et al., 1993; Carr, 2000; Ciriello, 1994; Convey, 1992; Grace, 1996; Wallace, 2000; Wao, 2005). The Catholic school principals' spiritual leadership refers to "leadership the principal directs toward achieving the school's religious mission" (Carr, 2000). The fundamental reason Catholic school principals have spiritual leadership results from the ecclesial nature of the Catholic school permeating all aspects of Catholic school life (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009). As continually stressed in this study, the Catholic school is both an educational institution and a religious institution. Consequently, Catholic schools have dual goals of academic achievement and religious mission, so that principals in Catholic schools are required to accomplish religious goals as well as academic goals (Wao, 2005).

Explicitly, the primary responsibility of the principal as spiritual leader in a Catholic high school is to nurture, protect, and develop the Catholic identity of the school, to build a faith community, to foster the faith development of students and faculties, and to promote integration between learning, faith, and life (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009; Ciriello, 1994; Curran, 1994; Jacobs, 2005; Wallace, 1998). Therefore, the Catholic school principals' spiritual leadership is closely associated with their faith identity. Catholic school principals can exercise spiritual leadership only through their faith (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009; Carr, 2000; Jacobs, 2005). Faith makes it possible for the principals to practice their spiritual leadership. Therefore, in order to be a spiritual leader the Catholic high school principal must have spiritual (faith) identity, be knowledgeable about Catholic education and Catholicism, and have concern about the religious mission as a religious institution (Curran, 1994; Jacobs, 2005; Wallace, 2000). In addition, since spiritual (faith) identity requires a life of agape (unconditional love to others), the essence of the principal's

spiritual leadership is found in their dedication to teachers' spiritual and professional growth (Jacobs, 2005). Thus, the Catholic school principal as a spiritual leader is also viewed as a servant leader (Schuttloffel, 1999). A servant leader is one who has the natural feeling of wanting to serve first followers' needs (Greenleaf, 2002). Therefore, service of school members' needs, a holistic approach at work, and sharing of power in decision making are also major responsibilities of Catholic school principals as spiritual leaders (Schuttloffel, 1999; Spears & Lawrence, 2004).

Similar to the school's values and goals rooted in Catholicism and the community culture based on the Gospel, the Catholic high school principals' spiritual leadership also would mediate the relations between faith and commitment of Catholic high school teachers. Jacobs (2005) claimed that when Catholic school principals provide spiritual leadership in their school, lay teachers will embrace their personal vocations, witness the Gospel in all aspects of their lives, and strive to build educational faith communities. Also, because spiritual leadership in the Catholic high school takes the form of "leadership by binding and bonding" in Catholic faith, the Catholic high school principal and teachers would be bound together by shared values and goals rooted in Catholicism and become bonded together in a shared practice and commitment (Sergiovanni, 2007, p.68). Sergiovanni (1990) claimed that leadership of binding and bonding provides to teachers the inspiration needed for extraordinary performance and commitment. In schools, the principals' leadership plays a critical role in not only producing an environment in which teacher commitment can happen but also sustaining teachers' commitment (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Cherkowski, 2005; Day et al., 2007; Rossmiller, 1992; Schein, 2004). In Catholic high schools, the principals' spiritual

leadership would operate as an important catalytic factor that promotes Catholic teachers' school commitment.

In sum, in the United States Catholic high schools explicitly have a climate rooted in the faith-based Catholic culture. Because the Catholic high school is obviously both an educational institution and a religious institution of the Catholic Church, it has clear distinctive values and goals rooted in Catholicism and strong community culture based on the Gospel. In addition, principals in Catholic high schools accept spiritual leadership as one of their critical roles. A number of researchers report that the climate of the Catholic high school has not only attracted Catholic teachers who have faith-sense but also influenced their attitudes and behaviors positively in regard to their school work and activities. This study has explored to what extent the three distinctive environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school have an effect on the relationships between Catholic teachers' faith and their school commitment.

### **Synthesis on All the Discussions**

Through this literature review on previous studies regarding Catholic faith, teacher commitment, and characteristics of the Catholic high school, this chapter tried to reveal the relations between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school. According to researchers who have studied Catholic school education, Catholic high school teachers are very mission-oriented and willingly accept the goals and values of their school based on Catholicism. Also, many of them have tried to foster a community atmosphere within the school, have paid attention to students' academic achievement and welfare, and have provided caring and academic support to students,

especially those at risk. How are these commitments of Catholic high school teachers associated with their Catholic faith?

A number of researchers report that faith as a believer's orientation to life impacts one's identity, beliefs, values, passion, emotions, morality, attitudes, and behaviors. Accordingly, a person's faith will function as one of the most critical intrinsic motivators associated with teacher commitment. Especially, for Catholic teachers, faith may become the primary and basic intrinsic motivator that contributes to teacher commitment. Catholic faith clearly has three dimensions: belief in God (cognitive dimension), a loving relationship with God (affective dimension), and action (behavioral dimension). The three dimensions are closely inter-related with one another and cooperate in the life of a Christian person. When the three dimensions are harmoniously integrated within a Catholic Christian's faith, the faith operates as a living faith and becomes lived, personalized, and internalized within one's life. Catholic Christians who have a living faith strive to look at all aspects of life from a faith perspective and pursue a life of agape toward their life, work, and society because Catholic faith has its root in love resulting from God who is love. Therefore, if Catholic teachers have a living faith, they will try to live faith entirely and to put their faith into practice in all aspects of their school lives in ways of unselfish love, compassion, kindness, caring, sincerity, and collaboration. Consequently, their living faith would lead directly to their commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students. However, in reality, all Catholic teachers would not have possessed the living faith and high levels of faith because of their different faith background, experiences, disposition, environment, and effort. Therefore, even though there are close relations between faith and commitment of Catholic high school teachers,

Catholic teachers' commitment degree would be different according to their faith dimension and faith level.

Also, large numbers of studies regarding Catholic schooling report that Catholic high schools clearly have distinctive culture and environment rooted in Catholicism and the climate greatly influences Catholic teachers' attitude and behaviors related to school commitment. Therefore, the distinctive environmental characteristics Catholic high schools have shared commonly need to be considered as mediating factors that would influence the relationships between faith and commitment of Catholic high school teachers. Three important environmental characteristics explored in this study are the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership.

Twenty-five years ago, Benson and Guerra (1985) reported that the majority of Catholic high school teachers place high value on religion and faith and are strong believers closely attached to the Church. And, it has been reported by several researchers that Catholic faith is likely to be a significant predictor impacting teacher commitment in Catholic schools (Ciriello, 1987; Convey, 1992; Tarr, 1992; Tiernan, 2000). In a study on commitment of Catholic elementary school teachers, Ciriello (1987) found that the Catholic faith scale of teachers would be the most important predictor of their organizational commitment. Tarr (1992), who studied the commitment and satisfaction of Catholic elementary and secondary school teachers, also pointed out that religion is likely to be a significant predictor of organizational commitment for lay Catholic teachers. According to Tiernan (2000), who studied commitment of Catholic and non-Catholic teachers in Catholic elementary schools, while non-Catholic teachers had a professional

orientation, the majority of Catholic teachers who valued faith and religion were closely associated with organizational commitment. Through analyses of studies during twenty-five years on Catholic schools, Convey (1992) concluded that Catholic teachers' faith would be closely associated with commitment to mission in Catholic schools.

At this time do Catholic high school teachers still place high value on faith and remained in a strong faith? Also, for Catholic high school teachers, does the faith factor impact their identity, values, passion, morality, attitudes, and behaviors in their school lives and activities? In other words, is the faith factor placed in the center of intrinsic motivation creating teacher commitment? This study has sought to find the answer to these important questions. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether or not Catholic teachers' faith is really the critical predictor impacting the teachers' commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students within the context of the Catholic high school.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

This study was designed to examine the relationship between Catholic teachers' faith and their school commitment in the context of the Catholic high school. For that purpose, this dissertation study employed a quantitative method that uses a self-administered website survey (SurveyGizmo.com) because the survey method is useful for describing trends and characteristics of large sample populations and is appropriate for obtaining self-reported data about individuals' particular beliefs, attitudes, emotions, self-classification, and behaviors (Creswell, 2008; Neuman, 2004). This chapter reports sampling, distribution and data collection, the survey instrument, validity and reliability, data coding, and data analysis procedures.

#### **Sampling**

The population for this study is all Catholic high school teachers of the United States. According to McDonald and Schultz (2009), during the 2008-2009 academic year, there were 1,220 Catholic secondary schools and 52,097 full time professional staff in the United States. Since the population for this study is very large and spread out over the United States, this study used cluster sampling.

For a cluster sampling of this study, a logical cluster was a Catholic high school, the unit of analysis was a teacher, and the desired sample size was about 1000 – 1500 teachers across the United States. In order to secure the desired sample size, on the basis of the result of a pilot test that obtained 50 teacher responses from three Catholic high schools, five schools from each one of the 16 major archdioceses across the United States, a total of 80 Catholic high schools, were initially selected by using a way of random selection

through SPSS. In cases of the principals' disapproval of the survey request, selecting other schools from the same archdioceses by the process of SPSS random selection to fill up around 80 schools was also planned. The researcher primarily used archdiocesan websites to obtain information about names, e-mail addresses, faculty numbers, and student enrollment numbers of all Catholic high schools and to create lists of Catholic high schools of each archdiocese. Based on the information obtained from each archdiocesan website, Catholic high schools that have an enrollment number of fewer than 250 were eliminated from the lists of Catholic high schools for the SPSS random selection to secure similar numbers of teacher samples per each archdiocese. Table 1 presents the 16 archdioceses and the total numbers of high schools that have an enrollment number of more than 250 students in each archdiocese selected for the survey.

Table 1

*The 16 Archdioceses and Each Archdiocese's Total School Numbers Selected for the Survey*

	The 16 Archdioceses	State	Total school numbers
1	The Archdiocese of Baltimore	Maryland	20
2	The Archdiocese of Boston	Massachusetts	20
3	The Archdiocese of Chicago	Illinois	29
4	The Archdiocese of Cincinnati	Ohio	20
5	The Archdiocese of Detroit	Michigan	19
6	The Archdiocese of Indianapolis	Indiana	8
7	The Archdiocese of Los Angeles	California	45
8	The Archdiocese of Miami	Florida	12
9	The Archdiocese of Milwaukee	Wisconsin	11
10	The Archdiocese of Newark	New Jersey	25
11	The Archdiocese of New Orleans	Louisiana	22
12	The Archdiocese of New York	New York	44
13	The Archdiocese of Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	19
14	The Archdiocese of St. Louis	Missouri	23

15	The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis	Minnesota	12
16	The Archdiocese of Washington	Washington DC	14
Total			343

### **Distribution and Data Collection**

Online survey research has very useful advantages such as “access to unique populations, considerably reduced costs, and a significant savings of time” (Rudestam & Newton, 2006, p.255). For these reasons, the researcher used an online survey tool (SurveyGizmo.com) for survey distribution and data collection because this survey’s potential respondents (teachers) are professional members that have e-mail and Internet access and the population for this survey is very large and spread out over the United States. Through the Web survey, the researcher could distribute the survey questionnaires to teachers quite easily, collect data quickly, and save significant costs.

For distribution of the survey, on April 19, 2010 both a formal letter and an e-mail explaining the purpose, confidentiality, and anonymity of the survey and asking the school’s participation in the survey were sent to the principals of the randomly selected 80 Catholic high schools of the 16 Archdioceses. However, among 80 principals only eight principals allowed their teachers to participate in the survey, ten of the principals disapproved, and the rest of them did not respond to the survey request. Follow-up efforts to obtain a higher rate of the principals’ permission were undertaken by sending e-mails to the principals who did not respond to survey requests twice during the following two weeks. At the same time, two formal letters and two e-mails requesting the survey participation of teachers were sent to another 85 principals of Catholic high schools on the school lists of the 16 archdioceses created by the researcher (April 23 and May 5, 2010).

Two follow-up e-mails also were sent to them to ask for their permission once again during the following two weeks. Through this process, 39 Catholic high schools finally participated in the survey.

When the principals accepted the survey request, they were asked to forward an e-mail requesting participation in the survey to teachers and to encourage them to complete the survey. Because this survey used an online website for the survey (SurveyGizmo.com), teachers easily accessed the link connected to the survey questionnaire through the attached e-mail and their responses were immediately collected and stored into the researcher's personal website account. According to researchers that studied online survey research (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009; Kittleson, 1997; Sue & Ritter, 2006), follow-up e-mails increase the response rates significantly in online surveys. For this reason, in order to increase the response rate of teachers, the researcher created a teacher list containing e-mail addresses of the sample teachers using school websites and sent two follow-up e-mails asking the teachers on the list to complete the survey during the following two weeks.

The period for questionnaire distribution and data collection was from April 19, 2010 to June 15, 2010. Of the 2106 Catholic high school teachers sent the survey, 1089 teachers accessed the survey, 701 teachers entirely completed the survey, 50 teachers partially participated in the survey with regard to Catholic Faith or Teacher Commitment, 108 teachers partially participated in the survey with regard to General Information, and 230 teachers abandoned their responses. Among partial respondent teachers, 50 teachers who responded to Catholic Faith or Teacher Commitment were treated as completed responses and 108 teachers who responded to only General Information were excluded in

the data coding. Finally, 751 teachers from 39 Catholic high schools in 15 archdioceses excluding the Archdiocese of Philadelphia were included as the completed respondents and the overall response rate of sample teachers was 35.7%. According to Sue and Ritter (2007), a sample size of 751 respondents guarantees a maximum 4% margin error at the 95% confidence level. Table 2 displays school/teacher numbers included in the survey and survey response rates in the 16 archdioceses.

Table 2

*School/Teacher Numbers Included in the Survey and Survey Response Rates*

Archdioceses	Schools contacted for the survey	Schools included in the survey	A total of teachers	Respondents (completed)	Response rate
Baltimore	10	4	219	59	26.9%
Boston	10	3	136	57	41.9%
Chicago	10	2	139	19	13.7%
Cincinnati	10	2	146	38	26.0%
Detroit	10	4	209	72	34.4%
Indianapolis	8	2	82	29	35.4%
Los Angeles	11	4	209	87	41.2%
Miami	11	1	58	22	37.9%
Milwaukee	9	4	198	83	41.9%
Newark	10	1	21	5	23.8%
New Orleans	10	2	94	52	55.3%
New York	13	2	140	16	11.4%
St. Louis	11	3	133	61	45.9%
St. Paul and Minneapolis	10	1	72	30	41.7%
Philadelphia	14	0	0	0	-
Washington D.C	8	4	250	103	41.2%
Total	165	39	2106	733+18=751	35.7%

Note. Regarding total respondents, 18 teachers did not identify the location of their school.

**The Survey Instrument**

The survey instrument created for this study was guided by three primary research questions. The questions are as follows:

1. To what extent do Catholic teachers in Catholic high schools report that they believe the tenets of Catholicism (the cognitive dimension), have a loving relationship with God (the affective dimension), practice their faith (the behavioral dimension), and live their faith in their lives (the integral dimension)?
2. Are there significant relationships between multi-dimensions of Catholic teachers' reported faith and commitment in the Catholic high school?
3. Do a Catholic teacher's perceptions of the three environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school (the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership) have an effect on the relationships between the Catholic teacher's reported faith and commitment?

The survey instrument for this study was developed by the researcher on the basis of several survey instruments that dealt with subjects regarding faith, teacher commitment, or Catholic schooling, and it was revised through a pilot test study. The pilot test was performed using responses from 50 teachers in three Catholic high schools in the Washington D.C area from September 16 – October 16, 2009 by using an online survey tool (SurveyGizmo.com) after passing the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) in order to secure reliability for this survey instrument. After the pilot test, one item regarding "faith type" and eight items regarding "Catholic identity" from the original survey items were eliminated, two questions regarding the location of the Catholic high school and the principal's religious background were added, and the format for some questions was revised. The questionnaire in this study has 111 items in four sections:

Section I – General Information (12 items), section II – Catholic Faith (54 items), section III – Teacher Commitment (30 items), and section IV – The School’s Environment (15 items).

Section I (General Information) deals with personal and professional background characteristics that would impact the faith factor and the commitment factor of Catholic high school teachers. This section contained 12 items of “locality”, “the principal’s religious background”, “gender”, “employment status”, “religion”, “marital status”, “age”, “race”, “Catholic education background”, “academic degree”, “years of teaching”, and “teaching subject.” All 12 categorical variable items utilized multiple-choice answers.

Section II of the survey deals with Catholic teachers’ faith as the critical predictor of this study. Section II contained 54 items dealing with the importance of Catholic faith (1 item), Catholic identity (10 items), belief (17 items), intimacy with God (7 items), action (12 items: action attitude - 5 items, religious practice - 7 items), and a living faith (7 items). Questions of Catholic identity were adapted from *The 2005 Survey* designed by D’Antonio et al. (2007) that examined the connections between American Catholics, their faith, and the Church. The rest of this section’s items were developed on the basis of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* by the United States Catholic Conference (1997), *Measures of Religious* edited by Hill and Hood (1999), and survey instruments of Benson and Guerra (1985) and Galetto (1996). Methods to measure this section’s variables were multiple choice, Likert scales, and rating scales. Table 3 presents Catholic faith’s variables and short descriptions of items.

Table 3

*Catholic Faith's Variables and Short Descriptions of Items*

Variables	Short Descriptions of Items (item number)
The importance of Catholic faith	The importance of religion in one's life (13)
Catholic identity	The sacraments (14a), Mary as the mother of God (14b), Church activities toward social justice (14c), the teaching authority of the Vatican (14d), daily prayer life (14e), helping the poor (14f), belief in Jesus' resurrection (14g), a celibate male clergy (14h), the Church's teaching about same-sex marriage (14i), the Church's teaching about abortion (14j)
Belief	The Trinity (15a), human created by God (15b), the Bible (15c), Jesus Christ as both human and divine (15d), Jesus' birth of a virgin (15e), Jesus' resurrection (15f), Jesus' second advent (15g), the forgiveness of man's sin through Jesus Christ (15h), life after death (15i), Mary as Mother of God (15j), the Holy Spirit (15k), the Church (15l), the Church's seven sacraments (15m), Mass obligation (15n), the authority of the Pope (15o), lay people's prophetic mission (15p), the equal dignity of human being (15q)
Intimacy with God	Awareness of God's love (16a), praying to give thanks for God's love (16b), God's care for my prayers (16c), God's guidance toward my life (16d), feeling God is always with me (16e), obeying God because of love for God (16f), feeling very close to God at many moments (16g)
Action attitude	Praying (17a), obeying God's rules in words and behaviors (17b), participating in the Church's evangelizing mission (17c), being involved in Catholic community life (17d), helping the poor (17e)
Action Religious practice	Praying in daily life (18a), sharing religious belief with others (18b), reading the Bible (18c), attending Mass (18d), going to confession (18e), participating in parish activities (18f), helping the poor (18g)
A living faith	Living environment reflecting beliefs (19a), striving to improve religious virtues in attitudes and behaviors (19b), being more open to other people because of faith (19c), helping the poor because of faith (19d), sharing faith with others because of love for God (19e), everyday choices based on faith (19f), ethics and behaviors reflecting faith (19g)

Section III of the survey is about Teacher Commitment. This section deals with motives for teaching (3 items), motives for remaining (3 items), and four dimensions of teacher commitment (24 items): commitment to mission (6 items), commitment to the school (6 items), commitment to teaching (6 items), and commitment to students (6 items). All items of this section were adopted from survey instruments of Benson and Guerra (1985), Ciriello (1987), Hamilton, (1999), Mowday et al. (1979), Rosenholtz (1989), Louis (1998), Nir (2002), and Park (2005). In order to measure this section's variables, top-down multiple choices for motives for teaching and remaining as well 5-point Likert scales for four commitment variables were utilized. Table 4 presents Teacher Commitment's variables, short descriptions of items, and the item numbers.

Table 4

*Teacher Commitment's Variables, Short Descriptions of Items, and Item Numbers*

Variables	Short Descriptions of Items (Item Number)
Motives for teaching	The most important reason for teaching at this school (20), the second most important reason (21), the third most important reason (22)
Motives for remaining	The most important reason for remaining at this school (23), the second most important reason (24), the third most important reason (25)
Commitment to mission	Promoting the religious faith of students (26a), attending school liturgies or prayer services (26e), integrating religious concepts into the teaching subject (26n), talking to students about faith (26o), supporting the religious mission of school (26q), encouraging students to participate in the Sacraments and liturgy (26x)
Commitment to the school	Promoting a sense of community within the school (26b), great effort to help this school be successful (26f), strong acceptance of the school's values (26i), strong intention to remain in the school (26k), willingness to dedicate oneself to school work (26t), the importance of the reputation of this school (26w)
Commitment to teaching	Affective acceptance of teaching profession (26c), enjoying teaching

	(26g), extra investment to teaching subjects (26j), willingness to dedicate oneself to teaching (26l), positive sharing with colleagues to enhance teaching ability (26s), effort to improve one's professional knowledge (26v)
Commitment to students	Caring about students' future (26d), taking responsibility for helping students reach their potential (26h), extra effort toward improving students' learning and school life (26m), willingness to help students regardless of their background (26p), strong emotional bonds with students (26r), extra effort for students outside of class (26u)

Lastly, section IV of the survey is about the Catholic high school's three distinctive environmental characteristics. The three environmental variables are the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism (SGVC - 5 items), the school's community culture based on the Gospel (SCCG - 5 items), and the principal's spiritual leadership (PSL - 5 items). The questions for section IV were developed on the basis of survey instruments of Benson and Guerra (1985), Hamilton (1999), and Wao (2002). As a measuring method for this section, 4-point Likert scales were utilized. The School's Environment's variables, short descriptions of items, and the item numbers are given in Table 5.

Table 5

*The School's Environment's Variables, Short Descriptions of Items, and Item Numbers*

Variables	Short Descriptions of Items
Overall satisfaction degree on the school's environment (OSSE)	The school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism (27a), the school's community culture based on the Gospel (27b), the principal's spiritual leadership (27c)
SGVC	Concern for faith development with academic development (28a), concern for the candidates' faith in selecting new teachers (28d), clear expectation of teachers' role in the school's religious mission (28i), the school's goals and values reflecting teachings of the Church (28k)

SCCG	A sense of community among school members (28c), sharing the school's central mission of school members (28f), cooperative effort among staff members (28j), an atmosphere of caring and trust among the staff (28l)
PSL	Educational philosophy based on Catholicism (28b), Leadership as a vocation/ministry (28e), developing the Catholic identity of the school (28g), encouraging teachers to participate in the religious mission of the school (28h)

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### **Validity and Reliability**

In order to secure validity and reliability for this survey instrument, a pilot test was performed. In order to secure validity for the survey instrument, survey items were developed on the basis of content and information shown in the literature review and many of them were modified from previous questionnaires regarding faith factor, teacher commitment, and school environment. Also, all items were carefully examined and the wording of some items was revised through the pilot study.

A reliability estimate for the survey instrument employed Cronbach's Alpha which estimates "internal consistency reliability by determining how all items on a test related to all other test items and to the total test" (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2005, p.142). Excluding 12 items of 'personal background,' 1 item of 'the importance of Catholic faith,' and 6 items of 'working motives', all items were evaluated in 14 variables using Cronbach's Alpha. The results of Cronbach's Alpha on the 14 variables are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

*Survey Items' Reliability by Cronbach's Alpha*

Variable	Numbers of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1) Catholic identity	10	.872
2) Belief	17	.927
3) Intimacy with God	7	.867
4) Acton attitude	5	.846
5) Religious practice	7	.781
6) A living faith	7	.894
Teacher commitment (four variables)	24	.837
7) Commitment to mission	(6)	
8) Commitment to the school	(6)	
9) Commitment to teaching	(6)	
10) Commitment to students	(6)	
11) OSSE	3	.858
The school's environment (three variables)	12	.886
12) SGVC	(4)	
13) SCCG	(4)	
14) PSL	(4)	

This table shows that Cronbach's Alpha for all variables is above .70. Because a score of .70 or higher is preferred to ensure the reliability of a survey instrument (DeVellis, 2003), this survey instrument has secured reasonable internal consistency reliabilities for the population.

### **Data Coding**

Data coding means "the process of assigning numbers to the value or levels of each variable" (Leech, Barrett, & Morgan, 2008, p.23). In order to measure data gained by the survey, all data were coded, cleaned, and entered into SPSS. All words obtained as data

were also converted to numbers in order to do statistics with SPSS. Non responses of participants remained as blanks and were treated as missing values in SPSS.

As an example for data coding, the personal background variable “gender” was coded as 1 for male and 2 for female. Also, in the Catholic Faith section “the importance of Catholic faith” variable coded 5 for “the most important influence in my life” and 1 for “the least important influence in my life.” Similarly, 14 major variables regarding Catholic faith, teacher commitment, and the school’s environment were coded as 4 to 1 in a 4-point Likert scale, 5 to 1 in a 5-point Likert scale, or 8 to 1 in an 8-point rating scale as ordered from the most positive one to the least positive one. That is, high scores have a positive meaning and low scores have a negative meaning. In order to maintain consistency of this rule that the higher score always indicates a higher value, item number 15i, 26k, 26l, and 26t in the survey questionnaire reversed their scores because of the items’ negative contents. For example, item number 15i in the belief variable was “there is no life after death.” Here, if a respondent strongly disagreed by rating this as 1, it would indicate strong (high) belief in Catholicism. Therefore, according to the rule that a high score always indicates high value, item number 15i changed a score of 1 into a score of 5, a score of 2 into a score of 4, a score of 4 into a score of 2, and a score of 5 into a score of 1. For this study, Table 7 displays the coding schemes and level criteria on the 14 variables.

Table 7

*The Coding Schemes and Level Criteria on the 14 Variables*

Variables	Coding Schemes (the numbers of items)	Total Scores
Catholic identity	4-point Likert scale (10 items): 4 = very important, 1 = not at all important	10 - 40

Belief	5-point Likert scale (17 items): 5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree	17 - 85
Intimacy with God	5-point Likert scale (7 items): 5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree	7 - 35
Action attitude	5-point Likert scale (5 items): 5 = A great deal, 1 = No emphasis	5 - 25
Religious practice	8-point rating scale (7 items): 8 = Every day, 1 = Never	7 - 56
A Living faith	5-point Likert scale (7 items): 5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree	7 - 35
Commitment to mission	5-point Likert scale (6 items): 5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree	6 - 30
Commitment to the school	5-point Likert scale (6 items): 5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree	6 - 30
Commitment to teaching	5-point Likert scale (6 items): 5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree	6 - 30
Commitment to students	5-point Likert scale (6 items): 5 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree	6 - 30
OSSE	4-point Likert scale (3 items): 4 = very satisfied, 1 = very unsatisfied	3 - 12
SGVC	4-point Likert scale (4 items): 4 = to a high degree, 1 = not at all	4 - 16
SCCG	4-point Likert scale (4 items): 4 = to a high degree, 1 = not at all	4 - 16
PSL	4-point Likert scale (4 items): 4 = to a high degree, 1 = not at all	4 - 16

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### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The SPSS 17.0 Statistical Software package was utilized for this study's data analysis. Before starting data analysis, in order to examine and understand the data, the researcher ran exploratory data analysis by computing various descriptive statistics and graphs. Through exploratory data analysis, the researcher examined whether there were problems in the data such as coding problems, missing values, and errors inputting the data. Also, the assumptions of the statistics such as normality, homogeneity of variances, and independence of observations were checked by exploratory data analysis. All data were within range.

For this study two types of analysis were conducted: (a) descriptive analysis and (b) inferential analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to summarize and describe the data gained by the survey. Also, the first question of this study for examining the degree of belief, intimacy with God, action attitude, religious practice, and a living faith of Catholic teachers was explored through descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean, and standard deviation.

Inferential statistics were applied to examining the second and third questions of this study. The second question was about relationships between multi-dimensions of Catholic teachers' reported faith and commitment in the Catholic high school. To determine whether and to what degree correlations exist between multi-dimensions of faith and commitment of Catholic teachers, this study applied the Pearson correlation. The third question of this study was about whether the three distinctive environmental characteristics of Catholic high schools will mediate the relationships between a Catholic teacher's faith and commitment. The researcher utilized a multiple hierarchical regression model in order to determine whether a Catholic teacher's perceptions of the Catholic high school's

environment have an effect on the relationship between the Catholic teachers' reported faith and commitment. For this model, the researcher performed four multiple hierarchical regressions that had each one of commitment to mission, commitment to the school, commitment to teaching, and commitment to students as the dependent variable. In those multiple hierarchical regressions, Catholic teachers' four faith variables (belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith) were entered as the predictors into the first block, and then the Catholic high school's three environmental characteristics (SGVC, SCCG, PSL) were entered as the predictors for the second block. Also, forced entry method was used as variable entry for both blocks.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Analysis of the Data**

This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the data. Demographics of the sample, descriptive analysis of variables, and the data analysis guided by three research questions were performed to explore the relationships between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment in the Catholic high school in this chapter. Of all respondents, Catholic teachers were mainly discussed in data analyses regarding the three research questions because this study focused on Catholic teachers' faith, the relationships between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers, and the effect of the Catholic high school's three environmental characteristics on the relationships between their faith and school commitment.

#### **Demographics of the Sample**

Demographics of the teachers who participated in the survey assessed personal background characteristics and professional background characteristics in three categories of all teachers, Catholics, and non-Catholics.

##### **Personal background characteristics.**

Variables consisting of the personal background characteristics of the sample were gender, religion, marital status, Catholic schooling, age range, and race/ethnicity. Table 8 presents a summary of descriptive statistics for the personal background variables of all respondents divided into three categories: all teachers, Catholics, and non-Catholics. The sample was comprised of 425 females (57%) and 321 males (43%). The gender ratio

was almost the same for Catholic teachers (female: 56.9%, male: 43.1%) and non-Catholic teachers (female: 57.4%, male: 42.6%). With regard to the teachers' religion, 81.7% were Catholics and 18.3% were non-Catholics. In regard to the teachers' marital status, 27.0% were single and 63.6% were married. And, the rate of religious (priests, brothers, or sisters) teachers was 5.5% of the total sample and 6.7% of Catholic teachers. In terms of Catholic education experiences of the sample, of Catholic teachers 77.4% attended Catholic elementary school, 71.9% experienced Catholic high school, and 64.7% studied at Catholic college or university. Catholic education experiences of non-Catholic teachers were relatively limited in comparison with Catholic teachers (Catholic elementary school: 28.9%, Catholic high school: 29.7%, and Catholic college or university: 29.9%). In terms of age, 36.4% were under 35, 40.4% were between 35 and 54, and 33.2% were over 55. With regard to race/ethnicity, the vast majority of the sample teachers were white (87.4%). Hispanic teachers constituted 6.6% of the sample and less than 4.0% were from other racial groups (American Indian – 0.1%, Asian – 1.7%, and Black teachers – 1.9%).

Table 8

*Descriptive Statistics for the Personal Background Variables*

Variables	All teachers		Catholics		Non-Catholics	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	321	43.0	263	43.1	58	42.6
Female	425	57.0	347	56.9	78	57.4
<b>Religion</b>						
All life Catholic	581	77.4	581	94.8		
Converted Catholic	32	4.3	32	5.2		
Former/Other	15	2.0			15	10.9

Former/None	29	3.9			29	21.0
Other Religion	72	9.6			72	52.2
None	22	2.9			22	15.9
Marital Status						
Religious or priest	41	5.5	41	6.7		
Single	202	27.0	159	26.1	43	31.2
Married	476	63.6	389	63.7	87	63.0
Other	30	4.0	22	3.6	8	5.8
Catholic Schooling						
Elementary						
Yes	500	68.9	463	77.4	37	28.9
No	226	31.1	135	22.6	91	71.1
High						
Yes	458	64.3	420	71.9	38	29.7
No	254	35.7	164	28.1	90	70.3
College						
Yes	401	58.3	363	64.7	38	29.9
No	287	41.7	198	35.3	89	70.1
Age range						
Under 25	13	1.7	11	1.8	2	1.4
25 – 34	185	24.7	141	23.1	44	31.9
35 – 44	124	16.6	92	15.1	32	23.2
45 – 54	178	23.8	150	24.6	28	20.3
55 or over	248	33.2	216	35.4	32	23.2
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian	1	.1	1	.2		
Asian	13	1.7	9	1.5	4	2.9
Black	14	1.9	10	1.6	4	2.9
Hispanic	49	6.6	43	7.1	6	4.4
White	650	87.4	530	87.3	120	87.6
Other	17	2.3	14	2.3	3	2.2

Note. In the religion variable, Former/Other = teachers who were Catholic but are now another religious denomination; Former/None = teachers who were Catholic but are not now religious.

### Professional background characteristics.

Four variables, namely employment status, academic degree, teaching subject, and teaching years at this school, were assessed as the professional background characteristics of the sample teachers. Table 9 presents descriptive statistics for the professional background variables of respondents divided as all teachers, Catholics, and non-Catholics.

With regard to employment status, 92.6% of the sample teachers were full time and 7.4% were part time teachers. In the level of formal education of teachers, 99.1% of the sample teachers possessed at least a bachelor's degree and 70.1% of teachers possessed a master's degree (64.9%) or a doctorate degree (5.2%). Three Catholic teachers (.5%) responded as having no degree. With regard to teaching a subject, 22.1% of teachers were involved in teaching religion and the remaining 77.9% of teachers were teaching other subjects only. Among non-Catholic teachers, teachers who had taught religion were only 2.8% ( $n = 4$ ) and among religious teachers, teachers who were involved in teaching religion were 59.9%. In teaching experience of the sample teachers, 16.6% of teachers had teaching experience of more than 20 years at their current Catholic high schools, 20.5% of teachers had teaching experience between 11 and 20 years, and teachers who had taught between 1 and 10 years were 62.9%.

Table 9

#### *Descriptive Statistics for the Professional Background Variables*

Variables	All teachers		Catholics		Non-Catholics	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Employment Status						

Full time	692	92.6	570	93.6	122	88.4
Part time	55	7.4	39	6.4	16	11.6
Academic Degree						
No degree	3	.4	3	.5		
Associate	4	.5	4	.7		
Bachelor	217	28.9	181	29.5	36	26.1
Master	487	64.9	392	63.9	95	68.8
Doctorate	39	5.2	32	5.2	7	5.1
Teaching Subject						
Religion	128	17.2	126	20.8	2	1.4
Religion + Other	37	5.0	35	5.8	2	1.4
Other	580	77.9	446	73.5	134	97.1
Teaching Years						
1-2	119	16.0	94	15.5	25	18.1
3-5	181	24.3	138	22.7	43	31.2
6-10	168	22.6	133	21.9	35	25.4
11-20	153	20.5	133	21.9	20	14.5
More than 20	124	16.6	109	18.0	15	10.9

### **Descriptive Analysis of Variables**

Since this study was focused on Catholic teachers among Catholic high school teachers, descriptive analyses of variables regarding Catholic faith, teacher commitment, and the school's three environmental characteristics were limited to Catholic teachers.

#### **Catholic faith.**

In the Catholic faith section, seven variables (the importance of religion, Catholic identity, belief, intimacy with God, action attitude, religious practice, and a living faith) were descriptively analyzed to summarize. However, this section will be restricted presenting major outlines of Catholic teachers' faith. The detailed description on faith variables will be presented in the data analysis section by research questions.

With regard to the importance of religion, almost all Catholic teachers (98.2%) reported that religion is influential in their lives. The Catholic teachers who responded that religion is the most important influence or one of the most important influences in their lives were 79.8%. Table 10 presents descriptive statistics for the importance of religion variable of Catholic teachers divided into three categories: all Catholic teachers (All Catholics), Catholic teachers teaching religion (Cath. Religion), and Catholic teachers teaching other subjects (Cath. Other).

Table 10

*Descriptive Statistics for the Importance of Religion*

Scale	All Catholics ( <i>N</i> = 612)		Cath. Religion ( <i>n</i> = 160)		Cath. Other ( <i>n</i> = 446)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Most important	200	32.7	90	56.3	105	23.5
One of the most important	288	47.1	67	41.9	220	49.3
Somewhat important	114	18.6	3	1.9	111	24.9
One of the least important	10	1.6			10	2.2
Least important						

Note. Cath. Religion = Catholic teachers who teach religion or religion with other subject; Cath. Other = Catholic teachers who teach other subjects.

In regard to Catholic identity, Catholic teachers placed relatively high importance on belief in Jesus' resurrection from the dead ( $M = 3.68$ ), helping the poor ( $M = 3.64$ ), the sacraments such as the Eucharist and confession ( $M = 3.60$ ), daily prayer ( $M = 3.56$ ), the Church's involvement toward social justice ( $M = 3.54$ ), opposition to abortion ( $M = 3.40$ ), and the Catholic Church's teaching about Mary as the mother of God ( $M =$

3.30). On the other hand, they placed relatively low importance on three items of a celibate male clergy ( $M = 2.07$ ), the Church's teaching on same-sex marriage ( $M = 2.55$ ), and the teaching authority of the Vatican ( $M = 2.79$ ). Catholic teachers who teach religion reported statistically significant higher degrees in all Catholic identity items excluding 'Mary as the Mother of God' item than Catholic teachers who teach other subjects at  $p < .05$ . Table 11 shows Means and Standard Deviation for the Catholic identity variable items in order of high degree of Mean.

Table 11

*Means and Standard Deviations for Catholic Identity Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 612$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 161$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 445$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	
1. Jesus' resurrection	3.68	.628	3.84	.442	3.62	.677	.000
2. Helping the poor	3.64	.555	3.80	.400	3.58	.594	.000
3. The sacraments	3.60	.626	3.83	.397	3.51	.673	.000
4. Daily prayer	3.56	.683	3.86	.370	3.45	.739	.000
5. Social Justice	3.54	.674	3.72	.525	3.47	.711	.000
6. Abortion	3.40	.897	3.66	.681	3.30	.949	.000
7. Mary as the Mother of God	3.30	.801	3.36	.787	3.28	.808	.251
8. Authority of the Vatican	2.79	.919	3.08	.876	2.68	.910	.000
9. Same-sex marriage	2.55	1.187	2.72	1.194	2.48	1.176	.025
10. A celibate male clergy	2.07	1.096	2.27	1.146	1.98	1.061	.004
Average	3.32	.528	3.42	.447	3.14	.535	.000

Note. Maximum possible score = 4.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

The belief variable was measured by 17 items based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Table 12 presents Means and Standard Deviations for belief variable items in order of high degree of Mean. Table 12 indicated that Catholic teachers generally have a strong degree of belief on Catholicism ( $M = 4.43$  in maximum possible score = 5.0). Also, similarly to Catholic identity items, Catholic teachers who teach religion had significantly higher degrees in most belief items excluding four items in comparison with Catholic teachers who teach other subjects at  $p < .05$ . Catholic teachers reported relatively strong agreement about human dignity ( $M = 4.84$ ), The Trinity ( $M = 4.80$ ), Jesus Christ as true God and true man ( $M = 4.78$ ), Jesus' resurrection ( $M = 4.78$ ), and the forgiveness of man's sin ( $M = 4.71$ ). But, they reported relatively weak agreement about two belief items of Mass obligation ( $M = 3.31$ ) and the authority of the Pope ( $M = 3.36$ ).

Table 12

*Means and Standard Deviations for Belief Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 612$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 160$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 446$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	
1. Human dignity	4.84	.499	4.96	.234	4.79	.561	.000
2. The Trinity	4.80	.606	4.91	.361	4.76	.672	.005
3. Jesus Christ	4.78	.575	4.94	.257	4.71	.646	.000
4. Jesus' resurrection	4.78	.612	4.89	.434	4.73	.663	.006
5. Human created by God	4.77	.621	4.98	.136	4.69	.702	.000
6. The forgiveness of sin	4.71	.693	4.80	.480	4.68	.709	.058
7. The Holy Spirit	4.62	.721	4.85	.480	4.53	.777	.000
8. Prophetic mission	4.51	.765	4.86	.412	4.37	.823	.000
9. The Bible	4.48	.820	4.80	.513	4.36	.881	.000
10. Mary as Mother of God	4.48	.888	4.58	.821	4.43	.913	.088

11. Life after death	4.45	1.086	4.54	1.110	4.41	1.083	.197
12. The Church's sacraments	4.43	.841	4.55	.785	4.38	.860	.024
13. Jesus' second advent	4.41	.933	4.63	.708	4.33	.993	.001
14. Jesus' birth of a virgin	4.40	1.022	4.51	1.022	4.36	1.022	.100
15. The Church	4.22	.993	4.38	.937	4.15	1.010	.013
16. The authority of the Pope	3.36	1.441	3.57	1.456	3.27	1.433	.024
17. Mass obligation	3.31	1.477	3.76	1.301	3.14	1.498	.000
Average	4.43	.587	4.62	.412	4.36	.626	.000

Note. Maximum possible score = 5.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

The intimacy with God variable was measured by seven items regarding close relationships with God. As indicated in Table 13 presenting descriptive statistics for intimacy with God, Catholic teachers generally felt God's love and loved God in their heart to a strong degree ( $M = 4.53$  in maximum possible score = 5.0). Catholic teachers reported that "I pray to give thanks for all God has done for me" ( $M = 4.76$ ), "I experience an awareness of God's love" ( $M = 4.72$ ), and "I feel God is always with me and helps me" ( $M = 4.55$ ) to relatively higher degrees. Also, the heart faith degree of Catholic teachers teaching religion was significantly high in all items rather than Catholic teachers teaching other subjects at  $p < .001$

Table 13

*Means and Standard Deviations for Intimacy with God Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 607$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 159$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 442$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	

1. Praying to God	4.76	.548	4.92	.276	4.70	.610	.000
2. Awareness of God's love	4.72	.555	4.90	.302	4.66	.609	.000
3. God is always with me	4.55	.752	4.82	.475	4.45	.812	.000
4. God's care for my prayer	4.51	.784	4.81	.443	4.40	.852	.000
5. Feeling very close to God	4.43	.830	4.69	.541	4.33	.897	.000
6. God's guidance toward my life	4.39	.878	4.62	.802	4.30	.891	.000
7. Love for God	4.35	.803	4.54	.593	4.28	.858	.000
Average	4.53	.601	4.75	.336	4.44	.655	.000

Note. Maximum possible score = 5.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

The action dimension of Catholic faith was measured by two variables of action attitude (5 items) and religious practice (7 items). Table 14 presents descriptive statistics for action attitude items and religious practice items in order of high degree of Mean. With regard to action attitude, Catholic teachers placed relatively strong emphasis on obeying God's rules ( $M = 4.22$ ) and praying ( $M = 4.16$ ). While Catholic teachers teaching other subjects placed the first priority of their action attitude on obeying God's rules, the first priority of Catholic teachers teaching religion was praying. Among action attitude items participating in the Church's evangelizing mission ( $M = 3.38$ ) was the lowest priority of Catholic teachers. However, for Catholic teachers teaching religion, the attitude on the Church's evangelizing mission was still strong ( $M = 4.18$ ) and higher than the attitude on obeying God's rules of Catholic teachers teaching other subjects ( $M = 4.16$ ).

In regard to the religious practice variable, 'praying' and 'sharing beliefs with others' were the highest frequency and 'going to confession' was the lowest frequency among religious practices of the Catholic teachers. For the rest religious practice items, in

order of frequency, Catholic teachers teaching religion have practiced religious life by reading the Bible ( $M = 6.58$ ), attending Mass ( $M = 6.31$ ), helping the poor or improving social justice ( $M = 4.91$ ), and attending parish services or activities ( $M = 4.72$ ), whereas Catholic teachers teaching other subjects have practiced religious life by attending Mass ( $M = 5.44$ ), helping the poor or improving social justice ( $M = 4.12$ ), and attending parish services or activities ( $M = 3.84$ ), and reading the Bible ( $M = 3.62$ ).

Table 14

*Means and Standard Deviations for Action Attitude Items and Religious Practice Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 607$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 160$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 441$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	
<b>Action Attitude Variable</b>							
1. Obeying God's rules	4.22	.830	4.35	.722	4.16	.863	.013
2. Praying	4.16	.904	4.53	.644	4.02	.949	.000
3. Helping the poor	3.94	.984	4.32	.790	3.79	1.011	.000
4. Catholic community life	3.83	1.014	4.35	.754	3.63	1.029	.000
5. The Church's mission	3.38	1.243	4.18	.999	3.08	1.187	.000
Average	3.90	.749	4.35	.561	3.73	.742	.000
<b>Religious Practice Variable</b>							
1. Praying in daily life	7.44	1.180	7.82	.443	7.29	1.329	.000
2. Sharing religious belief	6.07	1.988	7.44	1.137	5.56	1.996	.000
3. Attending Mass	5.68	1.299	6.31	1.031	5.44	1.312	.000
4. Reading the Bible	4.42	2.426	6.58	1.433	3.62	2.225	.000
5. Helping the poor	4.33	1.882	4.91	1.864	4.12	1.850	.000
6. Attending Parish activities	4.08	1.993	4.72	1.785	3.84	2.013	.000
7. Going to confession	2.16	1.096	2.65	1.186	1.97	1.009	.000

Average	4.88	1.154	5.78	.733	4.55	1.108	.000
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Note. Maximum possible score = 5.0 in the action attitude variable; Maximum possible score = 8.0 in the religious practice variable.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

A living faith was measured by seven items emphasizing the harmonious integration among belief, intimacy with God, and action. Table 15 regarding a living faith indicated that Catholic teachers in a total practice a living faith to a slightly strong degree ( $M = 4.26$ ), but for Catholic teachers teaching religion, the living faith was practiced in a considerably strong degree ( $M = 4.68$ ). Among items of a living faith, Catholic teachers more strongly agreed about the item that ‘based on my religious faith, I strive to improve virtues such as reconciliation, justice, compassion, patience, caring, and honesty in my attitude and behaviors’ ( $M = 4.52$ ).

Table 15

*Means and Standard Deviations for Living Faith Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 607$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 159$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 442$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	
1. Improving religious virtues	4.52	.704	4.82	.382	4.40	.760	.000
2. Behaviors reflecting faith	4.46	.733	4.71	.455	4.37	.793	.000
3. Choices based on faith	4.38	.895	4.76	.483	4.23	.969	.000
4. Being open to other people	4.28	.878	4.66	.582	4.14	.925	.000
5. Helping the poor	4.25	.869	4.69	.505	4.08	.919	.000
6. Environment reflecting belief	4.14	.975	4.55	.700	3.99	1.020	.000
7. Sharing faith with others	3.79	1.198	4.56	.683	3.51	1.223	.000
Average	4.26	.702	4.68	.355	4.10	.734	.000

Note. Maximum possible score = 5.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

In sum, 79.8% of Catholic teachers reported that religion is very influential in their lives (79.8%). In regard to Catholic identity, while Catholic teachers placed high value on belief in Jesus' resurrection from the dead, helping the poor, the sacraments such as the Eucharist and confession, daily prayer, and the Church's involvement toward social justice, they placed relatively low value on a celibate male clergy, the Church's teaching on same-sex marriage, and the teaching authority of the Vatican. Catholic teachers generally reported that they believe in Catholicism, have a loving relationship with God, and live their faith in their lives to a strong degree. However, for all Catholic teachers, the degree of their action attitude ( $M = 3.90$  in maximum possible score = 5.0) and religious practice ( $M = 4.88$  in maximum possible score = 8.0) were relatively low in comparison with belief ( $M = 4.43$ ), intimacy with God ( $M = 4.53$ ), and a living faith ( $M = 4.26$ ). In addition, Catholic teachers teaching religion reported significant higher degrees than Catholic teachers teaching other subjects in almost all items of the four faith variables including the Catholic identity variable.

#### **Teacher commitment.**

In regard to teacher commitment, six variables (motives for teaching, motives for remaining, commitment to mission, commitment to the school, commitment to teaching, and commitment to students) were descriptively analyzed and summarized.

Catholic teachers' motives for teaching and remaining in the Catholic high school provide crucial information to grasp their intrinsic motivation regarding school

commitment. With regard to motives that influenced Catholic teachers' decisions to teach at their current Catholic high schools, three items of 'God's choice for my life' (15.8%), 'view of teaching as ministry' (12.1%), and 'commitment to Catholic education' (10.6%) closely associated with their Catholic faith were the highest frequencies as the most important motives. On the other hand, for non-Catholic teachers, the highest frequencies as the most important motives for teaching at the Catholic high school were 'love of teaching' (23.0%), 'teaching my academic subject' (14.1%), and 'God's choice for my life' (11.9%). Table 16 shows the percentage of motives that influenced teachers' decisions to teach at the Catholic high school in order of frequency.

Table 16

*Motives That Influenced Teachers' Decisions to Teach at the Catholic High School*

Motives	Catholic teachers (n = 594)		Non-Catholic teachers (n = 135)	
	Most important	A total of the top three	Most important	A total of the top three
1. God's choice for my life	15.8%	28.0%	11.9%	17.1%
2. View of teaching as ministry	12.1	31.2	5.9	14.2
3. Commitment to Catholic education	10.6	29.7	-	.8
4. Love of teaching	9.1	30.7	23.0	49.1
5. Teaching my academic subject	6.9	21.0	14.1	33.5
6. Desire to work with students	6.4	20.3	6.7	32.2
7. Opportunity to witness to my faith	5.2	14.5	1.5	6.0
8. General working conditions	4.7	15.6	5.2	18.7
9. The school's Christian values	4.4	19.8	7.4	16.3
10. Satisfaction with my work	4.0	10.8	3.7	20.2
11. Family situation	2.7	8.9	1.5	5.3

12. Working in a school close to home	2.0	7.2	1.5	6.8
13. Helping children develop their faith	1.7	8.1	-	.8
14. Job security	1.7	5.6	1.5	5.9
15. Working with committed people	1.3	12.1	2.2	11.2
16. Student's achievement	1.2	6.1	2.2	16.5
17. Administrator's style and philosophy	1.0	4.7	3.0	12.8
18. Salary or benefits	1.0	7.6	.7	5.9
19. Relationship with the principal	.8	3.0	-	3.8
20. Helping create a Christian community	.7	5.4	1.5	6.7
21. Summer vacation and holidays	.3	.8	-	1.5

Note. Most important = the percentages of the most important reason; A total of the top three = the total percentages of the most, the second, and the third important reasons.

Table 17 classified the most important reasons for teaching at the Catholic high school into four groups of religious, professional, school environmental, and economic motives on the basis of a similarity of the reasons. According to Table 17, as a total, religious motives (50.5%) were outstandingly much more influential on Catholic teachers' decisions to teach at the Catholic high school than professional (27.6%), school environmental (7.8%), or economic motives (7.7%).

Table 17

*Most Important Reasons by Category that Influenced Catholic Teachers' Decisions to Teach at the Catholic High School*

Motive categories	Most important reasons	
	Catholic teachers ( <i>n</i> = 594)	Non-Catholic teachers ( <i>n</i> = 135)
Religious motives	50.5%	28.2%
Professional motives	27.6%	49.7%
School environmental motives	7.8%	10.4%

Economic motives	7.7%	5.2%
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Note. Religious motives = 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 13, 20; Professional motives = 4, 5, 6, 10, 16; School environmental motives = 8, 15, 17, 19; Economic motives = 11, 12, 14, 18, 21 with regard to item numbers of Table 16.

In regard to Catholic teachers' motives for remaining in the Catholic high school, Table 18 presents the percentage of motives that have influenced teachers' decisions to remain in the Catholic high school and Table 19 shows most important reasons by four motive categories based on a similarity of the reasons. As shown in Table 19, religious motives as a total (36.0%) were still more influential on Catholic teachers' decisions to remain in the Catholic high schools than professional motives (34.6%), school environmental motives (14.0%), or economic motives (12.7%). However, Table 18 indicates that there were significant changes in their preference rank between motives to teach and motives to remain. While God's choice (15.8%), ministry (12.1%), and commitment to Catholic education (10.6%) related to Catholic faith had been the highest preferences regarding Catholic teachers' decisions to teach at the Catholic high school, their highest preferences in the decisions to remain in the Catholic high school were satisfaction with my work (15.3%), love of teaching (10.1%), and God's choice (9.1%). These results imply that Catholic teachers' motives were moved into professional reasons from religious reasons while experiencing the school life.

Table 18

*Motives that have Influenced Teachers' Decisions to Remain in the Catholic High School*

Motives	Catholic teachers (n = 594)		Non-Catholic teachers (n = 135)	
	Most important	A total of the top three	Most important	A total of the top three
1. Satisfaction with my work	15.3%	29.3%	15.6%	36.5%
2. Love of teaching	10.1	26.3	14.8	35.0
3. God's choice for my life	9.1	17.4	5.2	12.0
4. View of teaching as ministry	8.9	19.7	5.2	14.2
5. General working conditions	7.9	21.5	10.4	29.9
6. Commitment to Catholic education	6.9	23.1	.7	2.2
7. The school's Christian values	6.2	20.0	3.7	12.0
8. Job security	6.2	13.5	11.1	18.6
9. Working with committed people	3.9	16.4	5.9	14.9
10. Desire to work with students	3.4	18.3	3.7	16.5
11. Student's achievement	3.4	14.5	5.2	23.2
12. Family situation	3.0	9.1	.7	8.2
13. Teaching my academic subject	2.4	9.8	2.2	17.2
14. Salary or benefits	2.4	9.2	3.7	10.4
15. Helping children develop their faith	2.2	9.3	-	1.5
16. Helping create a Christian community	1.5	7.9	-	4.5
17. Opportunity to witness to my faith	1.2	9.5	2.2	4.4
18. Administrator's style and philosophy	1.2	5.2	3.0	13.5
19. Relationship with the principal	1.0	3.7	1.5	4.5
20. Working in a school close to home	.8	4.5	1.5	6.0
21. Summer vacation and holidays	.3	3.3	-	3.0

Table 19

*Most Important Reasons by Category that have Influenced Teachers' Decisions to Remain in the Catholic High School*

Motive categories	Most important reasons	
	Catholic teachers ( <i>n</i> = 594)	Non-Catholic teachers ( <i>n</i> = 135)
Religious motives	36.0%	17.0%
Professional motives	34.6%	41.5%
School environmental motives	14.0%	20.8%
Economic motives	12.7%	17.0%

Note. Religious motives = 3, 4, 6, 7, 15, 16, 17; Professional motives = 1, 2, 10, 11, 13; School environmental motives = 5, 9, 18, 19; Economic motives = 8, 12, 14, 20, 21 with regard to item numbers of Table 18.

The commitment to mission variable was measured by six items regarding a teacher's belief and acceptance of the Catholic school's evangelizing mission, a willingness to appear as a witness to faith, and helping students develop Catholic faith. Table 20 presenting descriptive statistics for commitment to mission items indicated that Catholic teachers generally have strong commitment to mission ( $M = 4.47$  in maximum possible score = 5.0). Also, Catholic teachers teaching religions had considerably significant higher degrees in all items of commitment to mission in comparison with Catholic teachers teaching other subjects at  $p < .001$ . Catholic teachers as a total reported that they strongly support the religious mission of their school ( $M = 4.84$ ), willingly attend school-wide liturgies ( $M = 4.77$ ), and willingly talk to individual students about matters of faith ( $M = 4.52$ ).

Table 20

*Means and Standard Deviations for Commitment to Mission Items*

Items	All Catholics ( <i>N</i> = 594)		Cath. Religion ( <i>n</i> = 156)		Cath. Other ( <i>n</i> = 434)		<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1. Supporting religious mission	4.84	.446	4.95	.237	4.79	.496	.000
2. Attending school liturgies	4.77	.662	4.94	.247	4.71	.679	.000
3. Talking to students about faith	4.52	.788	4.95	.249	4.37	.858	.000
4. Integrating faith and subject	4.30	.955	4.91	.329	4.07	1.010	.000
5. Encouraging students in liturgy	4.25	.933	4.71	.558	4.08	.984	.000
6. Developing faith of students	4.16	.883	4.68	.672	3.98	.876	.000
Average	4.47	.557	4.86	.231	4.33	.575	.000

Note. Maximum possible score = 5.0. *p* = the significance level of a *t*-test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

The commitment to the school variable was measured by six items related to a teacher's acceptance and support of goals and values of the school, a willingness to dedicate oneself to school work and activities, intention to remain in the school, and effort toward building community within the school. As shown in Table 21 regarding commitment to the school variable items, Catholic teachers' degree of commitment to the school was high ( $M = 4.44$  in maximum possible score = 5.0). Catholic teachers on average strongly agreed that they willingly put in a great deal of effort to help their school be successful ( $M = 4.71$ ), help promote a sense of community within their school ( $M = 4.69$ ), and their school's reputation and performance are important for them ( $M = 4.81$ ). With regard to this commitment, significant commitment degree differences between Catholic

teachers teaching religion and Catholic teachers who teach other subject were not found in most items excluding 'concern for school's reputation' item on which Catholic teachers who teach other subject ( $M = 4.84$ ) were slightly higher than Catholic teachers teaching religion ( $M = 4.72$ ) at  $p < .05$ .

Table 21

*Means and Standard Deviations for Commitment to the School Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 594$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 156$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 434$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	
1. Concern for school's reputation	4.81	.518	4.72	.611	4.84	.480	.014
2. Helping school be successful	4.71	.556	4.69	.542	4.71	.563	.603
3. Promoting school community	4.69	.507	4.75	.451	4.67	.525	.128
4. Accepting school values	4.42	.827	4.37	.804	4.44	.837	.328
5. Dedicating oneself to school	4.06	1.224	4.11	1.162	4.04	1.248	.545
6. A strong intention to remain	3.94	1.249	3.91	1.246	3.94	1.253	.783
Average	4.44	.494	4.42	.501	4.44	.492	.683

Note. Maximum possible score = 5.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

The commitment to teaching variable was measured by six items dealing with a teacher's affective acceptance of, a willingness to dedicate oneself to, a strong intention to remain with, and extra investment to instruction and teaching subjects. Table 22 showing descriptive statistics for commitment to teaching indicated that Catholic teachers are strongly committed to teaching on the whole ( $M = 4.51$  in maximum possible score = 5.0). Two items reported to the highest degree by Catholic teachers were "I am willing to share

with and learn from my colleagues to enhance my teaching ability” ( $M = 4.79$ ) and “I often think about ways to improve my teaching and professional knowledge” ( $M = 4.73$ ). Also, similarly to commitment to the school, statistically significant commitment degree differences between Catholic teachers teaching religion and Catholic teachers teaching other subject were not found in all items of commitment to teaching.

Table 22

*Means and Standard Deviations for Commitment to Teaching Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 594$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 156$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 434$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	
1. Sharing with colleagues	4.79	.448	4.76	.483	4.81	.436	.314
2. Improving knowledge	4.73	.501	4.69	.540	4.74	.488	.280
3. Extra investment to teaching	4.66	.577	4.62	.551	4.68	.587	.252
4. Enjoying teaching	4.57	.768	4.48	.770	4.60	.768	.097
5. Pride in a job	4.19	.949	4.26	.889	4.17	.972	.303
6. Dedicating oneself to teaching	4.12	1.272	4.11	1.278	4.13	1.266	.850
Average	4.51	.475	4.49	.449	4.52	.485	.420

Note. Maximum possible score = 5.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

Commitment to students was measured by six items dealing with a teacher’s caring for students, a willingness to help students, taking responsibility for improving students’ learning and school life, and strong emotional bonds with students. As shown in Table 23 presenting descriptive statistics for commitment to students, Catholic teachers’ commitment degree to students was very high on the whole ( $M = 4.75$  in maximum

possible score = 5.0) and was in the highest place in comparison with commitment to mission ( $M = 4.47$ ), commitment to the school ( $M = 4.44$ ), and the commitment to teaching ( $M = 4.51$ ). Also, the degree of commitment to students on the whole was not significantly different between Catholic teachers teaching religion and Catholic teachers teaching other subjects.

Table 23

*Means and Standard Deviations for Commitment to Students Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 594$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 156$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 434$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	
1. Caring about students' futures	4.88	.398	4.93	.258	4.86	.438	.086
2. Helping students	4.88	.353	4.94	.234	4.85	.386	.007
3. Responsibility for students	4.86	.370	4.81	.412	4.87	.354	.055
4. Emotional bonds with students	4.74	.561	4.79	.509	4.71	.580	.143
5. Extra effort for students	4.70	.554	4.61	.552	4.73	.553	.021
6. Extra effort outside of class	4.47	.736	4.42	.691	4.48	.753	.406
Average	4.75	.323	4.75	.278	4.75	.339	.933

Note. Maximum possible score = 5.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

In sum, Catholic teachers generally reported strong commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students on the whole. In terms of a commitment degree, for Catholic teacher as a total, commitment to students ( $M = 4.75$ ) was in the first place in comparison with commitment to mission ( $M = 4.47$ ), commitment to the school ( $M = 4.44$ ), and commitment to teaching ( $M = 4.51$ ). However, for Catholic teachers teaching religion, the



1. SGVC	3.64	.697	3.35	.682	3.49	.701	.030
2. SCCG	3.27	.751	3.12	.734	3.32	.752	.004
3. PSL	3.28	.850	3.20	.846	3.30	.852	.197
Average	3.33	.669	3.23	.644	3.37	.676	.021

Note. Maximum possible score = 4.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

The SGVC variable was measured by four items regarding Catholic values and the religious mission that the Catholic school should have. Table 25 presenting descriptive statistics for SGVC indicated that it was reported by Catholic teachers that Catholic high schools generally have goals and values rooted in Catholicism to a high degree ( $M = 3.31$  in maximum possible score = 4.0). Catholic teachers reported that “their schools’ goals and values reflect important teachings and values of the Catholic Church” ( $M = 3.57$ ) and “their school demonstrates as much concern for faith development as for academic development” ( $M = 3.52$ ) to a relatively high degree. But, it was to a relatively low degree in Catholic teachers’ perception that “in selecting new teachers for this school, an important emphasis is placed on evidence of the candidates’ commitment to faith or to the value system of the Church ( $M = 2.94$ ). On the whole, the perception degree of Catholic teachers teaching other subjects ( $M = 3.36$ ) on SGVC was significantly higher than one of Catholic teachers teaching religion ( $M = 3.17$ ) at  $p < .01$ .

Table 25

*Means and Standard Deviations for the School’s Goals and Values Rooted in Catholicism*  
*Items*

Items	All Catholics ( <i>N</i> = 588)		Cath. Religion ( <i>n</i> = 154)		Cath. Other ( <i>n</i> = 430)		<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1. Reflecting teachings of the Church	3.57	.624	3.46	.658	3.61	.608	.012
2. Concern for faith development	3.52	.663	3.30	.753	3.60	.610	.000
3. Concern for teachers' religious mission	3.19	.867	3.05	.948	3.25	.832	.014
4. Emphasis on faith of new teachers	2.94	.852	2.85	.870	2.98	.845	.128
Average	3.31	.623	3.17	.672	3.36	.599	.002

Note. Maximum possible score = 4.0. *p* = the significance level of a *t*-test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

The SCCG variable was measured by four items dealing with community sense, sharing, collaboration, and caring based on the Gospel among the school members. As shown in Table 26 presenting descriptive statistics for SCCG, Catholic teachers perceived that their schools on the whole have community cultures based on the Gospel to a high degree ( $M = 3.34$  in maximum possible score = 4.0). Catholic teachers reported to similar degrees that “their school has an atmosphere of caring and trust among the staff” ( $M = 3.41$ ), “there is a great deal of cooperative effort among staff members” ( $M = 3.35$ ), “Most of the faculty share a central mission of what the school should be” ( $M = 3.31$ ), and “Staff and students experience a deep sense of community based on the Gospel” ( $M = 3.29$ ). Similarly to SGVC, Catholic teachers teaching other subjects ( $M = 3.39$ ) had significant higher perception degree than Catholic teachers teaching religion ( $M = 3.20$ ) on SCCG at  $p < .01$ .

Table 26

*Means and Standard Deviations for the School's Community Culture Based on the Gospel**Items*

Items	All Catholics ( <i>N</i> = 588)		Cath. Religion ( <i>n</i> = 154)		Cath. Other ( <i>n</i> = 430)		<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1. Atmosphere of caring and trust	3.41	.739	3.29	.721	3.45	.744	.016
2. Cooperative effort among teachers	3.35	.746	3.27	.728	3.37	.753	.140
3. Sharing on the school's mission	3.31	.754	3.10	.826	3.39	.714	.000
4. Community sense based on the Gospel	3.29	.697	3.16	.700	3.33	.693	.009
Average	3.34	.595	3.20	.606	3.39	.585	.001

Note. Maximum possible score = 4.0. *p* = the significance level of a *t*-test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

The PSL variable was measured by four items related to the function of the principal to foster the religious mission of the Catholic high school. Table 27 presents Means and Standard Deviations for the principal's spiritual leadership variable. As indicated at Table 25, Catholic teachers perceived that their school principals generally practice spiritual leadership to a high degree ( $M = 3.48$  in maximum possible score = 4.0). Catholic teachers generally reported a very positive perception on all items that "The principal has a philosophy of education and values based on Catholicism" ( $M = 3.58$ ), "The principal has consistently strived to nurture, protect, and develop the Catholic identity of this school" ( $M = 3.48$ ), "The principal encourages teachers to participate in the religious

mission of the school and to help the spiritual development of students” ( $M = 3.46$ ), and “The principal seems to view his/her school leadership as a vocation/ministry” ( $M = 3.40$ ). Unlike SGVC and SCCG, significant perception degree differences on PSL between Catholic teachers teaching other subjects and Catholic teachers teaching religion were not found in all items.

Table 27

*Means and Standard Deviations for the Principal's Spiritual Leadership Items*

Items	All Catholics ( $N = 585$ )		Cath. Religion ( $n = 153$ )		Cath. Other ( $n = 429$ )		$p$
	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	$M$	$SD$	
1. Educational philosophy based on the Gospel	3.58	.671	3.53	.661	3.60	.675	.243
2. Developing Catholic identity	3.48	.743	3.39	.747	3.50	.742	.126
3. Concern for school's religious mission	3.46	.770	3.39	.737	3.48	.783	.249
4. Leadership as a vocation/ministry	3.40	.841	3.36	.858	3.41	.838	.587
Average	3.48	.680	3.42	.668	3.50	.685	.208

Note. Maximum possible score = 4.0.  $p$  = the significance level of a  $t$ -test on the differences between the means of the two groups (Cath. Religion and Cath. Other).

In sum, Catholic teachers generally perceived that their schools have goals and values rooted in Catholicism, have community culture based on the Gospel, and their principals practice spiritual leadership to a high degree. Among the three environmental characteristics, PSL ( $M = 3.48$ ) was in the first place to the perception degree of Catholic teachers compared with SGVC ( $M = 3.31$ ) and SCCG ( $M = 3.34$ ). Also, Catholic teachers

teaching other subjects had significantly higher satisfaction and perception degrees on the Catholic high school's SGVC and SCCG excluding PSL than Catholic teachers teaching religion at  $p < .05$ .

### **Data Analysis by Research Question**

This study was guided by three primary research questions regarding Catholic teachers' faith, the relationship between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers, and the school's three environmental characteristics. The results of statistical analyses by the three research questions are presented in this section.

#### **Research question 1.**

The first question of this study was as follows: To what extent do Catholic teachers in Catholic high schools report that they believe the tenets of Catholicism (the cognitive dimension), have a loving relationship with God (the affective dimension), practice their faith (the behavioral dimension), and live their faith in their lives (the integral dimension)? In order to explore this question, descriptive statistical analysis was utilized to provide percentages of each faith dimension by survey respondents along with Means and Standard Deviations when appropriate.

In regard to belief as the cognitive dimension of Catholic faith, Catholic teachers generally reported a high degree of belief for most Catholic teachings ( $M = 4.43$  in maximum possible score = 5.0). Especially, the basic tenets of the Catholic Church such as "God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (87.1%), "The human person has been made in the image of God" (84.3%), "Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried but on the third day He arose from the dead" (85.3%), "Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God

provided a way for the forgiveness of man's sin" (81.3%) were strongly believed by the vast majority of Catholic teachers. Most of Catholic teachers also strongly agreed about the teaching of the Church on social justice issues. That is, of Catholic teachers 87.4% strongly and 10.2% moderately agreed about the item of "Because of our individual human dignity, Catholics must strive to promote the good of the human person." However, other belief items, such as the Bible as the word of God (63.8%), Jesus Christ being born of a virgin (67.8%), Jesus Christ's return (65.5%), Mary as "Mother of God" (68.0%), the Church's seven sacraments (61.1%), the Church as a way for knowing God better (50.2%), and lay people's prophetic mission (63.4%) were around 20–30 % lower in strong agreement than the previous belief items although they were moderately believed by over 80% Catholic teachers. Also, two teachings of the Church were remarkably low in belief degree. Only 30.0% of Catholic teachers strongly agreed that "It is a sin for a Catholic to miss weekly Mass obligation when he or she easily could have attended," and only 29.3% strongly believed "the Pope is the infallible leader of the Church." These results reflect the trends of American Catholics who prefer to be called spiritual rather than religious and do not view the Church as an essential component of their faith (Bagette, 2009; D'antonio et al., 2006; Williams & Davidson, 1996). Table 28 presents percentages for belief items.

Table 28

*Percentages for Belief Items*

Items	SA	MA	MD	SD
1. Because of our individual human dignity, Catholics must strive to promote the good of the human person.	87.4%	10.2%	.3%	.5%
2. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.	87.1	7.9	.2	1.0

3. Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried but on the third day He arose from the dead.	85.3	8.8	.8	.5
4. Jesus Christ is both true God and true man.	84.3	10.2	.3	.3
5. The human person has been made in the image of God.	84.2	10.3	.3	.8
6. Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God provided a way for the forgiveness of man's sins.	81.3	11.3	.3	1.1
7. The Holy Spirit builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church.	73.5	17.1	.3	.8
8. There is no life after death.	5.1	3.1	12.5	72.7
9. Mary is truly "Mother of God" since she is the mother of Jesus, the Son of God.	68.0	16.9	2.6	1.3
10. In God's plan Jesus Christ was born of a virgin.	67.8	13.7	2.6	3.3
11. Jesus Christ will return to the earth someday.	65.5	16.2	2.8	1.5
12. The Bible is the word of God given to guide man to grace and salvation.	63.8	25.9	3.3	.8
13. By virtue of their prophetic mission, lay people are called to be witnesses to Christ in all circumstances.	63.4	27.1	2.0	.7
14. The Church's seven sacraments are effective signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church.	61.1	25.0	3.0	.7
15. I come to know God better through the Church.	50.2	31.2	4.5	2.6
16. It is a sin for a Catholic to miss weekly Mass obligation when he or she easily could have attended.	30.0	21.5	14.1	18.0
17. The Pope is the infallible leader of the Church.	29.3	24.6	16.6	15.4

Note. SA = Strongly agree; MA = Moderately agree; MD = Moderately disagree; SD = Strongly disagree. The percentages of neither agree nor disagree were not presented.

With regard to intimacy with God as the affective dimension of Catholic faith, Catholic teachers also reported strong heart faith degree ( $M = 4.53$  in maximum possible score = 5.0). More than 90% of Catholic teachers strongly or moderately affirmed that they experience an awareness of God's love (97%), pray to give thanks for all God has done for

them (96.8%), and feel God is always with them and helps them (91.2%). Only less than 5.0% of Catholic teachers reported that they do not feel God's love toward them, do not feel close to God, and do not love God in their heart. Table 29 presents percentages for intimacy with God items.

Table 29

*Percentages for Intimacy with God Items*

Items	SA	MA	MD	SD
1. I pray to give thanks for all God has done for me.	80.2%	16.6%	.5%	.3%
2. I experience an awareness of God's love.	76.2	20.8	.3	.3
3. I feel God is always with me and helps me.	67.5	23.7	2.3	.5
4. God hears and answers my prayers.	65.0	23.8	1.8	.7
5. I frequently feel very close to God in prayer, during Mass, or at important moments in my daily life.	59.8	28.3	3.5	.7
6. God actively directs my life.	58.0	28.6	3.3	1.3
7. Because of my love for God, I obey his commandments.	51.7	35.5	2.3	.7

Action, the behavioral dimension of Catholic faith, was measured in two aspects: action attitude and religious practice. Table 30 presents percentages of action attitude items. As shown in Table 30, the majority of Catholic teachers put their strong emphasis on obeying God's rules and praying. However, the item on participating in the Church's evangelizing mission was strongly emphasized by fewer than half of Catholic teachers. That is, in regard to their own religious life, 84.5% of Catholic teachers responded that they have put emphasis quite a bit or more on "obeying God's rules in my words and behaviors" and 78.3% of Catholic teachers responded with a strong emphasis on "praying". However, only 49.0% of Catholic teachers reported that they have placed quite a bit or

more emphasis on “participating in the Church’s evangelizing mission”. On average, the action attitude degree of Catholic teachers ( $M = 3.90$ ) was slightly strong, but was the lowest compared with belief ( $M = 4.43$ ) and intimacy with God ( $M = 4.53$ ).

Table 30

*Percentages of Action Attitude Items*

Items	A great deal	Quite a bit	Some	A little	No
1. Praying	43.3%	35.0%	16.7%	4.2%	.8%
2. Obeying God’s rules in my words and behaviors	42.0	42.5	11.8	2.7	1.0
3. Helping the poor or working for social justice	34.1	35.6	21.7	7.3	1.3
4. Being involved in Catholic community life	29.8	35.7	24.6	7.6	2.3
5. Participating in the Church’s evangelizing mission	22.2	26.8	27.5	13.7	9.8

In regard to religious practice, of Catholic teachers 68.2% responded they pray everyday and 68.3% affirmed that they share their religious beliefs with others once a week or more. Catholic teachers who have read the Bible everyday were 11.6%, who have read it once a week or more were 30.4%, and who have never read it were 17.9%. Of Catholic teachers 69.3% reported they have attended Mass once a week and 32.4% reported that they have participated in parish services and activities once a week or more. Of Catholic teachers 58.1% responded that they have participated in activities for helping poor people or improving social justice once a month or more. Lastly, Catholic teachers who have gone to confession several times a year or more were 31.5% and who have never gone to confession were 29.7%. Table 31 shows percentages of Catholic teachers’ religious practices.

Table 31

*Percentages of Religious Practice Items*

Items	Every Day	A few times a week	Once a week	2 - 3 times a month	Once a month	Several times a year	About once a year	Never
1. Praying	68.2%	22.3%	3.5%	2.3%	1.3%	.8%	.7%	1.0%
2. Sharing belief	29.5	26.3	12.5	10.3	5.2	9.8	3.0	3.3
3. Reading the Bible	11.6	17.2	11.6	7.8	9.9	15.2	8.9	17.9
4. Attending Mass	6.3	14.1	49.2	13.2	7.8	8.4	.7	.3
5. Helping the poor/improving social justice	5.6	12.5	9.1	16.0	14.9	27.9	8.9	5.1
6. Participating in parish activities	3.2	8.6	20.6	10.6	10.0	22.9	12.8	11.3
7. Going to confession	.3	.3	1.0	1.7	4.5	23.7	38.8	29.7

A living faith as the integral dimension of Catholic faith was reported as having been practiced to a somewhat strong degree ( $M = 4.26$  in maximum possible score = 5.0). The degree on average was slightly higher than action attitude ( $M = 3.90$ ), but slightly lower than belief ( $M = 4.43$ ) and intimacy with God ( $M = 4.53$ ).

Over 90% of Catholic teachers strongly or moderately responded that “they strive to improve virtues such as reconciliation, justice, compassion, patience, caring, and honesty in their attitudes and behaviors based on their religious faith” (92.4%) and “their ethics, behavior, and speech reflect their religious faith” (91.9%). Of Catholic teachers 80 – 90 % reported to a strong or moderate degree that “their religious faith plays a vital role when they make everyday choices” (86.6%), “because of their faith, they participate

practically, financially, politically or prayerfully in helping people less fortunate than they are” (84.8%), “their religious faith has helped them be more open in their relationships with other people” (84.6%), and “their living environment (room, house, and office) reflects their religious beliefs” (80.2%). Only 65.6% of Catholic teachers responded that “they actively share their faith with others because God is important to them and they would like other people to know about Him” to a strong or moderate degree. Table 32 presents percentages of the living faith items.

Table 32

*Percentages of Living Faith Items*

Items	SA	MA	MD	SD
1. Based on my religious faith, I strive to improve virtues such as reconciliation, justice, compassion, caring, and honesty in my attitudes and behaviors.	61.3%	31.1%	.7%	.7%
2. My religious faith plays a vital role when I make everyday choices.	57.6	29.0	2.8	1.8
3. My ethics, behavior, and speech reflect my religious faith.	57.0	34.9	1.5	.7
4. My religious faith has helped me be more open in my relationships with other people.	49.3	35.3	2.3	1.7
5. Because of my faith, I participate practically, financially, politically or prayerfully in helping people less fortunate than I am.	45.6	39.2	2.5	1.7
6. My living environment (room, house, office) reflects my religious beliefs.	43.4	36.8	4.1	2.6
7. I actively share my faith with others because God is important to me and I'd like other people to know about Him too.	35.3	30.3	9.0	6.4

Note. SA = Strongly agree; MA = Moderately agree; MD = Moderately disagree; SD = Strongly disagree. The percentages of neither agree nor disagree were not presented.

Significant faith degree differences of Catholic teachers were found in some variables of Catholic faith in terms of gender, marital status, age range, Catholic schooling, teaching subject, and teaching years. As shown in Table 33, female Catholic teachers had a slightly significant stronger faith degree than male teachers in intimacy with God ( $F = 11.559, p = .001$ ) and a living faith ( $F = 4.378, p = .037$ ). With regard to marital status, there were also significant faith degree differences in intimacy with God ( $F = 2.704, p = .045$ ), action attitude ( $F = 9.677, p = .000$ ), religious practice ( $F = 15.805, p = .000$ ), and a living faith ( $F = 8.043, p = .000$ ). In those four variables, consistently religious teachers were highest, married teachers were the second, single teachers were the third, and others were the lowest in the faith degree. Significant faith degree differences by age range was also found slightly in intimacy with God ( $F = 2.469, p = .044$ ), action attitude ( $F = 3.613, p = .006$ ), religious practice ( $F = 3.645, p = .006$ ), and a living faith ( $F = 3.305, p = .011$ ). Older Catholic teachers (55 or over) had a consistently higher faith degree than younger teachers in those four variables.

Table 33

*Mean Differences of Faith Variables by Gender, Marital Status, and Age Range*

	Belief	Intimacy with God	Action Attitude	Religious Practice	A Living Faith
Gender (Mean)					
Male ( $n = 262$ )	4.40	4.43	3.84	4.93	4.19
Female ( $n = 347$ )	4.46	4.60	3.96	4.85	4.31
<i>F</i>	1.103	11.559	3.515	.644	4.378
<i>p</i>	.294	.001	.061	.423	.037
Marital Status (Mean)					
Religious ( $n = 41$ )	4.54	4.76	4.47	6.00	4.72

Single ( $n = 159$ )	4.36	4.49	3.80	4.72	4.14
Married ( $n = 389$ )	4.45	4.53	3.89	4.84	4.26
Other ( $n = 22$ )	4.32	4.37	3.72	4.53	4.10
<i>F</i>	1.659	2.704	9.677	15.805	8.043
<i>p</i>	.175	.045	.000	.000	.000
Age Range (Mean)					
Under 25 ( $n = 11$ )	4.30	4.51	3.82	4.53	4.30
25 – 34 ( $n = 141$ )	4.39	4.46	3.75	4.68	4.14
35 – 44 ( $n = 91$ )	4.43	4.41	3.83	4.68	4.15
45 – 54 ( $n = 150$ )	4.51	4.56	3.93	5.01	4.29
55 or over ( $n = 216$ )	4.42	4.61	4.04	5.05	4.38
<i>F</i>	1.005	2.469	3.613	3.645	3.305
<i>P</i>	.404	.044	.006	.006	.011

In terms of Catholic schooling, Catholic teachers who had attended Catholic elementary schools as students had a significantly higher degree of faith than Catholic teachers who had not attended those schools in the intimacy with God variable ( $F = 5.863$ ,  $p = .016$ ). In regard to attending Catholic high schools, significant faith degree differences among Catholic teachers were not found in all faith variables. However, in the case of college/university, Catholic teachers who had experienced Catholic colleges or universities were significantly higher than Catholic teachers who had never experienced Catholic colleges or universities in the faith degree of intimacy with God ( $F = 4.876$ ,  $p = .028$ ), action attitude ( $F = 9.354$ ,  $p = .002$ ), religious practice ( $F = 22.326$ ,  $p = .000$ ), and a living faith ( $F = 15.073$ ,  $p = .000$ ). Table 34 shows mean differences of faith variables by Catholic schooling of Catholic teachers.

Table 34

*Mean Differences of Faith Variables by Catholic Schooling*

	Belief	Intimacy with God	Action Attitude	Religious Practice	A Living Faith
Elementary School					
Yes ( $n = 462$ )	4.45	4.56	3.90	4.90	4.27
No ( $n = 135$ )	4.36	4.41	3.87	4.78	4.19
<i>F</i>	2.491	5.863	.041	1.176	1.291
<i>p</i>	.115	.016	.839	.279	.256
High School					
Yes ( $n = 419$ )	4.41	4.54	3.91	4.90	4.28
No ( $n = 164$ )	4.45	4.46	3.87	4.79	4.18
<i>F</i>	.421	2.195	.363	1.112	2.437
<i>p</i>	.517	.139	.547	.292	.119
College/University					
Yes ( $n = 362$ )	4.45	4.56	3.97	5.06	4.34
No ( $n = 198$ )	4.39	4.44	3.77	4.57	4.10
<i>F</i>	1.477	4.876	9.354	22.326	15.073
<i>p</i>	.225	.028	.002	.000	.000

As shown in Table 35, there were no significant faith degree differences found when comparing Catholic teachers' academic degrees. However, with regard to teaching subject, Catholic teachers who have taught religion or religion with other subjects reported significantly higher faith degrees than Catholic teachers who have taught only other subjects in all faith variables. In regard to teaching years, only the action attitude variable of the faith components showed a significant difference in the faith degree ( $F = 3.146$ ,  $p = .014$ ). That is, Catholic teachers who have taught during 11–20 years responded a

slightly significant higher action attitude degree than other Catholic teachers who have taught during 1–10 years or more than 20 years.

Table 35

*Mean Differences of Faith Variables by Academic Degree, Teaching Subject, and Teaching Years*

	Belief	Intimacy with God	Action Attitude	Religious Practice	A Living Faith
<b>Academic Degree</b>					
No degree ( $n = 3$ )	4.78	4.67	4.00	5.05	4.57
Associate ( $n = 4$ )	4.68	4.68	3.95	5.00	4.46
Bachelor ( $n = 180$ )	4.47	4.56	3.87	4.81	4.25
Master ( $n = 392$ )	4.52	4.52	3.90	4.89	4.26
Doctorate ( $n = 32$ )	4.49	4.49	4.10	5.16	4.31
<i>F</i>	.806	.292	.655	.632	.284
<i>p</i>	.522	.883	.623	.640	.888
<b>Teaching Subject</b>					
Religion ( $n = 125$ )	4.63	4.74	4.34	5.78	4.67
Religion + other ( $n = 35$ )	4.59	4.79	4.40	5.76	4.71
Other subject ( $n = 446$ )	4.36	4.44	3.73	4.55	4.10
<i>F</i>	11.969	16.204	45.689	83.483	45.211
<i>p</i>	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
<b>Teaching Years</b>					
1 – 2 ( $n = 94$ )	4.35	4.53	3.98	4.90	4.27
3 – 5 ( $n = 138$ )	4.49	4.45	3.79	4.72	4.19
6 – 10 ( $n = 133$ )	4.44	4.49	3.86	4.90	4.19
11 – 20 ( $n = 132$ )	4.46	4.63	4.07	5.10	4.38
More than 20 ( $n = 109$ )	4.38	4.54	3.82	4.81	4.26
<i>F</i>	1.028	1.709	3.146	1.966	1.609
<i>P</i>	.392	.146	.014	.098	.170

In comparison with American Catholics, Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school are likely to have a higher faith degree on the whole. In general, frequency of Mass attendance is recognized as “a strong indicator of the general importance of Catholicism in a person’s life and of his or her level of commitment to living out the faith” (Gray & Perl, 2008, p. 2). With regard to frequency of Mass attendance, Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school had a much higher percentage than American adult Catholics in Sunday Mass attendance. According to Gallup Poll’s report on church attendance among American Catholics conducted in 2008 (Saad, 2009), the percentage of Catholics saying they had attended church last Sunday was 45%. Also, D’Antonio’s 2005 Gallup survey reported that only 34% of American adult Catholics have attended Mass at least once a week (D’Antonio et al., 2007). But, this survey research shows that 69.3% of Catholic teachers (97.5% of religious teachers, 67.7% of laity teachers) have attended Mass once a week or more often.

Also, Catholic teachers reported higher degrees on the importance of Catholic faith, belief, and participation in Sacraments than general American Catholics. According to CARA’s survey research report that examined belief and Sacrament practice of American Catholics (Gray & Perl, 2008), less than half of American adult Catholics (41%) responded that Catholic faith is one of the most important parts of their lives or the most important part of their lives, while 79.8% of Catholic teachers (100% of religious teachers, 78.2% of laity teachers) in this study reported that religion (Catholic faith) is the most important influence or one of the most important influences in their lives. With regard to Catholic belief, about 80% of American adult Catholics did not doubt the Trinity (81%) and Jesus’ resurrection (80%) (Gray & Perl, 2008), whereas around 85% of Catholic

teachers reported that they strongly believe in the Trinity (87.8% of religious teachers, 87.0% of laity teachers) and Jesus' resurrection (87.8% of religious teachers, 85.0% of laity teachers). Also, while 61% of American adult Catholics agreed "strongly" or "somewhat" with the statement, "Sacraments are essential to my faith," (Gray & Perl, 2008), 94.1% of Catholic teachers (100% of religious teachers, 93.7% of laity teachers) responded "the sacraments such as the Eucharist and confession are very important or somewhat important to their faith" in this study. As one example regarding the sacraments, 26% of American adult Catholics reported that they have participated in the Sacrament of Reconciliation once a year or more often and 45% of Catholics responded that they have never gone to confession (Gray & Perl, 2008), whereas 70.3% Catholic teachers (85.3% of religious teachers, 69.3% of laity teachers) reported they have participated in confession about once a year or more often and 29.7% (14.6% of religious teachers, 30.7% of laity teachers) responded that they have never gone to confession in this study.

In sum, with regard to the belief variable, Catholic teachers generally reported strong belief degree for the basic tenets of the Catholic Church and the teaching of the Church on social justice issues. However, the Church's two teachings related to Mass obligation and authority of the Pope were significantly low in belief degree. Catholic teachers also reported strong heart faith degree on the whole regarding the intimacy with God variable. Only fewer than 5.0% of Catholic teachers responded that they do not feel God's love toward them and do not feel close to God. In regard to the action variable, the majority of Catholic teachers put their strong emphasis on obeying God's rules and praying, but participating in the Church's evangelizing mission was strongly emphasized by less than half of Catholic teachers. Of Catholic teachers 68.2% reported that they have prayed

everyday, 30.4% responded that they have read the Bible once a week or more, and 69.3% affirmed that they have attended Mass once a week or more. Catholic teachers who have never gone to confession were 29.7%. A living faith was reported as having been practiced to a somewhat strong degree on the whole. Catholic teachers' the living faith degree on average ( $M = 4.26$ ) was slightly higher than action attitude ( $M = 3.90$ ), but slightly lower than belief ( $M = 4.43$ ) and intimacy with God ( $M = 4.53$ ). Also, significant faith degree differences of Catholic teachers were found in some variables of Catholic faith in terms of gender, marital status, age range, Catholic schooling, teaching subject, and teaching years. Last, in comparison with American adult Catholics, Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school had a higher faith degree on the whole. That is, with regard to the importance of Catholic faith in one's life, belief, Mass attendance, and participation in confession, Catholic teachers reported much higher degrees than American adult Catholics.

### **Research question 2.**

The second question of this study was as follows: Are there significant relationships between the multi-dimensions of Catholic teachers' reported faith and their reported commitment in the Catholic high school? The second question had two sub-questions: 1) which dimension of faith is most influential in teacher commitment? 2) which dimension among the four dimensions of teacher commitment is strongly associated with Catholic teachers' faith? In order to explore these questions, the Pearson correlation was applied.

Table 36 presents the correlation matrix and descriptive statistics for four dimensions of Catholic faith and four dimensions of school commitment of Catholic teachers. As shown in the correlation matrix of Table 37, Catholic teachers' reported belief,

intimacy with God, action, and a living faith all were significantly related to their reported commitment to mission, commitment to the school, commitment to teaching, and commitment to students with the highest  $r = .729$  to the lowest  $r = .120$  at  $p < .001$ . Among the four dimensions of school commitment, commitment to mission was the highest and had strong relationships with all faith variables of belief ( $r = .567$ ), intimacy with God ( $r = .593$ ), action ( $r = .682$ ), and a living faith ( $r = .729$ ). Also, among the four dimensions of Catholic faith, a living faith was the highest relationship with all commitment variables of commitment to mission ( $r = .729$ ), commitment to the school ( $r = .299$ ), commitment to teaching ( $r = .247$ ), and commitment to the students ( $r = .323$ ). Although commitment to teaching was significantly correlated with all faith variables, that commitment was the lowest relationship with all faith variables of belief ( $r = .120$ ), intimacy with God ( $r = .221$ ), action ( $r = .160$ ), and a living faith (.247) compared with other commitment variables. In addition, of the relationships between the multi-dimensions of Catholic teachers' reported faith and their reported commitment, the highest relationship was between a living faith and commitment to mission ( $r = .729$ ) and the lowest relationship was between belief and commitment to teaching ( $r = .120$ ).

These results imply that there are significant relationships between the four dimensions (belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith) of Catholic teachers' faith and the four dimensions (mission, the school, teaching, and students) of their commitment in the Catholic high school; Among the four dimensions of Catholic faith, a living faith that means harmonious integration of belief, intimacy with God, and action is most influential in commitments to mission, the school, teaching, and students of Catholic

teachers; Among the four dimensions of teacher commitment, commitment to mission is most strongly connected with Catholic teachers' faith.

Table 36

*Correlation Matrix and Descriptive Statistics for Four Dimensions of Catholic Faith and Four Dimensions of School Commitment Reported by Catholic Teachers*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Belief	–	.626	.499	.548	.567	.220	.120	.194
2. Intimacy with God		–	.616	.681	.593	.259	.221	.244
3. Action			–	.787	.682	.215	.160	.245
4. A Living Faith				–	.729	.299	.247	.323
5. Commitment to Mission					–	.324	.301	.382
6. Commitment to the School						–	.614	.522
7. Commitment to Teaching							–	.529
8. Commitment to Students								–
<i>M</i>	4.43	4.53	4.48	4.26	4.47	4.44	4.51	4.75
<i>SD</i>	.589	.601	.926	.702	.557	.494	.475	.323

Note. Action variable is the combination of 'action attitude' variable and 'religious practice' variable. All correlations are statistically significant at  $p < .001$ .

### **Research question 3.**

The third question of this study was as follows: Do a Catholic teacher's perceptions of the three environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school (the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership) have an effect on the relationships between the Catholic teacher's reported faith and commitment? In order to examine whether the Catholic high school's three environmental characteristics make an additional

contribution to Catholic teachers' school commitment outcome produced by the previous block of their four faith variables, a multiple hierarchical (blockwise entry) regression model was conducted.

Table 37 presents a summary of hierarchical regression analysis for seven variables (four faith variables and three environmental variables) predicting commitment to mission. As shown in Table 38, Catholic teachers' faith variables accounted for almost 60% of the variability in commitment to mission ( $R^2 = .597$ ), but the school's three environment variables accounted for just 0.2% of the variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .002$ ) and were not statistically significant ( $p = .403$ ). Also, the beta weights indicated that only belief ( $\beta = .202$ ,  $t(582) = 5.754$ ,  $p < .001$ ), action ( $\beta = .259$ ,  $t(582) = 5.893$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and a living faith ( $\beta = .376$ ,  $t(582) = 7.873$ ,  $p < .001$ ) among the seven predictors contribute significantly to commitment to mission and a living faith plays a major role in predicting commitment to mission. These results imply that Catholic teachers' faith (belief, action, and a living faith) significantly contributes in quite a large degree to their commitment to mission, but the three environmental characteristics (SGVC, SCCG, and PSL) of the Catholic high school do not have an effect on the relationships between Catholic teachers' faith and commitment to mission.

Table 37

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Commitment to Mission (N = 583)*

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$
Step 1			

Belief	.186	.033	.196***
Intimacy with God	.052	.037	.056
Action	.151	.026	.251***
A living faith	.305	.038	.384***
Step 2			
Belief	.193	.033	.202***
Intimacy with God	.041	.038	.044
Action	.156	.026	.259***
A living faith	.298	.038	.376***
SGVC	.053	.043	.060
SCCG	-.037	.038	-.040
PSL	.010	.033	.012

Note.  $R^2 = .598$  for Step 1 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .002$  for Step 2 ( $p < .403$ ). \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

In terms of commitment to the school, Table 38 shows the hierarchical regression analysis for seven variables predicting commitment to the school. Table 38 indicates that Catholic teachers' faith variables accounted for 10.0% of the variability in commitment to the school and the school's three environmental variables accounted for 15.0% of the variance in Catholic teachers' commitment to the school. Also, the beta weights indicated that only a living faith ( $\beta = .186$ ,  $t(582) = 2.845$ ,  $p = .005$ ) among faith variables and in similar degrees SCCG ( $\beta = .162$ ,  $t(582) = 2.883$ ,  $p = .004$ ) and PSL ( $\beta = .164$ ,  $t(582) = 2.975$ ,  $p = .003$ ) among the school's environmental variables contribute significantly to Catholic teachers' commitment to the school. In addition to commitment to mission, a living faith played a major role in predicting commitment to the school. These results suggest that the Catholic high school's community culture based on the Gospel and the principal's spiritual leadership significantly make an additional contribution to the

Catholic teachers' commitment to the school that was produced by Catholic teachers' faith variables.

Table 38

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Commitment to the School (N = 583)*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Step 1			
Belief	.036	.044	.043
Intimacy with God	.080	.049	.097
Action	-.041	.035	-.078
A living faith	.192	.050	.274***
Step 2			
Belief	.069	.040	.082
Intimacy with God	.028	.045	.034
Action	-.007	.032	-.014
A living faith	.130	.046	.186**
SGVC	.091	.052	.115
SCCG	.134	.046	.162**
PSL	.119	.040	.164**

Note.  $R^2 = .100$  for Step 1 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .150$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ ). \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

In regard to the hierarchical regression analysis for the four faith variables and the three environmental variables predicting commitment to teaching, as shown in Table 39, Catholic teachers' faith variables explained 7.5% of the variability in commitment to teaching and the school's three environment variables explained 11.3% of the variance in Catholic teachers' commitment to teaching. The beta weights reported that of seven

variables a living faith ( $\beta = .199, t(582) = 2.921, p = .004$ ), SGVC ( $\beta = .176, t(582) = 2.582, p = .010$ ), and SCCG ( $\beta = .180, t(582) = 3.092, p = .002$ ) contribute significantly to Catholic teachers' commitment to teaching. Among the three variables, a living faith played a major role in predicting commitment to the school like the case of commitment to mission and the school. These results imply that the Catholic high school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism and community culture based on the Gospel have significant effects on the relationships between Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment to teaching.

Table 39

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Commitment to Teaching (N = 583)*

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$
Step 1			
Belief	-.055	.043	-.068
Intimacy with God	.118	.047	.150*
Action	-.052	.034	-.102
A living faith	.179	.048	.266***
Step 2			
Belief	-.030	.040	-.038
Intimacy with God	.071	.045	.091
Action	-.025	.032	-.050
A living faith	.134	.046	.199**
SGVC	.133	.052	.176*
SCCG	.143	.046	.180**
PSL	.009	.040	.012

Note.  $R^2 = .075$  for Step 1 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .113$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ ). \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 40 shows the hierarchical regression analysis for variables predicting commitment to students. As indicated in Table 38, 10.5% of the variation in commitment to students was accounted for by Catholic teachers' faith variables and only 3.8% of the variability in commitment to students was accounted for by the Catholic high school's three environmental factors. Also, the beta weights indicated that a living faith ( $\beta = .263, t(582) = 3.760, p = .000$ ) among the four faith variables and SGVC ( $\beta = .165, t(582) = 2.356, p = .019$ ) among the Catholic high school's three environmental variables contribute significantly to Catholic teachers' commitment to students. In addition, a living faith consistently played an important role in predicting commitment to students as related to commitment to mission, the school, and teaching. The results suggest that a living faith Catholic teachers have significantly contributes to their commitment to students and the Catholic high school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism make an additional contribution to commitment to students produced by Catholic teachers' faith variables.

Table 40

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Commitment to Students (N = 583)*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Step 1			
Belief	.006	.029	.011
Intimacy with God	.028	.032	.052
Action	-.009	.023	-.027
A living faith	.138	.032	.300***
Step 2			
Belief	.017	.028	.031

Intimacy with God	.006	.032	.011
Action	.002	.022	.005
A living faith	.121	.032	.263***
SGVC	.085	.036	.165*
SCCG	.033	.032	.061
PSL	-.010	.028	-.021

Note.  $R^2 = .105$  for Step 1 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .038$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ ). \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

In conclusion, this analysis explored by the hierarchical regression model for the third research question indicates that a Catholic teacher's living faith significantly contributes in a large degree to all commitments connected to mission, the school, teaching, and students and that the Catholic high school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership make additional contributions to Catholic teachers' commitment to the school, teaching, and students (excluding commitment to mission) produced by Catholic teachers' faith variables.

## Chapter Five

### Summary and Conclusions

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment within the context of the Catholic high school. For this purpose, this study explored the following three questions.

1. To what extent do Catholic teachers in Catholic high schools report that they believe the tenets of Catholicism (the cognitive dimension), have a loving relationship with God (the affective dimension), practice their faith (the behavioral dimension), and live their faith in their lives (the integral dimension)?
2. Are there significant relationships between multi-dimensions of Catholic teachers' reported faith and commitment in the Catholic high school?
  - 2-1. Which dimension of faith is most influential in teacher commitment?
  - 2-2. Which dimension among the four dimensions of teacher commitment is strongly associated with Catholic teachers' faith?
3. Do a Catholic teacher's perceptions of the three distinctive environmental characteristics of the Catholic high school (the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture, and the principal's spiritual leadership) have an effect on the relationships between the Catholic teacher's reported faith and commitment?

In order to explore statistical relationships between the multiple dimensions of Catholic teachers' faith and commitment in Catholic high schools, this study employed a self-administered website survey (SurveyGizmo.com). This study used cluster sampling in which a logical cluster is a Catholic high school and the unit of analysis is a teacher. The

survey invitations were sent to the principals of 165 Catholic high schools randomly selected in 16 Archdioceses across the United States. Finally 751 teachers were included as the completed respondents from 39 Catholic high schools in 15 Archdioceses excluding the Philadelphia Archdiocese. The sample teachers were comprised of 425 females (57%) and 321 males (43%). Also, of the sample teachers 81.7% were Catholics and 18.3% were non-Catholics; 22.1% of teachers were involved in teaching religion and the rest 77.9% teachers were teaching other subjects only. The period for questionnaire distribution and data collection was from April 19, 2010 to June 15, 2010.

The survey instrument that has been developed by the researcher has 111 items in four sections: Section I – General Information (12 items), section II – Catholic Faith (54 items), section III – Teacher Commitment (30 items), and section IV – The School’s Environment (15 items). A pilot test was performed in order to investigate the reliability of the survey instrument for this population. Excluding ‘general information,’ ‘the importance of Catholic faith,’ and ‘motives for working at this school,’ all items were evaluated in 14 variables using Cronbach’s Alpha. Because Cronbach’s Alpha for all variables was between .781 and .927, this survey instrument secured reasonable internal consistency reliabilities for the population. In order to measure data gained by the survey, all survey items were coded. Fourteen major variables regarding Catholic faith, teacher commitment, and the school’s environment were coded as 4 to 1 in a 4-point Likert scale, 5 to 1 in a 5-point Likert scale, or 8 to 1 in an 8-point rating scale as ordered from the most positive one to the least positive one.

For data analysis of this study, two types of statistics were conducted: (1) descriptive statistics and (2) inferential statistics. In order to examine the degree of Catholic teachers' faith variables, descriptive statistics were utilized. The Pearson correlation was applied in order to determine whether and to what degree correlations exist between multi-dimensions of faith and commitment of Catholic teachers. Last, the researcher applied a multiple hierarchical regression model to determine whether a Catholic teacher's perceptions of the Catholic high school's environment make an additional contribution to the teachers' commitment outcome produced by the Catholic teachers' faith variables. The SPSS 17.0 Statistical Software was utilized for this study's data analysis.

### **Summary of the Findings**

In regard to the first question on Catholic teachers' faith, the main findings were as follows.

- With regard to the belief variable, Catholic teachers generally reported a strong belief degree for the basic tenets of the Catholic Church and the teaching of the Church on social justice issues. However, the teachers were lower in their ratings of the importance of their beliefs regarding the obligation to go to Mass and the authority of the Pope than the other belief variables.
- Catholic teachers reported a strong heart faith degree on the whole regarding the intimacy with God variable. Only fewer than 5.0% of Catholic teachers responded that they do not feel God's love toward them and do not feel close to God.

- The majority of Catholic teachers put a strong emphasis on obeying God's rules and praying, but participating in the Church's evangelizing mission was strongly emphasized by less than half of Catholic teachers in their action attitude.
- With regard to religious practice, of the Catholic teachers studied 68.2% reported that they have prayed everyday, 30.4% responded that they have read the Bible once a week or more, and 69.3% affirmed that they have attended Mass once a week or more. Also, 32.4% of Catholic teachers reported that they have participated in parish services and activities once a week or more, 58.1% stated that they have participated in activities for helping poor people or improving social justice once a month or more, and 70.3% responded that they have gone to confession once a year or more.
- In terms of the living faith variable, around 90% of Catholic teachers strongly or moderately responded that "they strive to improve virtues such as reconciliation, justice, compassion, patience, caring, and honesty in their attitudes and behaviors based on their religious faith" (92.4%). The living faith degree on average of Catholic teachers ( $M = 4.26$ ) was slightly higher than action attitude degree ( $M = 3.90$ ), but slightly lower than belief degree ( $M = 4.43$ ) and intimacy with God degree ( $M = 4.53$ ) of the teachers.
- Significant faith degree differences of Catholic teachers were found in variables of Catholic faith in terms of gender, marital status, age range, Catholic schooling, teaching subject, and teaching years. Especially, with regard to a living faith, female teachers rather than male teachers, married teachers rather than single teachers, older teachers (55 or over) rather than younger teachers, teachers who had experienced Catholic colleges or universities rather than teachers who had never experienced Catholic colleges or

universities, and teachers who teach religion rather than teachers who teach only other subjects reported a significantly higher faith degree.

- In comparison with American adult Catholics, Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school had a higher faith degree on the whole. That is, with regard to the importance of Catholic faith in one's life, belief, Mass attendance, and participation in confession, Catholic teachers reported much higher agreement or participation than American adult Catholics.

With regard to the second question, the hypothesis predicted that there would be significant relationships between the four dimensions (belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith) of Catholic teachers' reported faith and the four dimensions (mission, the school, teaching, and students) of their reported commitment; a living faith that means harmonious integration of belief, intimacy with God, and action would be most influential in teacher commitment; among the four dimensions of teacher commitment, commitment to mission would be most strongly connected with faith of Catholic teachers. The results of the second question that applied the Pearson correlation were as follows.

- Catholic teachers' reported belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith all were significantly related to their reported commitment to mission, commitment to the school, commitment to teaching, and commitment to students at  $p < .001$ .

- Among the four dimensions of Catholic faith, a living faith had the highest relationship with all commitment variables of commitment to mission ( $r = .729$ ), commitment to the school ( $r = .299$ ), commitment to teaching ( $r = .247$ ), and commitment to the students ( $r = .323$ ).

- Among the four dimensions of school commitment, commitment to mission had the highest and had strong relationships with all faith variables of belief ( $r = .567$ ), intimacy with God ( $r = .593$ ), action ( $r = .682$ ), and a living faith ( $r = .729$ ).
- Of the relationships between the multi-dimensions of Catholic teachers' reported faith and their reported commitment, the highest relationship was between a living faith and commitment to mission ( $r = .729$ ), and the lowest relationship was between belief and commitment to teaching ( $r = .120$ ).

In regard to the third question, the hypothesis predicted that a Catholic teacher's perceptions of the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership would have an effect on the relationships between the Catholic teacher's reported faith and commitment. The results of the third question that utilized a multiple hierarchical regression model were as follows.

- Catholic teachers' faith variables accounted for almost 60% of the variability in commitment to mission ( $R^2 = .597$ ), but the school's three environmental variables accounted for just 0.2% of the variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .002$ ) and were not statistically significant ( $p = .403$ ). Also, of four variables of Catholic faith only belief, action, and a living faith contributed significantly to commitment to mission and a living faith played a major role in predicting commitment to mission.
- Catholic teachers' faith variables accounted for 10.0% of the variability in commitment to the school and the school's three environmental variables accounted for 15.0% of the variance in Catholic teachers' commitment to the school. Also, only a living faith, the

school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership contributed significantly to Catholic teachers' commitment to the school, and a living faith among the three variables played a major role in predicting commitment to the school.

- Catholic teachers' faith variables explained 7.5% of the variability in commitment to teaching and the school's three environmental variables explained 11.3% of the variance in Catholic teachers' commitment to teaching. Also, a living faith, the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, and the school's community culture based on the Gospel contributed significantly to Catholic teachers' commitment to teaching. Among the three variables, a living faith played a major role in predicting commitment to teaching.

- 10.5% of the variation in commitment to students was accounted for by Catholic teachers' faith variables and only 3.8% of the variability in commitment to students was accounted for by the Catholic high school's three environmental variables. Also, only a living faith and the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism contributed significantly to Catholic teachers' commitment to students, and a living faith consistently played a major role in predicting commitment to students as related to commitment to mission, the school, and teaching.

Other important findings revealed through this study were as follows.

- With regard to the importance of religion, almost all Catholic teachers (98.2%) reported that religion is influential in their lives. The Catholic teachers who responded that religion is the most important influence or one of the most important influences in their lives were 79.8%.

- In regard to Catholic identity, Catholic teachers placed relatively high importance on belief in Jesus' resurrection from the dead ( $M = 3.68$ ), helping the poor ( $M = 3.64$ ), the sacraments such as the Eucharist and confession ( $M = 3.60$ ), daily prayer ( $M = 3.56$ ), and the Church's involvement toward social justice ( $M = 3.54$ ); On the other hand, they placed relatively low importance on a celibate male clergy ( $M = 2.07$ ), the Church's teaching on same-sex marriage ( $M = 2.55$ ), and the teaching authority of the Vatican ( $M = 2.79$ ).
- With regard to motives that influenced Catholic teachers' decisions to teach at their current Catholic high schools, 'God's choice for my life' (15.8%), 'view of teaching as ministry' (12.1%), and 'commitment to Catholic education' (10.6%) were the highest frequencies as the most important motives, and religious motives (50.5%) were outstandingly much more influential on Catholic teachers' decisions to teach at the Catholic high school than professional (27.6%), school environmental (7.8%), or economic motives (7.7%).
- In regard to Catholic teachers' motives for remaining in the Catholic high school, religious motives as a total (36.0%) were slightly more influential than professional motives (34.6%), school environmental motives (14.0%), or economic motives (12.7%), but there were significant changes in their preference between motives to teach and motives to remain. That is, their highest preferences in the decisions to remain in the Catholic high school were satisfaction with my work (15.3%), love of teaching (10.1%), and God's choice (9.1%).
- Catholic teachers generally reported strong commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students on the whole. With regard to a commitment degree, commitment to students

( $M = 4.75$ ) was in the first place in comparison with commitment to mission ( $M = 4.47$ ), commitment to the school ( $M = 4.44$ ), and commitment to teaching ( $M = 4.51$ ).

- Catholic teachers generally perceived that their schools have goals and values rooted in Catholicism, have community culture based on the Gospel, and their principals practice spiritual leadership to a high degree. Among the three environmental characteristics, the principal's spiritual leadership ( $M = 3.48$ ) was in the first place to the perception degree of Catholic teachers compared with the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism ( $M = 3.31$ ) and the school's community culture based on the Gospel ( $M = 3.34$ ).

- Catholic teachers who teach religion reported significantly higher degrees than Catholic teachers who teach other subjects in all faith variables and the commitment to mission variable. However, significant commitment degree differences in commitment to the school, commitment to teaching, and commitment to students between Catholic teachers who teach religion and Catholic teachers who teach other subjects were not found. Also, the satisfaction and perception degrees on the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism and the school's community culture based on the Gospel excluding the principal's spiritual leadership were significantly higher in Catholic teachers who teach other subjects than Catholic teachers who teach religion.

## **Discussion**

### **Catholic teachers' faith in the Catholic high school.**

In the United States, one of the most dramatic transitions in the Catholic school was the shift in the composition of Catholic school teachers that began in the 1950s. In 1960, religious teachers comprised 73.8% of Catholic school faculties, but, in 2008-2009, a

full-time professional staff in Catholic elementary and secondary schools was made up of 96.0% laity and 4.0% religious (Convey, 1992; McDonald & Schultz, 2009). This noticeable transition has been accepted as a crucial challenge to the Catholic high school by the Catholic Church's leaders and educators who believe that Catholic teachers' strong faith would be one of the most essential factors that guarantees the success of the Catholic school defined as students' academic achievement and the school's achievement of religious mission. The reason is that it is perceived that lay teachers might be less faithful than religious and clergy teachers.

This study found that lay teachers had lower faith degrees than religious or clergy teachers in all faith variables (Catholic identity, intimacy with God, action attitude, religious practice, and a living faith) excluding the belief variable, but the differences were not large. Also, the findings of this study showed that on the whole Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school had strong degrees in all faith variables, and that lay teachers' faith degrees were also higher than American adult Catholics in most faith variables. With regard to the belief variable, while about 80% of American adult Catholics believed in the Trinity (81%) and Jesus' resurrection (80%) (Gray & Perl, 2008), around 85% of Catholic lay teachers reported that they strongly believe in the Trinity (87.0%) and Jesus' resurrection (85.0%). In regard to the intimacy with God variable, whereas over 90% of American Catholics feel that God loves them and over 80% believe that they have a close personal relationship with God (Bacik, 2002), in this study 96.8% of Catholic lay teachers reported that they feel God's love toward them and 90.8% responded that they feel God is always with them and helps them. In regard to religious practice, of Catholic lay teachers 67.7% reported that they have attended Mass once a week or more often and 69.3%

responded they have participated in confession about once a year or more often, whereas it was reported that only 34% of American adult Catholics have attended Mass at least once a week (D'Antonio et al., 2007) and 26% of American adult Catholics have participated in confession once a year or more often (Gray & Perl, 2008). In addition, with regard to the importance of faith, 41% of American adult Catholics responded that Catholic faith is one of the most important parts of their lives or the most important part of their lives (Gray & Perl, 2008), while 78.2% of Catholic lay teachers in this study reported that religion (Catholic faith) is the most important influence or one of the most important influences in their lives. These results support Benson and Guerra's statement that "to a much greater degree than the average American Catholic, the teacher in the Catholic high school is a believer, a churchgoer, and a person who prays" (1985, p. 28) and imply that the majority of Catholic teachers in Catholic high schools still possess a balanced and strong faith.

On the other hand, this study indicates a trend of Catholic teachers' faith that is similar to a tendency that has been reported among American Catholics. Catholic faith clearly involves both a religious dimension such as believing Catholic doctrine, belonging to the Church, and participating in the Church's mission and a spiritual dimension such as having a close relationship with God, providing meaning and purpose to life, and improving an inner quality of the person. Also, the two dimensions interrelate for cultivating one's faith (Hill et al., 2000; Teasdale, 1999). However, today many American Catholics seem to prefer to be called spiritual rather than religious (D'Antonio et al., 2006; O'Toole, 2008; Williams & Davidson, 1996). The results of this study also reveal that Catholic teachers have a tendency toward spirituality rather than a harmony between religiousness and spirituality. With regard to Catholic identity and belief, Catholic teachers

in this study placed relatively low importance or weak agreement about Mass obligation ( $M = 3.31$  in maximum possible score = 5.0), the authority of the Pope ( $M = 3.36$  in maximum possible score = 5.0), and the teaching authority of the Vatican ( $M = 2.79$  in maximum possible score = 4.0). That is, in this study only 30.0% of Catholic teachers strongly agreed that “It is a sin for a Catholic to miss weekly Mass obligation when he or she easily could have attended,” and only 29.3% strongly believed “the Pope is the infallible leader of the Church.” Also, participating in the Church’s evangelizing mission ( $M = 3.38$  in maximum possible score = 5.0) among action attitude items of the survey was the lowest priority of Catholic teachers, and attending parish services or activities ( $M = 4.08$  in maximum possible score = 8.0) was put to a low frequency degree among religious practice items. These results imply that for Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school, involvement in the Church’s activities and participation in the Church’s evangelizing mission would not be their priorities in their religious life, their personal relationship with God would be more important than involvement in the institutional Catholic Church, and the institutional Church would not be recognized as an essential component of their faith.

Twenty-five years ago, Benson and Guerra concluded that teachers in the Catholic high school overall have a stronger faith than average Catholics and are closely attached to the Church. In response on their conclusion, this study indicates that still today, Catholic teachers in the Catholic high school have remained stronger in their faith than typical American Catholics, but their faith has been influenced by changing attitudes in the general laity such as from religiosity to spirituality and from involvement in the Church to a personal relationship with God.

### **The relationship between faith and commitment of Catholic teachers.**

A number of researchers reported that teachers in Catholic high schools have been strongly committed to their school, teaching, and students (Bryk et al., 1993; Convey, 1992; Guerra et al., 1990; Schaub, 2000). This research study also reveals that Catholic teachers on average support the religious mission of their school ( $M = 4.84$  in maximum possible score = 5.0), willingly put in a great deal of effort to help their school be successful ( $M = 4.71$ ), think about ways to improve their teaching and professional knowledge ( $M = 4.73$ ), and really care about their students' futures ( $M = 4.88$ ) to a strong degree. Why do Catholic teachers devote themselves to their school's religious mission, the school, teaching, and students?

It is clear that there is no single factor that impacts teacher commitment, and it results from the combination of multiple factors such as teacher sense of efficacy, a teacher's passion and values, collegial and administrative support, workplace conditions, and student behavior and background. That is, teacher commitment should be comprehensively understood not by any single factor, but by multiple factors and by an interaction among the factors (Mimi, 1999). However, for Catholic high schools, a Catholic teacher's strong faith needs to be considered as one of the most important predictors that would create, sustain, and/or improve teacher commitment. The critical reason is that for Catholic teachers who have a strong faith, the faith is placed in the center of intrinsic motivation associated with teacher commitment.

According to a number of researchers (Astley, 1992; Fowler, 1981; Gallagher, 1996; Geyer & Baumeister, 2005), faith affects one's identity, beliefs, values, passion, emotions, morality, attitudes, and behaviors. Also, for strong believers, faith is the most

reliable way to make life meaningful as giving purpose to one's life (Matthews & Clark, 1998; Park, 2005). With regard to Catholic teachers' intrinsic motivation, this study found that the most important reasons that influenced Catholic teachers' decisions to teach at their current Catholic high schools were closely related to their Catholic faith. That is, religious motives such as "God's choice for my life," "view of teaching as ministry," and "commitment to Catholic education" were the highest frequencies as the most important reasons for teaching at the Catholic high school to Catholic teachers and on the whole, religious motives (50.5%) were outstandingly much more influential on Catholic teachers' decisions to teach at the Catholic high school than professional (27.6%), school environmental (7.8%), or economic motives (7.7%). Also, with regard to Catholic teachers' decisions to remain in the Catholic high schools, religious motives as a total (36.0%) were continually influential rather than professional motives (34.6%), school environmental motives (14.0%), or economic motives (12.7). These results demonstrate that faith is placed in the center of intrinsic motivation regarding Catholic teachers' school life and activities.

In addition, a number of researchers indicate that intrinsic motivation has a close relationship with teacher commitment (Anness, 2003; Ball & Goodson, 1985; Crosswell & Elliot, 2004; Day, 2004; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Weiner, 1982). It is obvious that when people recognize their work as meaningful, purposeful, and significant, their commitment and extraordinary performance will be produced (Sergiovanni, 2007). Through the Pearson correlation analysis, this study examined whether Catholic faith as the intrinsic motivation for Catholic teachers is associated with their school commitment. In this study, Catholic faith was categorized into the four dimensions: belief (cognitive dimension), intimacy with

God (affective dimension), action (behavioral dimension), and a living faith (integral dimension) (Groome, 1980). The result was that Catholic teachers' reported belief, intimacy with God, action, and a living faith all were significantly associated with their reported commitment to mission, commitment to the school, commitment to teaching, and commitment to students with the highest  $r = .729$  to the lowest  $r = .120$  at  $p < .001$ . That result suggests that Catholic teachers' faith that is closely associated with their motives for teaching and remaining in the Catholic high school, would impact their school commitment as an important intrinsic motivation.

This dissertation study also found that among the four dimensions of Catholic faith, a living faith had the highest relationship with commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students of Catholic teachers and played a major role in predicting the four commitments more than the Catholic high school's three environmental characteristics – the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership. These results support the researcher's argument that a strong living faith as the primary intrinsic motivation contributes to school commitment of a Catholic teacher to a strong degree. A living faith integrating the mind, heart, and action becomes lived, personalized, and internalized within one's life. And the living faith lived, personalized, and internalized affects one's identity, values, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors positively, so that it functions as the basic intrinsic motivation that causes the committed lives of the faithful. Consequently, for Catholic teachers who have a strong living faith, the faith would be their orientation to school life and would be closely linked to their commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students as the crucial intrinsic motivation.

Last, this study revealed that among the four dimensions of teacher commitment, commitment to mission was most strongly connected with Catholic teachers' faith variables. Also, this study's hierarchical regression analysis indicated that Catholic teachers' faith variables accounted for almost 60% of the variability in commitment to mission, but the school's three environment variables accounted for just 0.2% of the variance and were not statistically significant. These results confirm that Catholic teachers' faith is strongly associated with and contributes to their commitment to mission most powerfully.

In conclusion, a Catholic teacher's faith is not a single factor that influences teacher commitment in the Catholic high school and combines with various other predictors in order to contribute to teacher commitment. However, Catholic teachers' strong living faith needs to be acknowledged as a critical predictor contributing to teacher commitment because their living faith is placed in the center of intrinsic motivation for their school life and activities. By the faith placed in the center of intrinsic motivation for commitment, Catholic teachers would perform their evangelizing mission, dedicate themselves to school work and activities, improve their professionalism, and devote themselves to students.

#### **A living faith and school success of the Catholic high school.**

A living faith is the most desirable faith style of Catholic Christians. A living faith integrating belief, intimacy with God, and religious action contains both religiousness and spirituality. A living faith as religiousness accepts the Church as the primary way that Catholic Christians can meet God and fulfill their salvation (USCC, 1997). Therefore, Catholics who have a living faith first recognize their identity as members of the Church

and take their responsibilities being involved in Catholic community life, attending Mass, and participating in the Church's evangelizing mission. Also, a living faith containing spirituality interacts with one's inner identity, values, meaning, and purpose. As a consequence, Catholics who have a living faith value a close relationship with God, seek their lives' identity, values, meaning, and purpose in terms of the faith, and improve their inner quality through the faith. In addition, a living faith pursues a life of agape. Since Catholics who have a living faith believe that God is love for them, they indispensably seek a life of agape and strive to practice sincere love for God and their neighbors. Through the pursuit of a life of agape, a living faith containing religiousness and spirituality becomes the core factor that enables Catholic Christians to cultivate commitment to the Church, the neighbor, and the society. This study's survey results support the researcher's stand on the importance of a living faith in terms of school commitment of Catholic teachers. Compared to belief, intimacy with God, and action, a living faith of Catholic teachers was the highest relationship with commitment to mission ( $r = .729$ ), commitment to the school ( $r = .299$ ), commitment to teaching ( $r = .247$ ), and commitment to the students ( $r = .323$ ) in the Catholic high school and was most influential in the four commitments. These results lead one to assume that Catholic teachers' living faith would significantly contribute to school success of the Catholic high school.

First of all, the Catholic high school's school success can be examined in students' academic outcomes because academic achievement of students is a fundamental goal of all high schools. Another important aspect that should be examined regarding the school success of the Catholic high school is the school's achievement of religious mission. The fundamental reason why the Catholic high school should achieve the evangelizing

mission of the Church as well as students' academic achievement results from the ecclesial nature of the Catholic high school. As continually stressed in this study, the Catholic high school is both an educational institution and a religious institution. Consequently, Catholic high schools have dual goals of academic achievement and religious mission, so that they are required to accomplish religious goals as well as academic goals.

It is clear that the Catholic high school's successful achievement of religious mission would be closely associated with Catholic teachers' strong commitment to mission. That is because Catholic teachers who are committed to religious mission would strongly accept the evangelizing mission of their school, willingly appear as a witness to faith by word and deed, and help students develop Christian beliefs and values. As indicated in this study, Catholic teachers' commitment to mission is strongly related to their living faith.

Also, teacher commitment is a very important subject in terms of school success through students' academic achievement (Dannetta, 2002; Day et al., 2007; Firestone, 1996; Kushman, 1992; Lee, 2007; McLaughlin, 1994; Tsui & Cheng, 1999). Dannetta (2002) reported that teacher commitment is a significant factor that influences improving school effectiveness, especially in academic achievement of students. Day et al. (2007) also indicated that there are statistically significant relationships between levels of teacher commitment and levels of academic achievement of students. Therefore, it is also appropriate that teachers' strong commitment to the school, teaching, and students would significantly contribute to students' positive academic outcomes. With regard to teacher commitment, this study shows that in the Catholic high school Catholic teachers' strong commitment to the school, teaching, and students are closely associated with their strong living faith and the living faith plays an important role in predicting the three commitments.

In conclusion, this study's research results regarding the relationship between a living faith and commitment of Catholic teachers suggest that a living faith would be a crucial predictor that significantly contributes to the school success of the Catholic high school.

**The Catholic high school's distinctive three environmental characteristics.**

The Catholic high school, as an educational institution of the Catholic Church, has several distinctive characteristics rooted in the Catholic Church's philosophy. Among those characteristics, the researcher gave special attention to the Catholic high school's distinctive three environmental characteristics that are likely to contribute to the relationship between Catholic teachers' faith and their commitment. The three environmental characteristics were the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, the school's community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's spiritual leadership.

With regard to the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism, in this study, Catholic teachers reported that "their schools' goals and values reflect important teachings and values of the Catholic Church" ( $M = 3.57$  in maximum possible score = 4.0), and "their school demonstrates as much concern for faith development as for academic development" ( $M = 3.52$ ) to a relatively high degree. Also, this study found that the Catholic teachers' positive perception on their school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism significantly makes an additional contribution to their commitment to teaching and commitment to students that were produced by their faith. These results indicate that Catholicism generally becomes the fundamental basis of the Catholic high school's goals and values, and the school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism significantly impact commitment to

teaching and commitment to students of Catholic teachers who have a strong faith (especially a living faith).

Regarding the school's community culture, in this study Catholic teachers perceived that their schools on the whole have community cultures based on the Gospel to a somewhat high degree ( $M = 3.34$  in maximum possible score = 4.0). Catholic teachers generally reported that "their school has an atmosphere of caring and trust among the staff" ( $M = 3.41$ ), "there is a great deal of cooperative effort among staff members" ( $M = 3.35$ ), "Most of the faculty share a central mission of what the school should be" ( $M = 3.31$ ), and "Staff and students experience a deep sense of community based on the Gospel" ( $M = 3.29$ ). This study also found that the Catholic teachers' strong perception on their school's community culture based on the Gospel significantly makes an additional contribution to their commitment to the school and commitment to teaching that were produced by their faith. These results suggest that Catholic high schools generally have strong community culture based on the Gospel, and that community culture significantly contributes to commitment to the school and commitment to teaching of Catholic teachers who have a strong faith (especially a living faith).

In regard to the principal's spiritual leadership, this study found that Catholic teachers generally recognize that their school principals practice spiritual leadership to a high degree ( $M = 3.48$  in maximum possible score = 4.0). In this study Catholic teachers responded that their principal has a philosophy of education and values based on Catholicism ( $M = 3.58$ ), has consistently strived to nurture, protect, and develop the Catholic identity of this school ( $M = 3.48$ ), and encourages teachers to participate in the

religious mission of the school and to help the spiritual development of students ( $M = 3.46$ ). This study also found that Catholic teachers' strong perception on the principal's spiritual leadership contributes significantly to their commitment to the school that was produced by their faith variables. These results imply that the Catholic high school's principals generally have strong spiritual leadership, and their strong spiritual leadership makes significant contribution to commitment to the school of Catholic teachers who have a strong faith (especially a living faith).

Last, with regard to commitment to mission, this study also found that the three environmental characteristics that have close connection with the Catholic school's religious mission did not make any significant additional contribution to Catholic teachers' commitment to mission that was produced by their faith factor. The result would be explained by another finding of this study that Catholic teachers' commitment to mission is not only closely associated with Catholic teachers' faith factor but also most strongly and directly contributed by their faith factor.

A number of researchers have reported that the climate of the Catholic high school has not only attracted Catholic teachers who have a faith but also influenced their attitudes and behaviors positively in regard to their school work and activities (Benson & Guerra, 1985; Bryk et al., 1993; Convey, 1992; Jacobs, 2005). According to Benson and Guerra (1985), the Catholic high school's goals and values become a critical reason why lay teachers choose to teach in the Catholic high school, how they make sense of their school work and their roles, and why they are devoted to their school's mission. Bryk (1996) reported that the communal culture of the Catholic high school produces high levels

of teacher commitment such as teachers' satisfaction with their work. With regard to the principal's spiritual leadership, Jacobs (2005) indicated that when Catholic school principals provide spiritual leadership in their school, lay teachers will embrace their personal vocations, witness the Gospel in all aspects of their lives, and strive to build educational faith communities. The results of this study support these research findings. In conclusion, this study regarding the Catholic high school's three environmental characteristics suggests that Catholic high schools generally have strong goals and values rooted in Catholicism, have strong community culture based on the Gospel, and the principals practice strong spiritual leadership, and that the three environmental characteristics significantly contribute to Catholic teachers' commitment to the school, teaching, and students that were produced by their faith factor.

### **Implications for Practice**

With regard to ongoing faith formation of Catholic teachers, this study provides three important considerations to leaders of the Catholic Church and the Catholic high school. The first implication is that a living faith as the balanced integration of head, heart, and hand faith is the best model for Catholic teachers because a living faith is strongly associated with not only commitment to mission, but also commitment to the school, teaching, and students. Therefore, the ongoing faith formation of Catholic teachers must be focused on improvement of their living faith that integrates belief, intimacy with God, and religious attitude and practice. The second implication for practice is that Catholic teachers have a tendency toward spirituality rather than a harmony between religiousness and spirituality. This study found that Catholic teachers placed relatively low value or weak agreement about the authority of the Church and Pope, participating in the Church's

evangelizing mission, and attending parish services or activities. These results imply that the Church would not be recognized as an essential component of Catholic teachers' faith. Therefore, ongoing faith formation for Catholic teachers should consider development of both religiousness and spirituality of Catholic teachers. The third implication is that during their school lives Catholic teachers' faith degree seems not to have been improved through the school's programs regarding the faith formation of teachers. That is, this study showed that Catholic teachers' teaching motives were moved significantly from religious reasons such as vocation, ministry, and commitment to Catholic education into professional reasons such as satisfaction with their work and love of teaching while experiencing the school life, and that there were no significant faith degree differences between Catholic teachers categorized by teaching years. Therefore, the Church's and the Catholic high school's leaders need to examine deliberately whether Catholic high schools' current faith formation programs have positive impact on Catholic teachers' faith development.

Ongoing faith formation for lay educators has been recognized as a very important task of the Catholic school's leaders because it can lead lay teachers to deepen their personal relationship with God as well as their understanding of the Catholic faith, to integrate faith and learning for students, and to be devoted themselves to their school mission (Brink, 2004; Earl, 2007). Findings of this study strongly suggest that the ongoing faith formation for Catholic teachers should be focused on a living faith that has a balanced integration among head, heart, and hand dimensions and between religiousness and spirituality. The living faith formation for Catholic teachers should:

- Consider development of all three dimensions: belief, intimacy with God, and religious attitudes and practices. Some ways to provide teachers with various faith formation

opportunities include: faith seminar, gathering for prayer, Bible study, faith sharing meetings, involvement in school liturgies, participation in faith formation programs for students, a day of retreat, and service for the church or the poor.

- With the spirituality development (a close relationship with God) through opportunities of prayer, give attention to religiousness development (believing Catholic doctrine, belonging to the Church, and participating in the Church's evangelizing mission) of lay teachers by providing opportunities of faith seminar, involvement in school liturgies, participation in faith formation programs for students, and service for the Church.

With regard to the selection of new teachers, this study found that Catholic teachers generally believe that the candidates' commitment to faith or the Church has not been deliberately considered as one important criterion in selecting new teachers for their school. Therefore, the Catholic high school's leaders should have clear expectations about the faith of new Catholic teacher candidates. This study indicates that Catholic teachers' faith, especially a living faith, is a strong predictor of their school commitment.

Accordingly, leaders of the Catholic high school need to make a clear criterion regarding a living faith that can check whether new candidates integrate their belief, intimacy with God, and religious action and have balanced religiousness and spirituality.

In regard to the Catholic high school's three environmental characteristics, this study revealed that the Catholic high school's strong goals and values rooted in Catholicism, strong community culture based on the Gospel, and the principal's strong spiritual leadership significantly contribute to Catholic teachers' commitment to the school, teaching, and students. It is evident that the three environmental characteristics are closely connected with the Catholic identity of the school. Therefore, the Catholic Church's and

the Catholic high school's leaders should continually pay attention to keeping, sustaining, and improving the Catholic identity of the Catholic high school. Catholic teachers who have a strong faith still choose Catholic high schools with strong religious motives such as God's choice for my life, opportunity to witness to my faith, view of teaching as ministry, and commitment to Catholic education that are strongly related to their school commitment. If their school's environment continues to support or facilitate the Catholic teachers' religious motivation, the teachers' school commitment degree also will be able to be sustained or improved.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study revealed that a living faith is the crucial predictor that would significantly contribute to Catholic teachers' commitment to mission, the school, teaching, and students in the Catholic high school. On the basis of the findings, this study suggests that a living faith as the balanced integration of head, heart, and hand faith would also significantly contribute to the success of the Catholic high school. However, this implication on the relationship between Catholic teachers' living faith and school success of the Catholic high school needs to be examined through scientific research based on actual data in order to secure the reliability of that theory. Some questions for further research are as follows. Does a living faith of Catholic teachers have a close relationship with the effectiveness of Catholic high school? Does Catholic teachers' living faith have a contribution to students' academic achievement and the Catholic high school's achievement of religious mission?

With regard to a living faith of the Catholic teacher, another important issue that needs to be explored is 'what are the main factors that would affect a living faith of

Catholic teachers?’ All Catholic Christians have a faith history involving his/her individuality, temperament, experiences, and environment and their personal faith history influences their faith development and faith style (Guardini, 1998). Based on a faith history, each person has either a strong or a weak faith and different faith type. This study found some results regarding this issue. That is, female Catholic teachers rather than male Catholic teachers, married Catholic teachers rather than single Catholic teachers, older Catholic teachers of 55 or over rather than younger Catholic teachers, and Catholic teachers who had experienced Catholic colleges or universities rather than Catholic teachers who had never experienced Catholic colleges or universities had a significantly higher degree of a living faith. However, in order to understand more fully the nature of a living faith of Catholic teachers, research on what are the main factors impacting a living faith and on why the faith degree differences happen need to be explored.

This study focused on Catholic teachers’ faith and commitment in the Catholic high school. Therefore, the findings of this study do not generalize to Catholic elementary school teachers. This is because there seem to be some differences in teacher motives and school environment between the Catholic high school and the Catholic elementary school although Catholic high school teachers and Catholic elementary school teachers share the same Catholic faith. Similarly, the findings of this study do not generalize to high school teachers from other Christian denominations or different religions although most worldwide religions have commonly shared aspects in regard to the concept of faith. Therefore, exploring the relationship between Catholic teachers’ faith and commitment in the Catholic elementary school or between faith and commitment of teachers in other

religious high schools will be able to help understanding more fully the relationship between a teacher's faith and commitment in the high school.

This study employed only a quantitative method that uses a self-administered website survey in order to examine Catholic teachers' faith, the relationship between Catholic teachers' faith and school commitment, and the effect of the school's three environmental characteristics on that relationship. However, in addition to a quantitative method, the use of qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews and specific observations would complement the quantified findings by analysis of numerical data as providing detailed lived contents and the inner dynamics on subjects explored through this study. It is acknowledged that an integration of quantitative method and qualitative method is the best way to understand a phenomenon fully (Gay et al., 2005). In the future, a qualitative approach on this subject would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how and why Catholic teachers believe and live their faith, how and why their faith is connected with their school commitment, and how and why the three environmental characteristics affect the school commitment of Catholic teachers who have a strong faith.

## APPENDIX A

### Survey

#### Faith and Commitment of Catholic High School Teachers

Please answer the following questions by choosing the response that best fits your particular situation.

1. In which of the following Archdioceses is your high school located?

-- Please Select --

-- Please Select --

Baltimore

Boston

Chicago

Cincinnati

Detroit

Indianapolis

Los Angeles

Miami

Milwaukee

Newark

New Orleans

New York

Philadelphia

St. Louis

St. Paul and Minneapolis

Washington

2. What is your school principal's religious background?

- Laity
- Religious sister or brother
- Priest
- Other

3. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

**4. What is your employment status?**

- Full time
- Part time

**5. Which of the following best applies to you?**

- I've been a Catholic all my life.
- I converted to Catholicism.
- I was a Catholic but am now a member of another religious denomination.
- I was a Catholic but am not now a formal member of any church or religion.
- I am a member of another religious denomination.
- I am not now a formal member of any church or religion.

**6. Which statement best describes your present situation?**

- Religious sister, religious brother, or priest
- Single
- Married
- Other

**7. In which age range are you?**

- Under 25
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 or over

**8. What is your race/ethnicity?**

- American Indian/Alaskan
- Asian/ Pacific Islander
- Black, non-Hispanic
- Hispanic
- White
- Other

9. Check the number of years you were a student in the following types of Catholic schools:

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Catholic Elementary School	<input type="radio"/>										
Catholic High School	<input type="radio"/>										
Catholic College or University	<input type="radio"/>										

10. What is your highest academic degree beyond high school?

- No degree
- Associate degree
- Bachelor degree
- Master degree
- Doctorate degree

11. Counting this year, check the number of years you have been a teacher in each of the following setting:

	0	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	More than 20
This School	<input type="radio"/>					
Other Catholic Schools	<input type="radio"/>					
Private Schools, not Catholic	<input type="radio"/>					
Public Schools	<input type="radio"/>					

12. What subject are you teaching?

- Religion
- Religion + other subject
- Other subject

Please answer the following questions by choosing the response that best fits your faith identity, attitudes, or behaviors. If you are not a Catholic, you can skip this section's questions.

**13. Overall, how important is religion in your life?**

- It is the most important influence in my life.
- It is one of the most important influences in my life.
- It is a somewhat important influence in my life.
- It is one of the least important influences in my life.
- It is the least important influence in my life.

**14. As a Catholic, how important is each of the following to you?**

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
The sacraments, such as the Eucharist and confession	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Catholic Church's teachings about Mary as the mother of God	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Church involvement in activities directed toward social justice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The teaching authority claimed by the Vatican	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a regular daily prayer life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helping the poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Belief in Jesus' resurrection from the dead	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important
A celibate male clergy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Catholic Church's teaching that oppose same-sex marriage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Catholic Church's teachings that oppose abortion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Please read each statement and respond to the content of the statement using the following scale.

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The human person has been made in the image of God.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Bible is the word of God given to guide man to grace and salvation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jesus Christ is both true God and true man.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In God's plan Jesus Christ was born of a virgin.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried but on the third day He arose from the dead.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jesus Christ will return to the earth someday.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God provided a way for the forgiveness of man's sins.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is no life after death.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mary is truly "Mother of God" since she is the mother of Jesus, the Son of God.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Holy Spirit builds, animates, and sanctifies the Church.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I come to know God better through the Church.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Church's seven sacraments are effective signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
It is a sin for a Catholic to miss weekly Mass obligation when he or she easily could have attended.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Pope is the infallible leader of the Church.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
By virtue of their prophetic mission, lay people are called to be witnesses to Christ in all circumstances.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because of our individual human dignity, Catholics must strive to promote the good of the human person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. For each of the following statements, indicate how much you agree or disagree.

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
I experience an awareness of God's love.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I pray to give thanks for all God has done for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
God hears and answers my prayers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
God actively directs my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel God is always with me and helps me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because of my love for God, I obey his commandments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I frequently feel very close to God in prayer, during Mass, or at important moments in my daily life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. In your own religious life, how much emphasis do you put on each of the following?

	A great deal	Quite a bit	Some emphasis	A little emphasis	No emphasis
Praying	<input type="radio"/>				
Obeying God's rules in my words, and behaviors	<input type="radio"/>				
Participating in the Church's evangelizing mission	<input type="radio"/>				
Being involved in Catholic community life	<input type="radio"/>				
Helping poor people or working for social justice	<input type="radio"/>				

18. The following is about religious practices. Please respond to them using the following scale

	Every day	A few times a week	Once a week	2-3 times a month	Once a month	Several times a year	About once a year	Never
How often do you pray, other than at meals or at church?	<input type="radio"/>							
How often do you share your religious beliefs with others?	<input type="radio"/>							
How often do you read the Bible?	<input type="radio"/>							
How often do you attend Mass?	<input type="radio"/>							
How often do you go to confession?	<input type="radio"/>							
How often do you participate in parish services and activities?	<input type="radio"/>							
How often do you participate in activities for helping poor people or improving social justice?	<input type="radio"/>							

19. For each of the following statements, indicate how much you agree or disagree.

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
My living environment (room, house, office) reflects my religious beliefs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Based on my religious faith, I strive to improve virtues such as reconciliation, justice, compassion, patience, caring, and honesty in my attitudes and behaviors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My religious faith has helped me be more open in my relationships with other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because of my faith, I participate practically, financially, politically or prayerfully in helping people less fortunate than I am.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I actively share my faith with others because God is important to me and I'd like other people to know about Him too.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
My religious faith plays a vital role when I make everyday choices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My ethics, behavior, and speech reflect my religious faith.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please answer the following questions by choosing the response that best fits your attitudes or behaviors as a teacher.

20. What was the most important reason that influenced your decision to teach at this school?

-- Please Select --

- 1. Job security
- 2. Opportunity to witness to my faith
- 3. Salary and benefits
- 4. View of teaching as ministry
- 5. General working conditions
- 6. Satisfaction with my work
- 7. God's choice for my life
- 8. Administrator's style and philosophy
- 9. Desire to work with high school age students
- 10. Love of teaching
- 11. Commitment to Catholic education
- 12. Desire to help create a Christian community
- 13. Summer vacation and holidays
- 14. Satisfaction derived from students' achievement
- 15. Desire to help children develop their faith
- 16. Chance to work with other committed people
- 17. Personal family situation
- 18. Philosophy of the school rooted in Christian values
- 19. Opportunity to teach my academic subject

21. What was the second most important reason that influenced your decision to teach at this school?

-- Please Select --

22. What was the third most important reason that influenced your decision to teach at this school?

-- Please Select --

23. What is the most important reason that has influenced your decision to remain at this school?

-- Please Select --

24. What is the second most important reason that has influenced your decision to remain at this school?

-- Please Select --

25. What is the third most important reason that has influenced your decision to remain at this school?

-- Please Select --

26. For each of the following statements, indicate how much you agree or disagree.

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
My responsibility is to develop the religious faith of my students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I help promote a sense of community within my school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I talk up the teaching profession to my friends as a great profession.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I really care about my students' futures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
I willingly attend school-wide liturgies and/or common prayer services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this school be successful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy teaching and feel valued for my teaching.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is my important responsibility to help all of my students reach their potential.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find that my values and the school's values are very similar.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I invest extra time and effort to become an expert in subjects I teach.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I could get a higher paying job, I'd leave teaching.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I sometimes feel it is a waste of time to try to do my best as a teacher.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
I willingly put extra time and effort towards the academic achievement and well-being of my students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I integrate religious and value concepts into the subject matter I teach.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to talk to individual students about matters of faith.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I value helping students learn regardless of their academic difficulties or social background.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I support the religious mission of my school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important for me to know something about my students' individual needs and to have a good relationship with them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to share with and learn from my colleagues to enhance my teaching ability.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree
I put in my time at work and then leave as soon as possible after work to do those things I want to do in my personal life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I make an effort to work with students outside of class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I often think about ways to improve my teaching and professional knowledge.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The reputation and performance of this school is important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I encourage students to participate in the Sacraments, liturgy, and common prayer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please answer the following questions by choosing the response that best fits your school's environment.

27. How satisfied are you about the following issues?

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
The school's goals and values rooted in Catholicism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
Community culture based on the Gospel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal's leadership in regard to Catholic mission of your school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

28. To what extent would you say each of the following is characteristic of your school?

	To a high degree	To some degree	Very little	Not at all
This school demonstrates as much concern for faith development as for academic development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal has a philosophy of education and values based on Catholicism.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staff and students experience a deep sense of community based on the Gospel.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In selecting new teachers for this school, an important emphasis is placed on evidence of the candidates' commitment to faith or to the value system of the church.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal seems to view his/her school leadership as a vocation/ministry.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	To a high degree	To some degree	Very little	Not at all
Most of the faculty at this school share a central mission of what the school should be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal has consistently strived to nurture, protect, and develop the Catholic identity of this school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal encourages teachers to participate in the religious mission of the school and to help the spiritual development of students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This school has very clear expectations of the teachers' role in its religious mission.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teachers in this school work together in a variety of ways and there is a great deal of cooperative effort among staff members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This school's goals and values reflect important teachings and values of the Catholic Church.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This school has an atmosphere of caring and trust among the staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Thank you for taking this survey. Your responses will provide very valuable data to understand how Catholic high school teachers feel about their faith and school commitment and will help to develop recommendations about Catholic school education.**

## APPENDIX B

### Communication with Principals

#### Initial invitation letter to principals

May 3, 2010

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Young-Kwan Cho, a Korean priest living in Olney, MD. As a doctoral candidate in education at The Catholic University of America, I am now conducting my doctoral dissertation research study. My dissertation topic is “The relationship between the Catholic teacher’s faith and commitment in the Catholic high school.” My research project has obtained certification by the University’s Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects.

I have randomly selected 80 Catholic high schools from the 16 Archdioceses across the U.S. in order to secure 1,000 – 1,500 teacher responses, and your school has been included in the sample. The survey questions focus on the Catholic teacher’s faith, the teacher’s school commitment, and the school’s environment. If you wish to review the survey, access this link <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s/248971/ctfc>.

If you agree to permit the teachers in your school to participate in the study, please forward the attached letter to all teachers including non-Catholic teachers or allow me to send them the letter through their school email addresses. I am convinced that your teachers’ participation in this survey will benefit my study and Catholic school education as a whole. The survey will take approximately 20 - 25 minutes to complete. Your school and all respondents will absolutely remain anonymous. Participation of your teachers in this survey will be voluntary and they can refuse to answer any questions that may be uncomfortable for them. All data from this survey will be used for research purposes only.

The survey will remain open and active until the middle of June, 2010. I look forward to sharing my results with you when this dissertation is complete. If you have any questions about this study, you can contact me at [27cho@cardinalmail.cua.edu](mailto:27cho@cardinalmail.cua.edu) or 240-246-5917. Whether you decide to have your teachers participate in this survey or not, please inform me so that I can make sure of your school’s participation or select another school to make up the desired sample size. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Fr. Young-Kwan Cho  
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Administration and Policy  
The Catholic University of America

P.S. - I am also sending this letter to you by email.

“By their witness and their behaviour teachers are of the first importance to impart a distinctive character to Catholic schools.” (The Congregation for Catholic Education)

## First follow-up e-mail to principals

May 10, 2010

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I hope all is well with you. Last Monday, I sent you an email asking for your teachers' participation in my survey regarding 'faith and commitment of Catholic high school teachers.'

The questionnaire being used for this survey does not ask for names or schools so it is impossible for me to know which schools are participating based on the results. I would greatly appreciate it if you would let me know whether or not your teachers will be participating. Your response will allow me to make sure of your school's participation or to select another school to make up the desired sample size.

The middle of May is a very busy time for you and teachers, and I understand how valuable your teachers' spare time is in the end of semester. However, I earnestly hope that you will agree to take part in this study because I have not yet obtained enough schools and teacher responses for my study. Your support would really help me out with my dissertation. The survey will remain open and active until the middle of June, 2010.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Fr. Young-Kwan Cho  
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Administration and Policy  
The Catholic University of America

P. S. – I have attached 'survey invitation for teachers'. Also, if you wish to review the survey, access this link <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s/248971/ctfc>.

“By their witness and their behaviour teachers are of the first importance to impart a distinctive character to Catholic schools.” (The Congregation for Catholic Education)

## Final request e-mail to principals

May 17, 2010

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I hope all is well with you. This is Fr. Cho. I am writing to follow up on two emails I previously sent to you with regard to my survey research on 'faith and commitment of Catholic high school teachers.'

I know well that your school schedule is toward the end of academic year and this time of year is extremely busy for you and your teachers. However, I am still hoping you may be able to help me by permitting your school teachers to participate in my survey.

If you can help me, it would be really helpful to complete my survey research. I would like to ask you one more time to participate in it. My survey will remain open and active until the middle of June, 2010. This will be my final request. Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Fr. Young-Kwan Cho  
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Administration and Policy  
The Catholic University of America

P. S. – I have attached 'survey invitation for teachers'. Also, if you wish to review the survey, access this link <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s/248971/ctfc>.

“By their witness and their behaviour teachers are of the first importance to impart a distinctive character to Catholic schools.” (The Congregation for Catholic Education)

## APPENDIX C

### Communication with Teachers

#### Initial invitation e-mail to teachers

May 10, 2010

Dear fellow Catholic high school teachers:

Greetings! My name is Young-Kwan Cho, a Korean priest living in Olney, MD. As a doctoral candidate in education at The Catholic University of America, I am now conducting my doctoral dissertation research study. My study focuses on 'The relationship between the Catholic teacher's faith and commitment in the Catholic high school.'

I have randomly selected 80 Catholic high schools from the 16 Archdioceses across the U.S. in order to obtain responses of Catholic high school teachers, and your school has been included in the sample. Your principal has given permission for me to contact you to ask you to complete the survey.

As a former school minister and teacher, I understand well that your schedule is busy and your time is valuable. However, your complete responses will become very valuable data for understanding Catholic high school teachers with regard to faith and commitment and for developing Catholic school education. Participation in this survey is voluntary and you can refuse to answer any questions that may be uncomfortable for you. This survey guarantees your anonymity because names of your school and participants will not be asked. Also, all data from this study will be used for research purposes only.

A link is provided at the bottom of this letter that connects to an Internet survey. The link will take you to the start of the survey. The survey will take approximately 20 - 25 minutes of your valuable time. In order for your responses to be included in the study, the survey must be completed by June 15, 2010. I would appreciate all teachers participating in it whether they are Catholic or not. Your participation would really help me out with my dissertation.

Thank you very much in advance for your participation. If you have any questions about the study, you can contact me at [27cho@cardinalmail.cua.edu](mailto:27cho@cardinalmail.cua.edu) or 240-246-5917.

Sincerely,

Fr. Young-Kwan Cho  
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Administration and Policy  
The Catholic University of America

\* To start the survey, click <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s/248971/ctfc>

## First follow-up e-mail to teachers

May 17, 2010

Dear fellow teachers:

I hope all is well with you. This is Fr. Cho, a doctoral candidate in Education at CUA, who sent you an email asking for your participation in my survey regarding 'faith and commitment of teachers in the Catholic high school' through the principal a week ago.

First, I deeply appreciate all teachers who willingly responded to my survey questions. However, I need much more responses from teachers. If you have not yet had a chance to access the survey, I hope you will be able to have a moment to access and complete it in the coming week. If you believe that my survey research is valuable, once again I'd like to ask you to participate in my survey.

As a former Catholic school teacher I know well that your school schedule is very busy especially in the end of this academic year. However, your complete responses will be really helpful for my dissertation and for developing Catholic school education as a whole.

The survey will remain open and active until June 15, 2010. I would deeply appreciate your participation. If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact me at [27cho@cardinalmail.cua.edu](mailto:27cho@cardinalmail.cua.edu) or 240-246-5917.

God bless,

Young-Kwan Cho  
Doctoral Student, Educational Administration and Policy  
The Catholic University of America

To start the survey, click <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s/248971/ctfc>

## Second follow-up e-mail to teachers

May 24, 2010

Dear fellow teachers:

I hope this letter finds you well and that the end of the school year is coming to a smooth ending.

This is Fr. Cho. I previously sent you a message with regard to my research survey on 'faith and commitment of Catholic high school teachers.' I am writing this email to you with the hope that you may be able to give about 20 minutes of your time to help me by completing this survey before you leave for summer vacation.

If you have already completed the survey, once again I really appreciate your participation. If you have not yet responded, I would like to ask you one more time to complete this survey. Your responses will be really helpful and would allow me to complete my research survey.

This is my final request. Please note that the survey will remain open and active until June 15, 2010. I would deeply appreciate your participation. Have a great summer vacation. You deserve it.

God bless,

Young-Kwan Cho  
Doctoral Student, Educational Administration and Policy  
The Catholic University of America

To start the survey, click <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s/248971/ctfc>

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