The Characteristics Necessary for Leadership in the Sponsored Academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth

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THE CHARACTERISTICS NECESSARY FOR LEADERSHIP IN THE SPONSORED ACADEMIES OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH

BY

SISTER TERESA A. BRUNO, SC

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

The Characteristics Necessary for Leadership in the Sponsored Academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity as they relate to charism, mission, and vision in relationship to educational leadership and, in particular, to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. This qualitative research emphasized eight variables: mission, vision, charism, ministry, sponsorship, leadership, succession leadership, and spirituality, which provided the data for answering the three research questions. Very little research has been written about sponsorship and succession leadership regarding Catholic schools especially those sponsored by religious congregations. Today many outside influences disturb the very foundations upon which religious communities exist. Fewer religious, scarce financial resources and the religious and ethnic diversity of those served by religious congregations all suggest a need to look to the laity as partners in the continuation of the mission, vision and charism of religious congregations.

This qualitative researcher used an interview protocol to gather data from members of Congregational leadership within the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey, membership from healthcare, mission and charism services, and principals and teachers from the sponsored academies.

The research indicated that nonnegotiable leadership characteristics were predictable in the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity: commitment to the
mission, commitment to the Catholic faith and a deep-rooted spirituality, understanding the role of sponsorship, competency, and the ability to be articulate and collaborative. The results revealed that a formal process had not been developed by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth to identify those characteristics in new leadership. The results of the data also indicated that no clear transition exists within Congregational leadership that ensures a smooth transition from religious to lay leadership in the sponsored academies.

Congregational leadership is appointing a Director of Sponsorship Services to ensure sponsorship effectiveness of all sponsored works. The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity is preparing a Sponsorship Manual, which will be directed to the leadership in the sponsored works. Both the Director of Sponsorship and the Sponsorship Manual will assist in identifying steps in the transition from religious to lay leadership in the sponsored academies. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth must consider developing a procedure or mentoring program, which will ensure the clear transition from a religious leader to a lay leader of their sponsored schools so that the mission, vision, and charism continue into the new millennium.
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With sincere gratitude, I acknowledge the many people who helped me on this journey. It is with genuine appreciation that I recognize, Dr. Elaine Walker, Ph.D., my mentor, who guided and encouraged me to see this study through to its completion. My committee shared in each of the difficulties and joys of the dissertation process. Rev. Kevin Hasbury, Ed.D. Margaret Boland, Ed.D, and Lorraine Passafine, Ed.D offered their guidance, support and expertise whenever I called upon them. Special thanks to Dr. Collins, my advisor, for his help whenever I called or stopped in his office.

My family, especially my sisters Chris and Cennie, deserve special thanks for their understanding and patience. They understood every time I said I could not come home for a visit because I was working on my paper.

I am particularly thankful to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth who made all of this possible. The Sisters encouraged and supported me this past year through their prayers and words of encouragement.

There are always special people who stand out among the others. In particular, I am thankful to the following people: Dr. David Coughlan, Ph.D. whose life gave witness to Gospel values and who mentored me through my comprehensive project. Sister Kathleen Koehler for her many hours of proofreading, Sisters Alice Tracey, Joan Digan and Pat Donauer, my closest friends for their prayers and encouragement, and Dr. Margaret Boland for her ongoing support, constructive criticism, and friendship.

Each person contributed to this work and I thank my God whenever I think of you, and every time I pray for all of you, I pray with joy (Phil 2:3).
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to four significant people in my life, my aunts, Mary Ann Carey and Anna Henkel and my parents, Helen and Tony who instilled in me the values of understanding, hard work, and love of the Catholic faith and

The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth whose mission is "to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, and to proclaim the Lord's year of favor" (Luke 4:18–19).
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The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey are a community of women religious who follow in the footsteps of the founder of the parochial movement in America, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. This research examined the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth as they relate to charism, mission, and vision in relationship to educational leadership and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. Historically, the Sisters of Charity minister in education, health care institutions, social work, and pastoral work. This research will deal with the educational ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

Total Catholic education, which is more than "schools," serves the whole Catholic Church through its many ministries. Catholic education, like our nation, is built on the generations of immigrants who dared to create a system of schools that, to this day, reflect the cultural and societal diversity of our nation. As early as 1820 immigrant Catholics, disadvantaged but determined to keep their faith alive in America, supported parish schools as a way of preserving their religion and culture in a New World (Walch, 2003).

For 145 years, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth have continued to serve the people of God through the ministries of education, health care, social work, and
missionary activity. Jesus Christ came "to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favor" (Luke 4:18 – 19). The mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is to proclaim this Gospel of Jesus Christ (Constitution of the Sisters of Charity, Toward Boundless Charity, p. 10).

The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth sponsor five secondary academies for young women. Sponsorship is a term used to describe the relationship between a religious congregation and a particular ministry for which the congregation has responsibility. The sponsorship relationship carries with it the responsibility to insure both the quality and Catholicity of the work of these institutions. Sister Rosemary Smith, SC in a talk given to the Northern Province of the Sisters of Charity in 1994 stated that in sponsoring certain apostolic entities a Congregation places its name, its identity, and its commitment behind the ministry. In return, the Congregation bears responsibility for assuring that Gospel values and Catholic social teachings permeate the ministry, for stewarding the mission, and the resources of that ministry, and for shaping, and extending the legacy of the sponsored entity (Smith, 1994).

Sponsorship is a secret trust and a legal responsibility. The concept of sponsorship is used within the Catholic Church to describe the relationship between an institutional ministry (the sponsored work) and the entity identified as sponsor (e.g. the religious congregation that founded and sustained the institutional ministry) (Sponsorship Initiative 2003). Five essential tasks are required to exercise sponsorship effectively: mission integration, accountability, relationships, continuity, and sustainability. These
essential tasks required to exercise sponsorship effectively will be examined in Chapter II of this research.

In the late 1960’s, the word “sponsorship” became widely used in Catholic healthcare institutions. Reverend John McGrath first used the word in 1968 in his work with Catholic healthcare. According to Conlin (2001), Catholic Health Care first used the term “sponsorship” in 1969. Sponsorship is a reality not just an idea due to the changing profile of religious congregations.

Prior to the release of the documents of Vatican II in the early 1960’s, religious communities of women and men celebrated many new vocations added to their numbers each year. Following Vatican II and the many changes to religious life, religious congregations lost membership in large numbers. Together with the decline in numbers, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, like many religious communities, experienced a departure of sisters from the educational ministry to follow the ministries of health care and social work. This departure from education by religious women and men not only placed serious financial burdens on parishes with schools, but also challenged religious communities with the task of preparing lay educators to assume the roles of leadership in sponsored works in order to continue the charism, mission, and vision of the religious community.

Bryk, Lee, and Holland (1993) maintain that sponsorship means more than simply maintaining control; it also involves careful planning, and developing lay leaders to take the place of religious staff. In the Documents of Vatican II (1966) the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, the Council declared, “The Laity derive the right and duty with respect to the apostolate from their union with Christ their Head. Incorporated into
Christ's Mystical Body through Baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord, Himself" (p. 492). This declaration bestows on the laity the same rights and privileges as a vowed religious regardless of their role.

At this time in history, Catholic school leadership is in crisis. Developing faith leaders for the Catholic school is an overwhelming task for all who hope to see Catholic education flourish into the third millennium. A person who is a Catholic school principal first brings spiritual qualities to the ministry influenced by one’s "personal lived faith experience" (Wallace, 2000, p. 191)

Leaders in the Catholic Church such as Bishops and superintendents have called for more studies on lay leadership. "Research efforts should focus not only on the leaders themselves, but also on those whom they lead" (Amendolone, 1993, p. 179). This research will examine leadership within a religious Community whose founder calls all Sisters of Charity to be "women of the Church." To take that directive one-step further, this research will call the laity with whom the Sisters of Charity witness to that same calling, vision, and mission.

The transition from religious leadership to lay leadership in a sponsored school affects the religious Community, the sponsored school community, and the Catholic Church. Therefore, it is essential that the laity are educated for the academic responsibilities of the role of leadership, for the successful continuance of the traditions of the religious Community, and for the purposeful carrying out of the mission of the Catholic Church. Jacobs (1997), in his monograph The Grammar of Catholic Schooling,
insists, “Catholic educational leaders must embody Catholic identity as their primary leadership activity” (p. 78).

One of the problems facing the Catholic schools today is maintaining Catholic identity. Professionally the laity possess all the required credentials for academics, leadership, and management. However, the Catholic identity component requires further development. The Catholic School Leadership Program at Seton Hall University began, as stated by Hanbury, Fox, and Mitchell (2000), to answer that question:

Two years ago, intense discussions resumed in response to the continuing declining number of priests, brothers, and sisters and the increase of laypersons employed in the ministry of teaching. The laity who are teaching in New Jersey’s Catholic schools bring valuable professional competence and experience. If lay people are to serve as leaders of a community of teachers and are responsible for handing on the faith to young children and maturing adults, they must be conversant with the specialized aspects of Catholic education. (Hanbury, Fox, & Mitchell, p. 310)

The question of moral leadership and faith formation requires that a person be committed to a personal vision as well as a corporate vision. Faith leadership, according to superintendents, is the most important characteristic of the Catholic school principal (Walzec, 2000, p. 191). Faith leadership and Catholic identity are critical to the success of a sponsored work. Thomas Sergiovanni (1993) maintains that leadership behavior is about understanding and developing the heart and the head of leadership (p. 7). Peter M. Sengs (1990) asserts that leaders teach people how to achieve their vision by fostering learning for everyone, developing systemic understanding, and being committed to the truth. Building on reality requires that leaders view reality on four levels: events,
patterns of behavior, systemic structures, and a "purpose story" (p. 353). These aspects are needed for building a sponsorship relationship for the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth in the five secondary academies. Both Mazno (1985) and Bustow (1988) establish that the faith leader must be knowledgeable about the history of Catholic schools and the Church, as well as Church law, documents, and teachings. As so clearly stated in the document *Those Who Hear You, Hear Me* (1995), "When Jesus called His disciples, He invited them to join in His mission" (p. 21).

Statement of the Problem

Members of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth have always been in key leadership positions in the five sponsored secondary academies owned by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. With the change in the number of women entering the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and the decision by some of the present membership to minister in other ministerial fields, the problem facing the Congregation is how to identify leadership for congregationally sponsored academies. This study will examine the following issues: Will the leadership come from the membership? How will the congregation begin to identify and prepare the laity to carry on the mission, charism, and vision of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth in these sponsored academies? In answering these questions, the researcher will conduct interviews with Congregational leadership, healthcare administrators, school administrators, and lay teachers. The health care administrators are important to this research because the nature of sponsorship, which is vital to this research, is understood more by the healthcare systems industry than by the educational field. It is the hope of this researcher to show the importance of sponsorship in the educational works of the Congregation by utilizing the research from
healthcare systems. The purpose of these interviews will be to determine how the Congregation is preparing for leadership succession.

The purpose of this dissertation will be to examine the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity as they relate to mission, vision, and charism in relationship to educational leadership and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. Leadership in the Catholic schools is shifting from religious to the laity who hopes to minister and administer within Catholic secondary education. How has this Religious community identified the key elements needed for the continuation of its mission, vision, and charism under the faith leadership of the lay leader? The fundamental characteristics of mission, vision, and charism need to be identified as the shift continues from religious leadership to lay leadership.

Research Questions

This dissertation will study the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey in relationship to succession leadership theory, educational leadership, and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored secondary academies owned by the Congregation. This research intends to answer the following questions:

1. What leadership characteristics do the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey consider vital and nonnegotiable for lay administrators whom they hire to lead their sponsored Academies?

2. How will the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey develop a process to identify those characteristics?
3. What steps have the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey taken to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership of their sponsored schools so that their mission, vision, and charism continue into the new millennium?

Design of the Study

This research presupposes that among the Seton Associates and the lay educators in our Catholic institutions, especially those sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, there are those who strive to be educational leaders in the tradition of "Charity." This study is an attempt to hear from Congregational leadership, academy administrators, teachers, and other leaders in the ministries of education and healthcare systems who believe in the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity.

Present administrators of the five sponsored academies will be interviewed regarding the qualities of leadership they bring to each school and how that leadership reflects the mission, vision and charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. Congregational leadership, which includes the General Superior, Councilors and Mission and Charism Services, will be interviewed to ascertain the qualities of leadership needed to continue the mission of educational services in the five sponsored secondary academies. Health care administrators who work in the sponsored healthcare facilities of the Sisters of Charity will be interviewed to discover their ideas on sponsorship and succession leadership.

Instead of a random sample of leadership, the interviews will center on those in ministerial and leadership positions in the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity which include the five academies and the healthcare institutions. A stratified random sample of the teachers at each of the five academies will be done to ensure an unbiased
interview base. Creswell (1994) identifies the best random sampling is one in which:
* "each individual in the sample has an equal probability of being selected" (p. 129). The
random sample will be stratified to assure that specific characteristics of gender and years
at a Sisters of Charity sponsored secondary academy are represented in the interviewees.
This dissertation attempts to answer several important questions that concern the issue of
leadership succession at the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint
Elizabeth.

Theoretical Rationale

The theoretical basis and structure for this study is leadership succession
planning. Leadership succession planning is a process utilized primarily in corporations
to ensure that organizational positions are filled with qualified internal candidates. This
process will provide for continuity of leadership by identifying and developing potential
secondary administrators for the sponsored academies. "Leadership transition is an
integral process that begins before the leader departs, and it presents a remarkable
opportunity to move forward with a new understanding of the complexities, challenges,
and changes the organization must address" (Manz, 2002). Connected to the process
of leadership transition is a relational component. The leader transforms and inspires
his/her followers to seek the good of the organization over his/her own personal interest.

In the process of leadership succession, transformational leadership provides the level
of human contact necessary to recognize the real empowerment. Transformational
leadership, according to Burns (1978), occurs when persons interrelate at all levels to
increase motivation and good will. Transformational leadership prepares the leader to
recognize the importance and the strength of those she/he leads. This study is an
endeavor to clarify important questions about the fundamental characteristics of leadership succession in Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth sponsored secondary schools.

Significance of the Study

This study is important to the understanding of sponsorship within Catholic education and to understanding how sponsorship can be a vehicle to continue the mission, vision, and charism of a particular religious congregation especially the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. This study will be important to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth as well as to other Religious Congregations who presently sponsor or hope to sponsor Catholic secondary schools.

The five sponsored academies provide a quality Catholic education for young women from urban and suburban districts in two dioceses and five cities in New Jersey. Saint Vincent Academy, Sacred Heart Academy, and the Academy of Saint Aloysius are located in urban surroundings. Marylawn of the Oranges Academy, although located in suburban South Orange, educates young women from the cities of Irvington, Newark, East Orange, and Orange. Saint Elizabeth Academy, located in Convent Station, educates women from nearby suburban areas. The educational ministry of the Sisters of Charity is constantly evolving to meet the needs of urban populations as well as the needs of people in suburban parishes.

Declining numbers of religious in most religious congregations suggests the possibility of co-sponsorship of an academic institution with another religious congregation. The language used to express concepts like co-sponsorship, according to Sister Olive Bordelon, (2001) a Sister of Charity of the Incarnate Word, “changes and is
difficult to pin down, especially in complex relationships" (p.27). However, the significance of this research is primarily looking at the sponsorship of five academies by one religious congregation. The Church, due to the significance of the Second Vatican Council and the 1987 Synod on the Laity, recognizes the laity as vital partners in Church matters. Educational leaders in dioceses recognize the right of the laity to assume leadership positions in schools. It is the hope of this researcher that this research will reveal the characteristics that are needed for the laity to assume administrative roles in the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

This research is significant because it improves the reader's insight into the qualities of a leader in a Catholic school as well as in a sponsored work of a religious community. Finally, this research may afford others the motivation to do similar studies and increase the understanding of mission, vision, and charism as they relate to sponsorship by a religious community.

Limitation of the Study

This research is a descriptive study, which made use of an interview protocol to gather qualitative data. The subject of sponsorship as it relates to education is untapped. Research in related areas involves concepts essential to the study but there has not been very much research directly related to this study.

This research dealt with only one religious congregation in one state. The limited number of interviews were obtained from one religious congregation and the five sponsored academies owned by the religious congregation. The five secondary academies were located within two dioceses in one state. Another limitation is that all of the schools are single sex schools.
This study produced only descriptive data. Future research is necessary to develop statistical theory.

Finally, this study is limited by bias of the researcher and her ability to report the results accurately.

Definition of Terms

Canon Law is the official compilation of laws governing the universal Church, containing 1725 canons. These canons cover liturgy, sacraments, priesthood, and the religious life, the organization of the church (parish, diocese), preaching, and education, and apostolic works and their assets. It is the latter, which applies to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth sponsored works.

Catholic Identity—The educational mission of the Church has been described with three dimensions: the message revealed by God, which the Church proclaims; fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit, and service to the Christian community and the entire human community (To Tesch As Jesus Did, 1972). The seven elements of Catholic school identity mirror the three dimensions—message, community, and service. To the extent that Catholic schools reflect the seven elements and these three basic dimensions, they effectively fulfill the purpose for their existence.

Charism—Divine spiritual gift to individuals or groups for the good of the community. The word was introduced by Saint Paul “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good... all these gifts are activated by one and the same Spirit who allot[s] to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses” (1Cor 12:7,11). A charism given to one person can become embodied in a larger group, such as a religious institute. The unique gift of the founder or foundress is given to every member form one generation to
the next. Through these unmerited gifts, the spirit continues to call the Church to dynamic growth and to renewed fidelity to Christ (Mc Brien, 1995, p. 300).

Congregation – A group approved by competent Church authority who live in community and profess public vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. A president or superior, assisted by a council, usually governs congregations (Mc Brien, 1995, p. 1194).

Mission - the Mission of the Sisters of Charity is to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ and the Church. Mission is global. It promotes the values of the reign of God and is constituted by the simple presence and living witness of the Christian life. Mission is both a command and an invitation. It is a simple but complex reality carried out in different ways according to the charism of the religious community. Mission is a source of life and vitality for the Church.

Public Juridic Person is a term roughly equivalent to corporation in civil law and refers to the entity that in the eyes of the Church is ultimately responsible for a specific ministry. They carry out their ministries in the name of the Church and their assets are ecclesiastical goods. A competent authority in the Church, traditionally a bishop or the Holy See must establish public juridic persons.

Seton Associates of the Sisters of Charity are lay women and men who have made a commitment to live the mission of charity in their daily lives. A large number reside in New Jersey but they also come from different parts of the United States including Connecticut, Massachusetts, Georgia, Florida, Michigan and California. Some Seton Associates are from other countries including Peru, Salvador, Poland, Ireland, and Scotland.
Sponsorship – describes a relationship between the congregation and the sponsored institution; demands mutuality with neither the sponsor nor the institution exclusively responsible for maintaining the relationship; allows the congregation to expand its mission and helps give foundation and direction to the mission of the sponsored institution.

Vision – is lived out in the mission of the Congregation. In the tradition of Saint Vincent de Paul, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth participate in the mission of the Church fundamentally through ministry supported and nourished by prayer and vowed life in community. Our ecclesial mission impels us to collaborate with all those who strive to make life more human.
Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of the literature is divided into five sections: an historical perspective; sponsorship; religious leadership; Catholic identity; religious life, in particular: mission, vision, and charism; spirituality and how it shapes the leadership of sponsored works; and succession leadership.

Historical Perspective

The history of Catholic education in America is more than a movement, it is an evolution of successive generations of Catholics who were determined that their children would receive a quality education, preserve their Catholic faith, and be prepared to assume productive roles in American society (Walch, 2003). The Catholic Church in America faced an enormous challenge of over-population following the Revolutionary War. Immigrants flooded the territory hoping for places in the parishes and especially in the parish schools.

The prominence of the school issue in the minds of Catholic leaders was evidenced by the Epochal Third Plenary Council of Baltimore where the bishops set forth two decrees. The decrees set forth by the bishops said that near every church a parish school was to be built and maintained in perpetuity; and that all Catholic parents were bound to send their children to the parish school. Only the local bishop had the authority to allow any changes in following the decrees (Hunt, Oldenski, & Wallace, 2000). One year before the Council, James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore wrote, “It may safely be asserted that the future status of Catholicity in the United States is to be determined by the success or failure of our day-schools.” (Hunt et al., 2000, p. 37)
At the turn of the century, the laity who opposed the edict of the Episcopal Third Plenary Council were not alone. Several of the nation’s bishops were as resistant as were the laity. To alleviate the dissension among the bishops and the laity, Pope Leo XIII in a letter dated May 31, 1893 to James Cardinal Gibbons stated that the decrees of the Third Plenary Council were "explicitly declared to be the supreme norm, determining the Catholic attitude towards both parish and public schools" (as cited in Burns, 1912, p. 247). Catholic schools witnessed a growth on both the elementary and secondary levels. By 1936 Catholic schools educated 2,102,889 students (Hunt et al., 2000). This growth continued into the 1960's.

On October 6, 1962, Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council, which unsettled the very foundations of the Catholic Church. The Second Vatican Council significantly revised the Church's teaching on major issues especially those with religious and theological meaning. Walch (2003) maintains that these changes instigated questions about the "role and the mission of the parochial school" (p. 169). A new generation of Catholics followed the documents of Vatican II. These Catholics experienced a change in Church culture unlike any other generation of Catholics.

American Catholics met a common enemy in the early days of Americanization and that was Protestantism. Common schooling, as the public school was called, was utilized not only to educate but also to "transform a diverse population of children into a homogeneous, deferential, and very American citizenry" (Walch, 2003, p. 35). In these early days of colonization, being American was being Protestant. Catholics could not tolerate this label. They required that their children attend ethnic parish schools. This arrangement caused years of hostility, which lasted well into the twentieth century.
Major cities developed distinct ways of handling these battle lines between public and parish schools. In large cities like Boston both public and parish schools survived, but in New York and Philadelphia, the parish schools dominated in every Catholic neighborhood. The years before the Civil War actually proved to be a war of sorts between the schools. Unfortunately, as in all wars, innocent people got hurt. Battles over the schools continued through the decades long after the Civil War.

The success of the Catholic schools in American culture is attributed to the many religious women and men who worked untiringly to teach children the basic tenets of the Catholic faith and a solid academic curriculum. Women religious, hard working and devoted to education staffed these little schoolhouses. The so-called “sister-teachers” sacrificed for many years to ensure a place for American Catholic education. Walsh (2003) wrote, “sister-teachers were the single most important element in the Catholic educational establishment” (p. 151).


February 22 - appropriately enough the feast of Saint Peter, first father of the Church, and the birthday of George Washington, first father of the country – was of equal importance, for on that day three children from the village were admitted to the school. These three neighborhood children were the first “tiny seeds of the first American parochial school system. They were, therefore, the
first pupils of a parish school in America, forming the primary cell of the modern parochial school system. To Elizabeth Seton belongs, then, the honor that has traditionally been bestowed on her of being the foundress of the parochial schools in America. (p. 176)

The Sisters of Charity of New Jersey began during these tumultuous days with requests from James Roosevelt Bayley, the first Bishop of Newark, New Jersey, to Sister of Charity Congregations for Sisters for the new motherhouse and novitiate in New Jersey. Finally, he appealed to his friend, Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati, under whom another branch of the Seton Sisters of Charity had been founded (Sharkey, 1933, p. 55 v1). Mother Margaret Cecilia George of the Cincinnati Charities, who had been one of the early companions of Mother Seton, agreed to train the Bishop's candidates who would return to Newark, New Jersey under two of her professed Sisters, after their novitiate, and there secure the establishment of a permanent diocesan community (McEniry, 1952, p. 76).

Two sisters from Mount Saint Vincent in New York joined the five young Sisters from Cincinnati. On September 29, 1859, the feast of Saint Michael, Sister Mary Xavier Melegan began in “poverty and humility the extension and development in New Jersey of the great work initiated by Mother Seton at Emmitsburg, Maryland” (McEniry, 1952, p. 87). The work of the Sisters began with the opening of the first sponsored Academy of Saint Elizabeth for young women. Six young women enrolled as the first students of the new academy. Sister Mary Agnes O'Neill was appointed the first Directress of the Academy of Saint Elizabeth, the first sponsored work of the Congregation.
The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth established four more secondary academies for young women. As early as 1865 in Jersey City, NJ, one of the first missions established was the second sponsored Academy of Saint Aloysius. Sister Mary Agnes Sharkey (1933) writes, "No foundation, outside the motherhouse, has had so many direct offshoots as Saint Aloysius, for the Jersey City Academy has been the fruitful parent of several missions in Hudson County" (p. 82). The Academy of Saint Aloysius, a sponsored work, continues today under lay administration.

The third sponsored Academy was founded within one decade of the foundation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth in 1859. In 1868 the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Hoboken opened its doors to young women of high school age. For many years, this prestigious academy educated "families" from one generation to the next. Sacred Heart Academy from its earliest years to the present maintained a full college preparatory program and a commercial program. The traditions of the Academy of the Sacred Heart continue today together with the ever-changing immigrant population.

In 1869, the fourth of the sponsored academies began under the name of the "great Founder of the Sisters of Charity, Saint Vincent's, located in the Hill section of the city of Newark" (Sharkey, 1933, p. 200). Saint Vincent Academy was designed as an "industrial school" and later became solely a college preparatory, secondary academy for young women. The needs of the poor weighed heavily on Mother Xavier and in the spirit of charity, she was an advocate for them. On August 5, 1870, Mother Xavier wrote a letter to the Honorable T. F. Randolph, Governor of New Jersey asking for a "yearly appropriation" from the state. Mother Xavier explained her reasons for expecting the money in this way,
Our most ardent wish is to receive all deserving applicants—our present resources would not allow us to do. In the Industrial School, (Saint Vincent's by name) there is, of course, a certain yearly charge to pupils, so that by many it is considered a self-supporting institution, and a claim such as we are making in its favor might be called preposterous. But, there is another side to the question. It was commenced with the intention of making it a charitable, not a moneymaking institution; it is yet in its infancy, and there is upon it a debt of $19,000 upon which the interest has to be paid. It has already received as many pupils free, as its income can possibly afford, yet we are almost daily obliged to refuse applicants whose admission would be a great act of charity, and a public benefit—for God only knows how many poor young girls go to destruction for the want of such aid as they would receive therein, but have not the means to procure for themselves. The pupils receive daily a certain number of hours tuition in the branches of a good common education and are taught housekeeping and useful trades, and are thus prepared to become useful and virtuous members of society instead of idlers and burdens. (Motier Xavier, 1870, see Appendix A)

Last of the sponsored academies, Marylawn of the Oranges Academy began in the year 1935. While the United States was experiencing the most terrible period of economic depression in its history, a group of Catholic parents of Essex County, New Jersey consulted with Archbishop Walsh of the Newark Archdiocese about opening a private Catholic academy in South Orange. These dedicated parents wanted a school where their children would be prepared academically, socially, and spiritually to take
their places in society. The Sisters of Charity, contacted by Archbishop Walsh, agreed to staff the new school.

Beginning in the 1970s, four of the five sponsored academies changed to meet the needs of their neighborhoods and to compete in the educational marketplace. Saint Aloysius in Jersey City, Sacred Heart in Hoboken, Saint Vincent in Newark, and Marylawn in South Orange all serve the needs of the socio-economic poor of the surrounding cities. The Academy of Saint Elizabeth in Convent Station, the first of the sponsored academies, continues to serve suburban young women in Morris County as it did in its founding in 1860. Like many corporations, the five secondary academies sponsored by the Sisters of Charity changed with the times to compete in the educational marketplace. Senge (1990) states the importance of embracing change.

Embracing change does not mean abandoning a core of values and precepts. We must balance our desire for continuity with our desire to be creative. We must learn how not to abandon that core, while simultaneously letting go of past ways of doing things. (p. 349)

The five academies have continued to be catalysts for change to meet the needs of the young women of today.

For 125 years of Catholic education in the United States, religious communities of women and men embraced leadership positions in Catholic schools. Bryk, Lee, and Holland (1993) reported that 61% of the leadership positions in the Catholic schools in 1988 came from religious communities. With the promulgation of Vatican Council II in the sixties, religious women and men found new ways outside of the sphere of education to minister to God's people. With the decreasing numbers of religious women and men
in leadership positions in schools, members of the laity emerged as the new administrators.

This phenomena may be seen not as a negative for the Catholic Church and for religious communities but as a positive. The laity, while they are not the vowed members of Religious Communities, are considered by many as the new vocations to the Church. Large numbers of laypersons are infusing the Church with a new vitality, generosity, and commitment. "There is no lack of vocations; they simply look different now." (Amendolara, 1993, p. 7). Harris (1999) indicates that the culture of the American Catholic Church is changing from a clerical leadership to lay leadership at all levels and especially in the area of finances. The religious character of schools assured by the presence of religious brothers, sisters, and priests, can no longer be taken for granted.

Religious communities of women and men devoted decades to serving the poor in health care, education, and in other services directly related to alleviating the suffering of those in need. Today many outside influences disturb the very foundations upon which religious communities exist. Fewer religious, scarce financial resources and the religious and ethnic diversity of those served by religious congregations all suggest a need to look to the laity as partners in the continuation of the mission, vision, and charism of a religious congregation.

Sponsorship
Mission, Vision, Charism

Like many schools in the late 60's through to the present day, the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth suffered attrition and demographic changes. C. Albert Koob of the NCEA (as cited in Walch, 2003) noted in 1967 "We are in a time of crisis concerning Catholic education" (p.178). During these critical decades,
many schools closed. The controversy among the Church hierarchy, the clergy and the American people regarding the financial collapse of the schools continued into the 90’s. Bryk, Lee, and Holland (1993) indicate that fiscal problems create a twofold bind for many Catholic schools. While increasing tuition and multiplying fundraisers to meet the rising costs of education, a constant concern is the “conflicting pressures of keeping tuition-payments down, enrollment up and maintaining accessible to families from a broad range of social and economic backgrounds” (Bryk, et.al. p. 337).

Three of the academies, situated in the cities of Newark, Jersey City, and Hoboken, changed dramatically from a comfortable White population to an African American and Hispanic student population. Sponsorship by the Sisters of Charity for the five academies continued throughout the decades of low enrollment and demographic changes. Marylawn of the Oranges and the Academy of Saint Elizabeth retained their original population during most of the crisis years. In the late 80’s Marylawn of the Oranges began to educate young women from the cities of Newark and Irvington. They became almost totally African American by the late 90’s. The Academy of Saint Elizabeth retained its original population of upper class suburban young women.

Marylawn Academy and the Academy of Saint Aloysius are separately incorporated and are governed by a two-tiered Board of Trustees made up of Sisters of Charity and laity. An Advisory Board made up of Sisters of Charity and laity govern Saint Vincent Academy, Sacred Heart Academy, and the Academy of Saint Elizabeth. Religious communities retain substantial authority through their appointments to the Boards of Trustees. The religious communities, as stated in Bryk, Lee, and Holland (1992), wield the influence through the appointment of the Board members who in turn
select the principal. When these committees are seeking to fill administrative positions within the sponsored work, preference is given to members of the religious communities.

Most religious communities provide "administrative and technical support services in planning, development, spiritual leadership, financial control, legal advice, and personnel selection. The strength of the private high schools directly reflects the contributions of the sponsoring religious order." (p. 150)

The Most Reverend Thomas Kelly, OP, at a symposium sponsored by the Department of Secondary Schools of the National Catholic Education Association, stated that the challenges faced by religious communities fall into three categories. They are:

a) the challenges and opportunities facing religious orders, b) the particular challenges of Catholic secondary education in general, and c) the climate in which Catholic education exists today (Kelly, 1996, p. 5). The question, which rears its head and calls for an answer is how will the legacy of religious communities to secondary education, particularly through the sponsored works, be appreciated in the future. In particular, how will the Sisters of Charity identify leadership for the five sponsored academies in the future? The empowerment of the laity in administrative positions where only Sisters of Charity have ministered is the challenge that faces the Congregation. For the five sponsored academies, this lack at leadership and administration is crucial to their continued existence. To meet these challenges of the new millennium, the Boards of Trustees, the Advisory Boards and the Congregation must collaborate on the best models of administration needed to maintain the existence of the secondary schools.

Healthy organizations are learning communities. While change is difficult, it is essential to the continuance and excellence of an organization. The early experiences of
an organization creates the lens through which we view the present and the future of the organization (Senge, 1990). The core of the sponsored academies is interdependence among Board members, administration, Congregation members, teachers, parents, and students. Steven Covey (1989) defines interdependence as "the paradigm of we - we can do it; we can cooperate, can combine our talents and abilities and create something greater together" (p. 49). Covey (1989) later states that "interdependence opens up worlds of possibilities for deep, rich, meaningful associations, for geometrically increased productivity, for serving, for contributing, for learning, for growing" (p. 187).

The challenges facing religious communities and their sponsored works, particularly educational institutions, are intense. To meet these challenges, especially at the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity, the organization must see clearly all the options that exist. There must be openness among all stakeholders to participate by offering information, ideas, and feelings. There must be a sharing of resources to help move toward the goal of continuing the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity. Working together in a cooperative and collaborative fashion will achieve the desired outcome - educational excellence, continued quality leadership, and financial security.

In May 2004, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth published a statement on sponsorship. In this statement, this Congregation defined sponsorship as a formal relationship between the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and a particular ministry. This sponsorship relationship ensures organizational fidelity to mission, values, and Catholic identity (Sponsorship Manual). The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, through action of its designated leadership, exercises its responsibility for the ministry,
which, in turn, carries out the Congregation’s mission. The mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is to live the mission of Jesus as found in Luke’s Gospel “to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favor” (Luke 4: 18-19).

The concept of sponsorship describes the relationship between an organizational ministry and the association identified as sponsor. In this case the organization is the sponsored work and the association is with a religious community. Five tasks are identified with sponsorship: mission integration, relationships, continuity, accountability, and sustainability (Grant, 2003).

Canon law identifies two duties related to sponsorship: “the protection of stable patrimony or ecclesiastical goods and the faithful administration of these goods” (Grant, 2003). Direction regarding the latter, faithful administration of a ministry of the Church constitutes the direction pursued by this researcher. Reflecting on the five tasks related to sponsorship presents a direction for understanding the exercise of sponsorship.

The mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, to be authentic, must be a sign of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. The life of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is embodied in living out the gospel of Jesus Christ through its members. The mission of the Congregation is its reason for living. Therefore, the mission of the Congregation must encompass all of the ministries associated with the Congregation.

Grant (2003) affirms that the sponsored works of religious communities reflect the “focus, energy and personnel, the most tangible manifestation of its gifts to the Church and the people of God” (p.2). Mission integration is the heart of the sponsored work. Every person involved in the sponsored work, whatever his/her capacity, must
know and understand the mission of the institution. Grant (2003) emphasizes the
importance of knowing the mission and commitment to fulfilling it. Health care facilities
embracing the sponsored work dedicated personnel to mission effectiveness. Faithful to
the mission, the Policy and Procedure Manual of the Sisters of Bon Secours Health
System (CBS Leadership Team, 1999) states, “The Mission Personnel will have
oversight responsibility to ensure the adherence of Bon Secours facilities to the charism,
philosophy, mission, values, operating principles and policies of the Sisters of Bon
Secours ...”

Catholic health care institutions sponsored by religious congregations focused
mainly on the corporal works of mercy and the care of the poor. Religious
congregations, like the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, sponsored their health care
institutions and the people they served recognized in the hospitals a link to the Church.
The sponsors and those with whom they worked in the sponsored institutions persuaded
the leadership of the Sisters who guaranteed the stability and the leadership of the
institution.

Mission communicates the reason an organization exists. Health care institutions,
more than educational institutions, hire with mission effectiveness in mind. Grant
(2004) maintains that the mission is realized when it is the basis of all decision making
and strategic planning, hiring, rewarding, promoting, and retaining employees, and forms
the groundwork for all financial decisions. Mission, therefore, is the heart of the
organization — its very justification for existence. Organizational leadership assesses
every decision for mission integration and effectiveness. Terry (as cited in Grant 2004)
establishes mission as the central building block of an organization. He sets up a
framework by examining four components: mission, power, structure, and resources. Terry upholds mission as the "statement that defines the organization" (p. 49).

Community building is one of the keystones of mission integration. The mission is all about bringing the reign of God through the sponsored works to the people of God. Building community, as Grant (2004) emphasizes, is the only way to "realize full mission integration" (p. 73).

Building relationships is vital to sponsorship. The link between a founding Congregation and an existing sponsored work must be established to continue the mission of the Congregation. Grant (2003) affirms the founding Congregation is, in fact, the DNA of an organization. It is "the roots and its initial cultural characteristics" (M. K. Grant, personal communication, 2003). Sponsorship involves trust and accountability. Forming relationships for sponsorship requires open lines of communication with all stakeholders and in particular with the bishops of the dioceses in which the sponsored works dwell. Today, as stated by Holland (2001), "we find ourselves in a remarkable era of collaboration" (p. 32). Magnetti (1996) confirms that religious communities are at a turning point. The model is changing from holding the charism of the founder closely or letting go and allowing relationships with those involved in the sponsored works to work with the religious congregation to revitalize the charism of the institutions for future generations.

The task of continuity is directly connected to that of relationships. Continuity, as stated by Grant (2003), is "nurturing the culture and drawing on the richness of the past" (p. 4). Standards of excellence ensure continuity of purpose and mission. Grant (2002) distinguishes culture by identifying three waves of sponsorship: family business model,
franchise model, and partnership model. The family business model recognized the need for including the laity in the work of the religious congregation. In this model, the leaders of the religious congregations continued to control the organization especially in mission, values, and culture. The franchise model developed as relationships grew between the religious congregations and the laity. The franchise model marked the beginning of the role of the laity in governance. It is the beginning of forming the partnership model. The partnership model supported the laity's involvement in articulating the mission and values of the sponsored works. Grant (2002) presents these three waves as linkages, which resemble "both new and revitalized efforts to impart the unique culture or charism of the sponsors and the gradual incorporation and growing collaboration of the laity in ministry" (p. 11).

The fourth task of sponsorship is accountability. Two kinds of accountability are associated with sponsorship: canonical accountability and mission accountability. Canonical accountability, as Holland (2001) states, refers to sponsors as "a public juridic-person who carries out a ministry or apostolate in the name of the Church" (p. 32). The sponsored work is at all times under the direction of the diocesan bishop. The diocesan bishop incurs responsibility for chaplaincy services or "care of souls" and for the work itself. It is the responsibility of the sponsor to keep the bishop informed on the "work's progress, of difficulties encountered, and of challenges seen ahead" (Morrissy, 2001) p. 31). The bishop is held responsible to the Holy See for all actions within his diocese.

Grant (2003) asserts that the second component of accountability in sponsorship depends on who exercises authority and responsibility. Authority, in sponsored works, resides with the General Superior and her Council. Mission integration depends on a clear
definition of sponsorship accountability for all stakeholders whether they are related to health care or education. With the absence of religious personnel in major works of the Congregation, the role of mission effectiveness emerged. This role assures that someone from the religious community interprets the mission of the Congregation and acts as liaison between the corporation and the Congregation. This role is primarily found in Catholic health care facilities but the emergence of a mission effectiveness person will, as Religious leadership decreases, become part of the educational setting (Grant, 2002).

The final task of sponsorship is sustainability. Grant (2003) maintains that sustainability, “building sponsorship capacity,” is comparable to an organization’s ability to shape governance and provide succession leadership (p. 5). Sponsorship implies faithfulness to the mission of Jesus and to the mission of the Congregation, to the Gospel, and to the teachings of the Church. The sustainability of sponsorship is its integrity whereby all colleagues value the mission, vision, and charisma of the institute. Sponsors guide an institutional ministry to advancement in the mission of Jesus, its Catholic identity and mission, and providing health care or educational services to the people of God (Stanley, 2004).

Sponsorship is a relationship between a religious congregation (the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth) and a particular ministry. Grant (2002) emphasizes that the essence of sponsorship is “a creative fidelity, responding to the signs of times and being faithful to the mission and values of the organization” (p. 2). This inspired faithfulness is what gives sponsorship its very life. In the Sponsorship Statement issued by the Sisters of Charity in 1991, the Religious Congregation identifies a ministry with the name of the Congregation when that ministry meets the following criteria:
Provides a significant opportunity to carry out the Congregations’ mission; continues the Roman Catholic tradition of service; provides a competent, compassionate response to the identified need of the People of God; impels the Congregation to commit available human and material resources; affords the Congregation an opportunity to exercise influence over the manner in which needs are addressed, and opens visions of hope and renewed faith in the coming of the reign of God. (Sisters of Charity, 1991)

In 2002, the Neylon Commission asked a panel of religious women to address the major points of sponsorship and the desired competencies of sponsors with regard to higher education. The panel, representing three religious communities, opened their talk with several important questions regarding sponsorship and the sponsors. What is the understanding of sponsorship and the sponsorship relationship? What resources do religious congregations bring to the sponsorship relationship? How do we address the declining number of religious women who are involved in the sponsored works? The answers to these questions show that sponsorship by a religious congregation is a work of the whole congregation not just those who minister in the particular sponsored work (Peeters, Conroy, Lutz, Mollison, & Manley, 2002).

The congregation and the sponsored institution make a deliberate agreement to be in relationship and to be faithful to the mission. The mission of the congregation is the root of the mission of the sponsored institution. The mission of the sponsored institution affirms the mission of the congregation through fidelity to its unique mission (Peeters, Conroy, Lutz, Mollison, & Manley, 2002). Healthcare institutions and institutions of
higher education have produced mission statements that resonate with the sponsored religious congregation.

Sponsorship education is vital to the success of the sponsored work from the standpoint of the members of the religious congregation and the religious and laity committed to the sponsored work. The preparation of those engaged in sponsored works is a critical task to ensure commitment to mission. In the early 1980's the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth began a program on Trustee Education to infuse the membership in the understanding of the role of "sponsor." The purpose of this program was twofold: to educate and to enlist members of the Congregation to assume the responsibilities of being a trustee. All trustee education programs are open to the members of the religious congregation. In 1994, the Trustee Education Program incorporated laity who ministered in the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity including the five secondary academies. Sister Rosemary Smith, SC, in her talk given to the Sisters of Charity at a Seton Health Care Day, states, "Sponsorship is a continuing interest, support, and encouragement that provides for the Mission to go on through ever changing circumstances" (Smith, 1989, p. 1).

Sponsorship, according to Sieger (1997), is at a major crossroads. Based on their mission, health care institutions must re-evaluate their services for providing quality care for those less fortunate. Sieger (1997) maintains, "Sponsoring institutions are confronted with diminishing numbers, an aging membership, and a shortage of potential leaders" (p.1). Although authors like Sieger are concerned with healthcare institutions, the same dilemma faces those involved in education. Sponsors, to continue the mission, must
implement their leadership abilities to provide effective, forward-thinking leaders for sponsored works.

Singer (1997) confirms that sponsorship, to be effective, requires well-structured competencies: planning, marketing, relationship building, and doing your homework. Sponsorship requires those in leadership “identify core responsibilities they can carry out themselves or delegate to others” (p. 3). Strategic planning, an essential component for growth, strengthens the sponsor’s role in decision making for the religious congregation and for the sponsored work. Grant and Kopish (2001) concur that planting for leadership succession for sponsorship will determine a “strong and viable Catholic presence” in the sponsored work (p. 24). Mission and sponsorship carry unique responsibilities for the sponsoring religious congregation. Appointing personnel in the role of mission effectiveness within sponsored works ensures the dual responsibility of interpreting the congregation’s mission and building relationships with those who collaborate on a day-to-day basis within the institution.

The laity who share ministry in a sponsored institution deserve to know the mission and vision of the sponsoring congregation. To embrace the laity in a sponsored work is to include them in the very fundamental mission of that religious congregation. Marketing, as stated by Singer (1997) emphasizes the “interconnectedness not only with the organization; they sponsor but also with other sponsors” (p. 3).

Relationships build community, which connects sponsors with the sponsored institutions. For the sponsored institution to thrive, Peters, et al. (2002) maintain that the sponsored institution and the congregation must make a firm commitment to “ongoing reflection and discernment on sponsorship” (p. 3). Accountability invigorates the
relationship building required for sponsorship. All parties involved in the sponsorship relationship must commit to open dialogue. Building relationships requires time and commitment. At a time when religious men and women are experiencing a diminishment in numbers and advancement in age, the sponsorship relationship exists to create a "new story" (Peters, et al. 2002).

To keep the sponsorship relationship strong all stakeholders, but especially the sponsoring Congregation, must be involved with the sponsored work. Involvement means active participation in governance, decision-making, and articulation of mission and vision. Sponsorship challenges the sponsoring Congregation and the constituents of the sponsored work to keep the mission alive. Peters et al. (2002) reinforces the necessity for the sponsors to "oversee the sponsorship relationship" (p. 4).

Sponsorship of educational works like the five secondary academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth calls for a new perspective on leadership. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are guardians of a productive, admirable, and cherished tradition in both the healthcare ministry and the educational ministry. The next step is to continue the mission and vision of the Congregation by collaboration and shared leadership with the next generation of sponsors.

School Leadership and Ministry

Faith is the cornerstone of educational leadership and Catholic identity for Catholic schools. In Catholic schools, "faith leader generally refers to persons who have responsibilities to foster the integration of Catholic faith in the school's curriculum and all of its other activities" (Hunt, Ellis, Joseph, & Nuzzi, 2004, p. 293). The faith leader is usually the principal of the school and she/he cultivates that faith relationship with
faculty, staff, students, and parents. Everyone involved in the Catholic school is responsible, to some degree, for the continuation of the faith.

Characterizing a school as Catholic through visible signs like Masses, prayer services, service clubs, and other Catholic traditions identifies the school as Catholic. Faith leadership requires the faith leader to advance the Catholic spirit of the school by requiring that all subjects be taught, "so that they reflect the Catholic faith in an intellectually sophisticated and credible manner" (Hunt et al. 2004, p. 293). When religious congregations staffed the schools, the assumption was that both the faith and the Catholic identity would be reflected in clear, understandable ways.

Following Vatican II, the declining numbers of religious women and men in schools necessitated that dedicated laity assume the leadership roles in many Catholic schools. The laity, educated and degreed in administration and leadership, lack a command of the mission and identity of leadership in a Catholic institution (McBrien, 2003). Catholic higher education has grappled with this problem for several years. McBrien states that although the lay leaders in Catholic higher education feel they are equipped to handle the task of lay leadership in a Catholic institution, they "genuinely struggle with their own lack of clarity about the Catholic intellectual tradition" (McBrien, 2003, p. 2). Catholic secondary schools, like those sponsored by religious congregations, find the same inconsistencies between educational leadership and Catholic tradition when searching for leaders to assume positions originally staffed by women or men religious.

The Second Vatican Council unsettled the very foundations of the Catholic Church including the Catholic schools. The Council significantly revised its teachings on
major issues, especially those involved with religious and theological meaning. Walch (2003) maintains that these changes instigated questions about the "role and mission of the parochial school" (p. 169). A new generation of Catholics matured after the Second Vatican Council. These Catholics experienced a change in Church culture unlike any other generation of Catholics. In their 1972 document, "To Teach as Jesus Did," the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States stated, "Proclaiming the Gospel is a perennial task and joy for the Church of Jesus Christ" (p. 1). They then say, "Since the Christian vocation is a call to transform oneself and society with God's help, the educational efforts of the church must encompass the twin purposes of personal sanctification and social reform in light of Christian values." The bishops clearly state the purpose of Catholic schools:

The educational mission of the church is an integrated ministry embracing three interlocking dimensions: the message revealed by God, which the church proclaims, fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit, service to the Christian community and the entire human community. While these three essential elements can be separated for the sake of analysis, they are rejoined in the one educational ministry. Each educational program or institution under church sponsorship is obliged to contribute in its own way to the realization of the threefold purpose within the total educational ministry. (p. 3)

The infusion of the Gospel values of Jesus Christ is essential to the curriculum of the Catholic school. Thomas Groome (1998) considers curriculum to mean the subject matter taught, the pedagogy of teaching/learning process, and the environment in which the education takes place and finally, the intended learning outcome (p.25). The Catholic
school finds its identity in its relationships with regard to mission fellowship, and service.

Thomas Groome talks about Catholics thinking of themselves first and foremost as Christians. To be disciples of Jesus is the first vocation of all Christians (p. 55). The “intended learning outcome” of Christian religious education is nurturing disciples of Jesus Christ, people who follow his “way” through a community of disciples—the Church—in the midst of the world. Coming to “know” Jesus is much more than knowing about him and his teaching; it entails the “knowing” of relationship with him, becoming a disciple in the midst of a community of disciples that carries on his mission of God’s reign of holiness and justice in the world (p. 252). The mission and vision of an administrator in a Catholic institution has this model of Jesus Christ as his/her motivating force and ideal. Leadership in a Catholic school carries the weight of religious studies and theology as part of the core curriculum areas. Schools sponsored by a religious congregation also accept, as part of the leadership, the vision, mission, and charism of the congregation.

An effective leader is one who takes time to look in the mirror. Master the art of leading yourself and you will lay the foundation for helping others to do the same (Manz, 1998). True leadership is a gift that requires introspection, pruning, and planning. blast and blast (1998) list several leadership processes that establish clear connections between leadership and performance. The eight processes include the following: a strong sense of mission, shared vision, web of communication, breakdown of hierarchies, shared governance, personal development, lifelong learning, and learning communities. The leader in most religious organizations embraces these eight processes as she/he interacts with the community.
The mission and vision cannot be a solitary revelation. Administrators own the mission and vision by being the first to begin the actual articulation of the mission and vision. Covey (1994) states “the most empowering organizational mission statements are in harmony with what we’ve come to call universal mission—to improve the economic well-being and quality of life of all stakeholders” (p. 139). Blanchard (1999), Maxwell (1999), and Stetzer (1996) maintain that vision is essential for leadership. Vision grows from the history of the organization. Sturtz affirms this collective visioning to be “fundamental to the work of an educational administrator” (p. 50).

The vision and the mission flow from the traditions of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. A sense of vision and mission provides the stakeholders the motivation they need to accomplish their goals. The mission statement, when owned by all in the community, directs corporate and individual choices, which give life to the mission and vision. A passionate leader will keep that mission focused for the whole community. Covey (1989) upholds that an organizational mission statement that reflects the shared vision and values of everyone within the organization creates an incomparable unity and commitment.

Catholic school leadership, especially in a sponsored institution, requires that the mission and vision be articulated and transmitted to the teachers, the students, and all stakeholders who share in the tradition. Oldenski (2000) affirms that educational leaders and teachers in Catholic schools must become aware of the histories of their schools because by doing that, they become part of that history. The challenge of the leadership in a Catholic school is “to assist the components of the Catholic school community in the process of formulating the identity for that specific Catholic school” (p. 16). The school,
as stated by Stannard (1996), is a “learning community” (p. 70). This learning community must be intertwined into the cultural diversity of our times as well as the inherent histories of our own schools. True leadership compels the leader to continuing personal development, a pledge to life-long learning, and a commitment to developing learning communities. Community, according to Parker Palmer (1988) happens when leaders call us back to the heart of teaching and learning, to the work we share and to the shared passion behind that work. Leadership begins and ends with the passion around mission and vision.

On January 4, 1998, the feast of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, the General Superior and her Council, in effort to affirm leadership in the teachers in the five sponsored academies, announced the initiation of the Secon Scholars for Educational Leadership Program. It was a Master's Degree program in Educational Administration and Supervision/Leadership. The content included development in technology and its application to the secondary school environment; courses related to different learning styles as needed for multicultural backgrounds and varied abilities of the student populations in the five academies, and required Mission Effectiveness programs which would be provided at varied times throughout the program by the Sisters of Charity or the local Academy. The Congregation strongly believed in the mission of the five sponsored academies and saw this program as an opportunity to strengthen that mission for future leadership for the academies.

What is leadership? Yuki (2002), Snowmen and Gorton (1998), and Bennis and Goldsmith (1997) define leadership in many ways—ways that are acceptable depending on the way in which one leads and the tasks facing the leader of the organization. For the
The purpose of this research, the definition that supports a communal sense of leadership is essential to the success of the sponsored Catholic secondary school. Leadership that is collaborative and empowering is a process that facilitates individual and group efforts to achieve mutual objectives. McNamara (n.d.) affirms that leadership is establishing direction and influencing others to follow that direction.

Catholic school leadership is a combination of transformational leadership and servant leadership. Transformational leadership, as stated by Yukl (2002), is established on trust, respect, faithfulness, and admiration toward the leader. Followers of transformational leaders usually do more than they are expected to do. Bennis and Naisbitt (1985) maintain that the transformational leader "elevates the members' concern about self-interest toward something larger than themselves, a collective aspiration or commitment to a cause or value" (p. 50). Communicating the vision to the followers is essential to the success of the transformational leader. Articulating the vision and mission necessitates continuous and varied methods and the most persuasive is direct communication. Other techniques for communicating the vision and mission of the school are "colorful, emotional language that includes vivid imagery, metaphors, anecdotes, stories, symbols, and slogans" (p. 264). Transformational leadership accentuates the emotional development as well as the rational development. Support, encouragement, and enthusiasm are some of the approaches used by the transformational leader to motivate her/his followers. Transformational leaders exercise power in three ways—collaboratively with an emphasis on shared decision-making, empowerment of others with an emphasis on professional development, and an appreciation of change in themselves and in others (Snowden & Gorten, 1998).
Robert Greenleaf coined the term “servant leadership” in 1970 (Yuki, 2002, p. 404). Like transformational leadership, servant leadership “encourages collaboration, trust, foresight, listening and ethical use of power and empowerment” (Jha, Barrett, Parsons, & Hall). Servant leadership is not a top-down approach to leading but an empowerment of the individuals in the group to take ownership of the many roles involved in leading an organization. There is flexibility to servant leadership that allows the servant leader to encourage others to do their best to succeed. Poplin (1992) referred to administrators as servants when she placed them at the top and the bosses of the administrative hierarchy. These servant administrators represent the future leaders who can “tolerate the ambiguity of the role” so that change can happen where everyone is growing (p. 68).

The servant leader is simply and profoundly one who wants to serve others first. Servant leadership encourages everyone to balance leading and serving within their own lives (Spears, 1996). Servant leadership is a model of leadership that can be applied to schools such as the five sponsored academies owned by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. A major application of servant leadership is its role as the basis for what is called “trustee education” (p. 34). Servant leadership suggests that boards of trustees need to undergo a radical shift in how they approach their roles. Trustees who seek to act as servant leaders can help to create institutions of great depth and quality (p. 34).

One of the characteristics of Catholic school leadership is the ability of the leader to encourage the organization’s membership to have “clarity and consensus about the organization’s fundamental beliefs, goals, and aspirations” (Yuki, 1986, p. 91). Transformational leadership works with and through other people to find ways to
collaborate successfully on defining the fundamental purpose of teaching and learning. This empowers the entire school community to become strengthened and motivated (Lentos, 1992). Catholic school leadership compels the administrator to establish and acquire support for a common organizational vision and establish a suitable time line for organizational change. Starrett (1996) confirms that the development of a collective vision of where the school should be going is fundamental to the work of an educational leader (p. 50). Vision is one of the fundamental building blocks of leadership. Catholic school leadership transforms the school community through collaboration, shared decision-making, professionalism, and an understanding of change, including how to encourage change in others (Snowden, 1998, p. 68).

Lay Leadership in Catholic Schools

Catholic schools for the last 20 years have faced, and continue to face, the most critical changes since the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1875. Declining enrollment and declining presence of religious women and men as religious leadership in the schools prompted greater interest in preparing laity to assume the roles of leadership in Catholic institutions. In 1988, the Congregation for Catholic Education issued the document: The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School and in 1997 issued the document: The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium. Both of these documents struggle with the nature and purpose of Catholic schools, the religious ideas that strengthen them, the Catholic identity, the role of the laity, and the academic programs needed to give students a total Catholic education (Hansen, 2001). Unfortunately, neither document discusses fully the shift in leadership that is occurring in many of the Catholic schools in the United States and in other countries.
Hansen writes about the master teacher. He suggests that the leader of the school is the "principal teacher" (p. 29). The Second Vatican Council's *Declaration on Christian Education* (as cited in Flannery, 1990) maintains that the "teachers must remember that it depends chiefly on them whether the Catholic school achieves its purpose" (p. 582). The threads that weave through the documents of the Church are that religious women and men will maintain their roles as "principal teachers" or administrators in the Catholic schools. With the declining and aging populations of religious communities, and the choice of many of the existing membership of these communities to work in other ministries within the Church, the future of Catholic schools depends on the laity to continue the mission of Catholic education.

In 1982, the Congregation for Catholic Education issued a document *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*. This document, while concentrating on lay teachers, offered a very optimistic picture of the teacher with an emphasis on spirituality and professionalism (Hansen, 2001). This document emphasized the role of the teacher but gave the first margin of freedom to future governance roles. The document is significant to the role of the laity in the governance structure of Catholic education. Religious communities no longer have women or men to assume leadership roles in the Catholic schools. The Catholic laity who assume the roles of leadership in the Catholic schools receive this duty because they have the right by their baptism to share in the mission and ministry of this leadership role of the Church.

In 1988, the Congregation for Catholic Education issued another document on Catholic education: *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*. This document envisioned a more inclusive picture of Catholic education. The supposition is
that religious communities who owned schools also headed those schools. Hansen (2001) states that by this time most of the Australian Catholic schools depended on lay leadership on all levels of Catholic education. Statistics show that religious brothers and sisters in the field of education increased 240% between the years 1920 and 1965. However, their proportion relative to the percentage of lay educators decreased 27.9%, which means the percentage of lay educators in the schools increased to 27.9%. The control of Catholic schooling by lay leaders began years before Vatican Council II (Jacobs, 1998 a).

The Catholic School at the Threshold of the Third Millennium, written in 1997, is the final document, which states, “the presence of consecrated religious within the educating community is indispensable, since consecrated persons are able to be especially effective in educational activities” (Congregation, 1997). This document presents an encouraging attitude for those who minister in Catholic schools but it does not give full recognition to the laity who are rapidly becoming the steadfast leadership that keeps the Catholic school a vibrant and vital witness to the Catholic faith and the Church.

Religious created and cemented Catholic education for many years. One of the signs of a good leader is that the mission continues when he/she depart from that position. Religious have imparted a heritage to the laity that continues to be strong, vital, and indispensable to the Catholic Church. Through the active ministry of Religious women and men, they “enabled Catholic schools to demonstrate academic credibility and to renew their distinctive identity in a new era” (Jacobs, 1998 a, p. 161). The document To Teach as Jesus Did (1972) states that Catholic schools continue to be places where teachers devote their energies to building communities of faith and service. Religious
men and women ignited the passion of the laity for Catholic leadership as they worked side by side with them in the Catholic schools.

To be an educational leader in a public sector requires that individuals receive the necessary educational degrees and follow state guidelines. The public sector, when looking to establish fundamental changes in education, compels leaders to make dramatic shifts in the direction of a school. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium and the American Association of School Administrators (as cited in Lashway, 2001) suggest guidelines for leadership accountability and organizational change. Those guidelines include recognizing that leadership is not the same as management; giving up the notion of a hero leader; developing broad-based leadership; encouraging and nurturing individual initiative; building a learning organization; and taking a balcony view of the big picture. These are qualifications for good leadership in the public sector.

Catholic school leadership not only requires these practices as basic to their leadership requirements but also adds the spiritual domain to the list of guidelines. Religious who led the Catholic schools in the past did not undergo the difficult pre-hiring practices that are associated with the search committees and hiring practices that are in place in most diocesan offices today. Up until a few years ago, if a religious community replaced a religious as administrator in a school, it would be by appointment. However, when the religious community did not replace the administrator, and the vacancy was opened to the laity, then the process went to a search committee. The pastor of the parish appointed the principal from the names submitted by the search committee.

In the past, religious appointments to the principaship were based solely on the fact of their state in life. It was the custom of the General Superior to appoint a Sister to
the position of Principal. That is not to say that religious women and men were not professionally prepared for educational leadership. On the other hand, a lay person applying for a principalship in a Catholic school not only needed the credentials required by the state and the professional ability as an educational leader, but also the deeper understanding of what it means to minister in a Catholic school. The emphasis on Church matters, spiritual and pastoral, became more important for the lay leader than the educational qualities necessary to administer a Catholic school (Hansen, 2001).

For over 200 years, religious women and men educated youth from all lifestyles. Following the mission of Jesus Christ, these women and men were disciples and educators (Bryk et al., 1993).


God confirmed our mission through Bishop Carroll’s support: “Assure yourself and the [the sisters] . . . [of my blessing on] your prosperity in the important duty of education which will and must long be your principal, and will always be your partial, employment . . . Therefore [the sisters] must consider the business of education as a laborious, charitable, and permanent object of their religious duty.

Religious men and women worked side by side with their lay collaborators. Religious generously imparted the message of the Gospel and the academic preparation as part of their ministry in the Church. Their example continues today in the lay administrators and teachers who choose to continue the ministry of Catholic education.

These dedicated laity are the key to the future of Catholic schools (Hansen, 2001). The
religious women and men who educated students and worked side by side with the laity also prepared the laity for this noble task of continuing the mission of Catholic education. Formation of the new generation of Catholics will soon be in the hands of qualified, dedicated, lay ministers of Catholic education. How are these women and men prepared to continue the mission and vision of the religious communities whose legacy they represent? What direction do they need for these leadership positions? How will these dedicated individuals succeed the religious in this ministry? Succession planning will ensure that when an opportunity for leadership presents itself, the candidates—both lay and/or religious—will have received professional development for the leadership position.

Succession Leadership

Planning for succession leadership occurs frequently on the corporate level but seldom, if ever, does it happen in educational planning. With the decline of religious in key leadership positions in education, the idea of succession planning becomes critical to the educational leadership network. Succession planning on the corporate level is not without failure. Approximately 55% of outside CEO’s and 34% of inside CEO’s who departed in 2003 were forced to resign (Charan, 2005). Successful succession planning requires commitment and sustainability because “the performance of the CEO determines the fates of corporations, which collectively influence whole economies” (Charan, 2005, p. 12). Jim Collins in his book, Good to Great, analyzed approximately 1,435 companies that appeared in Fortune 500 from 1965 to 1995. He and his research team looked at leadership from the side of financial success over a minimum of 15 years. Eleven companies finally qualified. This research established a basis for success in three themes of “disciplined people, disciplined thought, and disciplined action” (Feller, 2003, p. 8).
The understanding of succession planning is critical to our society. Likewise, it is critical to the future of Catholic education especially in those institutions sponsored by religious communities. There is an increased difficulty in filling administrative leadership positions in Catholic education both in America and in other countries (Canavan, 2001, p. 73). Leadership personnel, in order to continue the mission of Catholic education with qualified, mission-oriented personnel, must begin to develop frameworks and/or management processes that will be of assistance in planning strategically for educational leadership (Canavan, 2001, p. 73).

Educational leadership personnel who minister at the diocesan level must begin to work with local leadership in succession planning. The leadership needed to continue the legacy of excellence requires what Collins calls Level 5 leaders. Collins developed a hierarchy of leadership based on five levels. The level 5 leader is “more like that of a chief operating officer not a manager” (Fullan, 2003, p. 11). The Level 5 leader builds greatness by leaving behind leaders in every aspect of the school community. If leadership succession planning exists, then those responsible will find in the leaders left behind, a great leader.

Succession leadership has two working definitions used by many of the large corporations on the Fortune 100 list. The first states that succession planning is the deliberate and systematic effort to project leadership requirements, to identify a pool of high-potential candidates, to develop leadership competencies in these candidates through intentional learning experiences, and then to select leaders from the pool of potential leaders. The second definition is strategic, systematic, and deliberate activity to ensure an organization’s future capability to fill vacancies without patronage or
fervorism (Tropiano, 2004). Top organizational leaders commit themselves at the outset of their careers to involvement in the search for future corporate leaders. For succession planning to succeed the CEO must work with top executives as they advise the identified future leaders throughout the workplace. Developing the workforce means that human capital professionals from within the company or hired for this particular service, become involved in every aspect of the succession planning.

Visioning the essentials for successful succession planning requires a finely honed concentration on the future of the organization. Human capital professionals ask what the CEO position will look like in five years and what competencies will be required to lead the organization (Tropiano, 2004). Organizations look at their vision, mission, and values to determine the kind of person needed to take the company into the next phase. It is important to identify significant positions and to increase understanding of the competencies required for success in those positions.

Budett (2005) maintains that a good succession planning process involves four steps:

1. Identify key management and executive positions; develop clear and comprehensive role descriptions; profile the technical and behavioral competencies that contribute to success in the role.

2. Identify individuals with the potential to grow into those roles; profile their technical and behavioral competencies.

3. Document the competency "gaps" between the position requirements and the individual targeted for development; prepare a personal development plan to address those needs.

4. Arrange mentoring support for the individual and monitor the progress throughout the development period. (p. 1)
Most important to the success of succession planning are the skills of interpersonal communication and relationship building. Technical knowledge and skills are important to leadership but not without the relational component. To build relational components into leadership positions RBC Financial Group's management team directed leader-facilitated discussions, which they called RBC Leadership Dialogues (Ready, 2004). The dialogues surfaced issues like risk taking, resolving conflicts, and the tensions of leadership and delegation of power. "The dialogues and exchanges opened the lines of communication, generated free-flowing conversations, and allowed as many people as possible to put their thumb-prints on the company" (Ready, 2004, p. 97).

Future leadership in any organization depends on the ability of the top executives to solve problems using the settings at hand to motivate and challenge their workforce.

Top organizations like Boeing, Corning, and Colgate-Palmolive want to be ready with a clear view of current and future needs and with carefully tended pools of candidates to fill the CEO positions (Charan, 2005). Finding a leader causes internal conflict in an organization unless prior planning occurred among top executive officers and boards. Companies must do three things to ensure the success of a future CEO (a) develop a pool of possible leaders from within the organization and provide them with continuing professional development, (b) boards must develop and maintain a succession plan that constitutes what the organization needs and wants from its leadership, (c) The executive search committees must be exacting in what is needed for the organization (Charan, 2005, p. 74).

Succeeding at succession planning requires diligence on the part of the organization and the board. Long before the existing CEO gives notice that he/she is
leaving the position board members should spend approximately 15% of their time in
session discussing succession planning. The potential pool of candidates becomes part of
the board's discussion. Leading candidates should be invited to board meetings and
informal sessions where they can interact with board members. The board's
understanding of the CEO position is critical to the triumph of succession planning. One
of the primary responsibilities of the board is to appoint a search committee. The task of
the search committee is to identify the leadership qualities they are looking for in a CEC.

There is a shift from the local marketplace to the global marketplace and
not all top executives are capable of handling that paradigm shift (Green, Hassan, Brounelt,
Marks, & Meiland, 2003). Base level concentration in marketing and making high-
quality contacts are necessary leadership abilities. However, today's leaders must add the
component of global communication to their abilities repertoire (Ready, 2004).
Leadership development that is forward looking into the global marketplace builds on the
top executives who can "manage the inherent tensions between unit and enterprise
priorities" (Ready, 2004, p. 94).

The leadership style most organizations look for is a combination of quantitative
measurable performance, such as experiences in big business ventures and the softer
qualitative attributes which reveal the candidate's visioning, ability to inspire, passion,
conviction and leadership (Atkins, 2005). Leadership style directly affects the
organization's ability to accept the new CEO and begin to trust his/her abilities to move
the company into new waters. This is difficult for some boards especially when they
exist in a vacuum. Leadership, particularly new leadership, tends to stir the waters and
strike at the foundations of comfortable board members. The task of the new leadership is to inspire the board members to a new vision, a new dynamic.

Succession leadership requires that companies begin to plan with their Board of Trustees a dynamic strategy that involves three basic criteria: seek to develop a pool of internal candidates who consistently receive professional development especially in leadership training. Included in this pool are candidates from different levels of the company. Leadership exists at all levels of the company not only at the top. Second, the board must regularly update their plan and process regarding decisions about candidates. Third, if the director is looking for an outside candidate, he/she must dictate the executive search process (Churan, 2005).

Successful succession planning is never a "quick fix." Rather, it is decades of decisions that reflect profound attention to the mission and vision of a company. It is the steady evaluation of candidates over years of service, which generates strong, dedicated leaders. Nothing else affects a company so profoundly as the time and energy invested in succession planning.

Leadership succession planning in the educational arena must look at the corporate models to begin the process of developing successful leadership. This is true in the public sector as well as in the Catholic institutions. This action is the key to the future of Catholic schools and especially those schools sponsored by religious communities of men and women. Catholic schools have two options. The first is to wait until a vacancy occurs and then put into place a search committee to find a suitable replacement. The second is to develop a succession planning process, which ensures that
suitable leadership candidates who have received consistent professional leadership development are available for the position (Caravac, 2001).

Sustainable leadership, which produces effects over time and which continues from one leader to the next, is not happening in today's educational systems. Initiating candidates into a leadership program requires a succession planning process. There is a need to set goals, to identify leadership requirements and standards, and to set up a process to identify the potential leaders. The success of the plan depends on the commitment to the vision, mission, and values of the educational institution. This means that all members of the institution understand, believe, and can articulate the mission, vision and values of the institution.

Summary

The literature review provided a theoretical paradigm for a theory of succession leadership advocated by this researcher. The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth as they relate to charism, mission, and vision in relationship to educational leadership and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. This researcher looked at sponsorship and succession leadership planning in relationship to mission, vision, and charism.

Religious life in the new millennium faces a critical juncture. Aging communities and fewer members compels Congregational leaders to look with new eyes at the changing culture of vocations and to the new leaders of Catholic education. Sponsored works in a religious congregation refers to those institutions owned and controlled by a religious congregation. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth own five
Catholic secondary academies for young women. Four of the five academies, located in Essex and Hudson counties, educate the urban poor and one academy located in Morris County educates the middle to upper middle class.

Sponsorship by its very nature is relational. The sponsorship relationship implies responsibilities on the part of the sponsoring institution and the sponsored work. Once the relational lines are understood, the “effectiveness of the common mission” can advance to its fullest capacity (Sponsorship Manual of the Sisters of Charity, 2005, p. 1). Sponsorship of educational works like the five secondary academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth calls for a new perspective on leadership. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are guardians of a productive, admirable, and cherished tradition in the ministry of education. The next step is to continue the mission and vision of the Congregation by collaboration and shared leadership with the next generation of sponsors.

The understanding of succession leadership planning is critical to our society. Likewise, it is critical to the future of Catholic education especially to the Sisters of Charity and the five sponsored academies. Congregational leadership, in order to continue the Sister of Charity mission of Catholic education in the five sponsored academies, with qualified mission personnel, must begin to develop new paradigms that will be supportive in strategic planning for educational leadership.
Chapter III
METHODOLOGY
Introduction

This research is a qualitative study to examine the data that will be needed for the leadership of the Religious Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth to continue their mission in the five sponsored secondary academies. The fundamental characteristics of mission, vision, and charism will need to be identified as the shift continues from religious leadership to lay leadership.

In this qualitative study, the researcher will use an interview protocol to gather data from the Sisters of Charity Leadership Council, educational administrators, teachers, and health care professionals committed to the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. The researcher will analyze the data to respond to the research questions relating to mission, charism, vision, and sponsorship as stated in Chapter I of this research. The procedure that will be used to analyze and report the data is cross-case analysis. This researcher will obtain extensive data from the interview process. Patton (2002) considers that the purpose of interviewing is “to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective” (p. 341). The interviews will be systematically reduced using coding, note taking, and comparative analysis. This researcher will generate interpretations of the interviews from the context analysis.

Literature pertaining to succession leadership in the Catholic schools and especially in those sponsored by religious communities is scarce. Although religious women and men who choose the ministry of education have diminished in number, qualified laity in large numbers continue to choose to minister within the Catholic school
system. Creswell (1994) explains that one characteristic of qualitative research problems is "the concept is 'immature' due to a conspicuous lack of theory and previous research" (p. 146). This researcher will attempt to provide an understanding of the phenomenon of educational works sponsored by religious congregations. Qualitative research has a distinct beginning and end. It begins when the researcher identifies the problem and ends when the researcher explains the conclusions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Research in the area of succession leadership for educational administrative positions is scarce particularly in the private sector regarding sponsored works of a religious congregation. This chapter is divided into four areas to explain the research process: research design, data collection procedures, instrumentation, and analysis of the data.

Research Questions

This research probes the following questions: (a) What leadership characteristics do the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey consider vital and nonnegotiable for lay administrators whom they hire to lead their sponsored academies? (b) How will the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth develop a process to identify those characteristics? (c) What steps have the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth taken to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership of their sponsored schools so that their mission, vision, and charisma continue into the new millennium?

Research Design

Qualitative research is interpretative and suggest four structures: the setting, the respondents, the events, and the process. The procedure that will be used to collect data for this research is the standardized, open-ended interview process. Qualitative research will provide the best method to uncover the complexities that exist regarding the
leadership succession that will be needed to continue the educational work of the sponsored academies owned by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research places emphasis on descriptions that are comprehensive in detail [(Creswell, 1994; Miles & Huberman, 1998; Patton, 2002; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).]

The researcher may emphasize certain key questions during the interviews by using a guided approach. In this way, the researcher will capture the complexities of the individual respondents. Respondents who are knowledgeable about the research will be excellent sources of germane information regarding the past and present [(Patton, 2002, Fraenkel, & Wallen, 2000, Fettermann 1988).]

For this research, the participants will be selected based on their roles of administrative leadership, their educational leadership and their capacity to understand the nature of sponsorship, mission, and charisma in a religious congregation. Those chosen for the interview process will possess vital information regarding leadership, sponsorship, mission, vision, and charisma. These respondents will be major contributors to the knowledge base that will be needed for this research.

Fifteen persons will be chosen to participate in the interview process. This researcher will develop questions relevant to mission, vision, charisma, leadership, and sponsorship. The participants who will be chosen for this research include the General Superior of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, a member of the General Council who is involved in education, two health care administrators, the five principals of the sponsored academies, one teacher from each of the academies, and one Sister of Charity who is involved in mission and charisma. This researcher will choose the teachers by
random sampling. The administrator of each school will be asked to identify female teachers who have been associated with the sponsored academy for at least 3 years. The principals will then submit those names to the researcher who will choose, by random sampling, two teachers from each school. The random sampling will be systematic so that each teacher in the sample has an equal probability of being selected. Every third and fifth teacher on the list will be selected for the interview process. Only one teacher from each academy will be interviewed. The other teacher selected from each of the academies will be used in case one elects not to be part of the research.

Data Collection Procedures

Each participant in the research will receive a letter and a follow-up telephone call to request collaboration in the research project. In the letter, the researcher will explain the focus of the research and the criteria for selection. Proceeding the interview process, the participants will complete demographic information (see Appendix B) concerning their position, number of years in that position, highest degree attained, and preparation for their leadership and/or teaching position. The researcher will enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope for each participant.

Fifteen standardized, open-ended interviews will take place with the significant members of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, including health care administrators, and the educational personnel from the five sponsored academies. Prior to the interviews, this researcher will send a letter (see Appendix C) to the Major Superior of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth requesting permission to carry out this research with the five sponsored academies. See (Appendix D for the letter received from the Major Superior giving her consent to the research.)
The participants will sign a Consent Form (see Appendix E) which will assure anonymity, the right to withdraw from the process, permission to tape the interviews, and the permission to use quotations from the transcribed text in the study. The taped interviews will last approximately one hour. The interviews will take place in the individual academies and occur after school hours. The researcher will make multiple visits to the academies to gather the data and for follow-up interviews as needed.

The fundamental purpose of this research will be to determine how real collaboration will take place between the leadership of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and the laity who will continue the mission of education in the five sponsored academies. Sponsorship works when the "sense of collaboration between religious and laity has been genuine and strong and has imprinted the lay staff with a very strong sense of the core value of the religious order" (Kelly, 1996, p. 10).

Instrumentation

The researcher will develop an interview protocol based on the research questions. There will be nine consistent interview questions. As each interview unfolds, the researcher will ask unique questions, which are germane to the role of the respondent.

The following questions will direct the interviews with the General Council members, administrators, teachers, and health care administrators:

1. How would you describe your ministry in the sponsored work of the Sisters of Charity?

2. What motivates you to minister in a Sister of Charity institution?

3. What are the mission, vision, and particular charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth? How do you carry out the mission and vision in your particular leadership role?
4. How has the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity helped you to improve your ministry? What suggestions would you have to assist the Congregation to advance your ministry?

5. What do you understand when you hear the term “sponsorship”? Do you see a correlation between your place of ministry and the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth?

6. What do you understand the difference to be between ministry and mission? How does your relationship with the ministry help you to live the mission of the Sisters of Charity?

7. In looking for solutions to the challenges that you encounter every day, how do you see the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity helping you?

8. What characteristics do you see as necessary in your role as a leader in a Sister of Charity sponsored work?

9. How would your ministry be strengthened if you were sure of leadership succession in your role as a leader?

10. How does your ministry affect your spirituality? How does the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity influence your spirituality?

In the Table 1, the researcher will show the research questions, how the guided questions relate to the research questions, and a sampling of the questions that are relevant to each of the respondents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Guided Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What leadership characteristics do the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey consider vital and non-negotiable for lay administrators when they hire to lead their sponsored academies?</td>
<td>1. How would you describe your ministry in the sponsored work of the Sisters of Charity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. What motivates you to minister in a Sister of Charity institution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. What are the mission, vision, and particular charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth? How do you carry out the mission and vision in your particular leadership role?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. How has the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity helped you to improve your ministry? What suggestions would you have to assist the Congregation to advance your ministry?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. What do you understand when you hear the term, “sponsorship”? Do you see a correlation between your place of ministry and the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. What do you understand the difference to be between ministry and mission? How does your relationship with the ministry help you to live the mission of the Sisters of Charity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. In looking for solutions to the challenges that you encounter every day, how do you see the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity helping you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. What characteristics do you see as necessary in your role as a leader in a Sister of Charity sponsored work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. How would your ministry be strengthened if you were free of leadership succession in your role as a leader?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey develop a process to identify those characteristics?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. How does your ministry affect your spirituality? How does the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity influence your spirituality?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The researcher will use follow-up questions to explore the interviewee's responses. The queries will be informal, natural, and of a conversational style. Each thorough interview will include the basic who, what, when, where and how questions used to gain a total picture of the experience of being associated with a Sister of Charity sponsored work (Patton, 2002). The researcher will relate the questions to the interviewee's role in the sponsored work of the Sisters of Charity.

Data Analysis

The procedure that will be used to analyze and report the data is cross-case analysis. The researcher will be looking for patterns and themes that develop. The researcher will be flexible when reporting the data. The analysis, interpretation, and reporting of the data will confirm the findings the researcher gained in the interview process. The researcher will use cross-case analysis to group together the answers from the different respondents to common questions. An analysis of different perspectives on central issues will be used to group together significant central issues. The challenge facing the researcher will be to simplify and make sense of the complexity of the data (Creswell, 1994; Patton, 2002).

To ensure the confidentiality of each of the respondents, this researcher will code the responses according to the five categories of participants using the word SETON. The manner in which this researcher will code the information will form the emerging images that will become the heart of the research. The researcher will segment the information and establish themes to make judgments that provide variations in the reliability of diverse conclusions (Patton, 2006; Tesch, 1990). The findings in this research will center on the rich description and interconnectedness that joins the
participants to one another through their immersion in the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. The participants' responses to the interview questions will be reflected in rich, narrative description.

This description will provide the structure for pattern, theme, and content analysis of the questions examining the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity. The description will explain how they relate to charism, mission, vision, and sponsorship in relationship to educational leadership and in particular to succession leadership in the five sponsored academies.

Summary

This research will focus on succession leadership planning for the five sponsored secondary academies owned by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. It will describe and investigate the nuances of those responses directly related to the problem of leadership faced by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. This researcher will use, as the primary source of data, the interview method. The data will provide an understanding of the degrees of significance of the various findings. The researcher will report these findings in Chapter IV in a fashion that will provide an awareness of the needs of the Sisters of Charity regarding the characteristics necessary for succession leadership in the five sponsored academies.
Chapter IV
RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity as they relate to charism, mission, and vision in relationship to educational leadership and, in particular, to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. This study endeavored to reveal the characteristics necessary to continue quality leadership in the sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

This research studied the mission, vision, and charism of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey in relationship to leadership succession theory, educational leadership, and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored secondary academies owned by the Congregation. The research questions answered in the data gathered by this researcher are as follows:

1. What leadership characteristics do the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey consider vital and nonnegotiable for lay administrators whom they hire to lead their sponsored academies?

2. How will the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey develop a process to identify those characteristics?

3. What steps have the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey taken to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership of their sponsored schools so that their mission, vision, and charism continue into the new millennium?
The organization of the Chapter IV is as follows: (a) summary of the study, (b) the nature of the study, (c) presentation of the findings, and (d) qualitative results of the interview protocol. This Chapter was organized in this way to give clarity to the presentation of the data. The results of the data were used to respond to the three research questions presented in Chapter I and the Introduction of Chapter IV. The results included the qualitative data resulting from the interviews. The questions asked in the interviews were derived from the variables of mission, vision, charismatic ministry, sponsorship, leadership, succession leadership, and spirituality. The interviewees' reflections were based on their perceptions of the variables.

Summary of the Study

The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth sponsors five Catholic secondary academies for young women. Sponsorship is a term used to describe the relationship between a religious congregation and a particular ministry for which the congregation has responsibility. The five secondary academies have always prepared their young women spiritually in the tenets of the Catholic faith, academically, and socially, to take their places in society. The core of the sponsored academies is interdependence among Board members, administration, Congregational members, teachers, parents, and students.

The five secondary academies located in North Jersey are the Academy of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, the Academy of Saint Aloysius, Jersey City, Sacred Heart Academy, Hoboken, Saint Vincent Academy, Newark, and Marylawn Academy, South Orange. The principals of the five secondary academies meet five times each school year at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity for a Principals' Leadership Meeting. Also,
during the school year, the teachers of the five academies participate in an In-service Day held at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Charity. The five principals, and the Coordinator of Educational Services who is a member of the Sisters of Charity, plan this professional development day. The principals, their Boards, and Advisory Boards are offered trustee educational opportunities on sponsorship by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity.

The five academies owned and operated by the Sisters of Charity face three significant challenges: the challenges that face religious communities today; the challenges facing education today; and the challenges that face Catholic education in particular (Kelly, 1996). For approximately 35 years, the roles of sponsorship and the relationship of the sponsor to the sponsored work have developed into a give and take relationship that enhances both the Congregation and the sponsored academies.

As stated in Chapter II, "faith leader generally refers to persons who have responsibilities to foster the integration of Catholic faith in the school's curriculum and all of its other activities" (Hunt, Ellis, Joseph, & Nuzzo, 2004, p. 293). Religious women and men pioneered the legacy of leadership in the Catholic school system. Today the Catholic laity are the inheritors of that legacy.

This study focused on the characteristics necessary for leadership succession in the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity. Four of the five academies sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are located in urban areas. The five secondary academies continue to change with the times to compete in the educational marketplace. An example of this is Marylawn Academy, founded in 1935 by a group of wealthy parents who wanted a private education for their young daughters.
Today, Marylhawn educates the economically poor young women from the inner cities of Newark, Irvington, and Maplewood. Senge (1990) maintains that recognizing and accepting change means balancing the core beliefs with modern theory which requires a “new model that operates in a continual learning mode, creating change” (p. 349).

Like many other religious congregations, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth experienced the decline in religious vocations and the withdrawal of religious women from Catholic education following Vatican II. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the leadership of the religious congregations and in particular, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, to recognize and cultivate the abilities of the Catholic Laity for leadership positions in the five sponsored academies.

Nature of the Study

For this research, the sample was selected based on positions of administrative leadership with the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity, Health Administration, and Educational leadership. The capacity to understand the nature of sponsorship, mission, and charism in a religious congregation was an important quality for this sample because mission effectiveness is a high priority in leadership in a sponsored academy. Those chosen for the interview process possessed vital information regarding leadership, sponsorship, mission, vision, and charism and were major contributors to the knowledge base that was needed for this research.

Twelve persons participated in the interview process. This researcher developed questions relevant to the variables of mission, vision, charism, ministry, sponsorship, leadership, succession leadership, and spirituality. The participants chosen for this research included the General Superior of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, a
member of the General Council of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity who is involved in education, one healthcare administrator from the Congregation, the five principals of the sponsored academies, three teachers from three of the academies, and one Sister of Charity who is involved in the Mission and Clarism services. This researcher chose the teachers by random sampling. The administrator of each school was asked to identify female teachers who have been associated with the sponsored academy for at least three years. The principals submitted those names to the researcher who chose, by random sampling, two teachers from each school. The random sampling was systematic so that each teacher in the sample had an equal probability of being selected. Every third and fifth teacher on the list was selected for the interview process. Only one teacher from each academy was selected to be interviewed. The other teacher selected from each of the academies would be used in case one elected not to be part of the research.

Each participant in the sample completed a short demographic survey and answered 10 interview questions. The demographic survey provided information regarding the participants’ professional background. Table 2 in this Chapter IV represents the demographic information about the respondents regarding their position status, number of years in the position, highest degree, and connection to the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. The demographic table was coded using the word “S E T O N” to protect anonymity and confidentiality. In looking at the data for Table I - Demographic Information of the Participants – this researcher noticed that in S - 1 through S - 5 only two participants indicated commitment to educational administration of more than 3 years. S - 5 served in her position for 36 years. The next longest tenure is
S - 1 with 14 years. It is important to note that S - 2, S - 3 and S - 5 are Sisters of Charity, S - 4 is a Sister from another Religious Congregation, and S - 1 is a laywoman. Although it is not on the Table, it is important to state that Sisters who may indicate service of only 3 years may have served in other sponsored institutions for 10 or more years. This is important because the roots of the sponsorship relationship are a unique ministerial calling within the Congregation and within the Church. Each of the participants from S - 1 through S - 5 has a Masters Degree. Three of the five have their degrees in Administration. S - 4 has her degree in Counseling and S - 5 has her degree in Communication Arts.

E - 1 and E - 2 both Sisters of Charity have been in their respective positions for 2 years. Positions T and O, both Sisters of Charity, have served for 2 years and 6 years respectively in their positions in sponsored institutions of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. It is interesting to note that compared to those serving from S - 1 to S - 5, the Sisters from E, T, and O have served less time in the sponsored works. However, it is important to note that Sisters serving in these particular designated leadership areas may also have served on other leadership positions in the sponsored works of this Congregation.

Positions N - 1, N - 2, and N - 3 have served in the sponsored works the longest time of any population and two of them were laywomen. N - 1 and N - 2 have Masters Degrees and N - 3 has a Bachelor of Science degree. N - 1 and N - 3 have been with their sponsored work for their entire professional careers. N - 2 has been with her sponsored work for 16 years. While 11 of the 12 participants in the sample have Masters Degrees, no one has a doctorate or an advanced degree.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position, S E T O N</th>
<th>Number of Years in Current Position</th>
<th>Sitter of Charity</th>
<th>Highest Degree Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S-1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>MA Administration/Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA Administration/Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA Education/Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>MA Education/Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA Communication Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA Religious Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA Administration/Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O-1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA French Certification Administration/Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N-1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>MA Educational Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N-2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA Administration/Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N-3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>MS History and English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The context for this research is based on the fundamentals necessary to determine how real collaboration will take place between the leadership of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and the laity who will continue the mission of education in the five...
sponsored academies. Sponsorship works when the "sense of collaboration between religious and laity has been genuine and strong and has imprinted the lay staff with a very strong sense of the core value of the religious order" (Kelly, 1996, p. 10).

The interview questions related to mission, vision, charism, ministry, sponsorship, leadership, succession leadership, and spirituality. This study probed into the charism, mission, and vision of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey in relationship to leadership succession theory, educational leadership, and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored secondary academies owned by the Congregation.

This researcher used an interview guide to ensure that the same basic lines of inquiry were pursued with each person interviewed. The interview guide provided topics or subject areas within which the interviewer was free to explore, probe, and ask questions that would elucidate and illuminate that particular subject (Patton, 2002, p. 343).

Presentation of the Data

The data presented in this section was used to respond to the three research questions addressed in Chapter I. Stated in the introduction to this chapter, this research studied the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey in relationship to succession leadership theory, educational leadership, and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored secondary academies owned by the Congregation. The three research questions answered in this study were: (a) What leadership characteristics do the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey consider vital and nonnegotiable for lay administrators whom they hire to lead their
sponsored Academies? (b) How will the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey develop a process to identify those characteristics? (c) What steps have the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey taken to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership of their sponsored schools so that their mission, vision, and charism continue into the new millennium?

Before analyzing the data in this chapter, this researcher briefly explained each of the variables to clarify the data relating to the variables as they formed a basis for answering the three research questions stated in Chapter I. The data presented in this section includes the interviewees' perceptions of mission, vision, charism, ministry, sponsorship, succession, leadership, and spirituality. Each variable, for the purpose of this study, described a connection between congregational community and ecclesiastical leadership in the five sponsored academies. Mission, vision, and charism are three variables that were understood by all of the respondents as united under the one umbrella of mission. The mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, to be authentic, must be a sign of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. The mission of the Congregation is its reason for living. Therefore, the mission of the Congregation must encompass all of the ministries associated with the Congregation. Terry upholds mission as the "statement that defines the organization" (p. 40).

The vision of the Sisters of Charity is to make God known in the world. This is done through the ministries of education, healthcare, and social work. The vision and the mission flow from the traditions of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. A sense of vision and mission provides the stakeholders the motivation they need to accomplish their goals.
The charism of the Sisters of Charity is rooted in the lives of the Founders Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac in the 1690’s and Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton in the 1800’s. One of the respondents in speaking about charism said, 

The distinct charism of the Sisters of Charity is charity. We do that in the Vincentian, Sosionian traditions of serving the poor and the underserved, in the name of love, the love of God, which impels us.

Ministry finds its inspiration in mission. Ministry in terms of education is modeled on Jesus. The ministry of the Sisters of Charity issues from the mission, which is to live the mission of Jesus.

The concept of sponsorship describes the relationship between an organizational ministry and the association identified as sponsor. In this case, the five academies are the sponsored works and the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is the religious community. Grant (2003) affirms that the sponsored works of religious communities reflect the “focus, energy and personnel, the most tangible manifestation of its gifts to the Church and the people of God” (p. 2).

Succession leadership is a term that occurs in the corporate marketplace rather than the Catholic educational ministry. With the change from religious leadership to lay leadership, succession planning is vital. This scarcity of leadership is not just in the Catholic sector but it also affects the public sector of education. (However, this research did not review succession leadership planning in the public sector.) Succession planning is designed to nurture the talent pool that exists in every school and every school district and to groom that pool in supervisory competence (Quinn, 2002). Leadership personnel, in order to continue the mission of Catholic education with qualified, mission-oriented
personnel, must begin to develop frameworks and/or management processes that will be of assistance in planning strategically for educational leadership (Canavan, 2001, p. 75).

Spirituality is the nucleus of all the variables because it provides the impetus for ministry and mission. One respondent expressed spirituality’s effects in this way.

Spirituality gives you a greater sense of the Body of Christ and how the parts work together. It calls you to a greater sense of Eucharist in the sense of strengthening the Body, renewing your own resources.

One of the principals spoke about the spirituality of her students affecting her spirituality. She commented,

The students here and their spirituality are what really strengthen rains. And, it’s often not the Catholic students where that happens.

Throughout the interviews, the researcher focused on the characteristics necessary for sustained leadership in the five sponsored academies. Clearly, three of the five populations understood the complexities of succession leadership and mission effectiveness. One member of Congregational leadership commented on succession leadership in this way,

Succession leadership requires that people are willing to put themselves forward, and that we nurture and mentor people in those roles. I think some people have done that better than others.

The Sister associated with Healthcare Administration described the health organizations as “spending a lot more time on leadership development.” She continued to say,
Leadership development is not a willy-nilly thing, and it does not happen by osmosis. I think it is important for succession leadership planning. We are not too good at that. I think that in order for us to ensure that these institutions are sustained over time in the way that we want them to be, we have to plan for succession.

Three of the five principals value succession leadership planning as a means to building up a new breed of leadership for the academies. One principal commented,

Certainly, I would be very strengthened if I knew someone was being groomed to take my place. I think that would help because what happens, particularly in school situations is people hang on because there is no one coming behind them and they don't want to just let it just die. I would be very strengthened if we could all be assured that a pool of people were being groomed in leadership to take our places in the academies.

Sister of Charity leadership presence has a significant influence on the overall life and mission in a sponsored academy. With the decline of women to religious life and women religious choosing professions other than education, the presence of Sisters of Charity in leadership positions in the five sponsored academies will be less and less.

Research Questions

The three research questions were answered from the data presented in the following subsections. The answers represent the perceptions and experiences of the sample population.
1. What leadership characteristics do the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey consider vital and nonnegotiable for lay administrators whom they hire to lead their sponsored academies?

In the research, the leadership characteristics that the five populations considered vital and nonnegotiable for lay administrators flowed from the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. One of the respondents from Congregational leadership stated that an administrator must be committed to the mission of the Sisters of Charity. Mission integration is the heart of the sponsored work. Every person involved in the sponsored work, whatever his/her capacity, must know and understand the mission of the institution. Grant (2003) emphasizes the importance of knowing the mission and commitment to fulfilling it. One of the academy principals expressed her understanding of mission as "what drives us and gives us our direction."

Faith is the cornerstone of educational leadership and Catholic identity for Catholic schools. In Catholic schools, "faith leader generally refers to persons who have responsibilities to foster the integration of Catholic faith in the school's curriculum and all of its other activities" (Hunt, Joseph, Ellis, & Nuzzi, 2004, p. 293). The faith leader is usually the principal of the school and she/he cultivates that faith relationship with faculty, staff, students, and parents. The administrator of the sponsored academies would be committed to the Catholic faith and to Catholic education. The respondent from Mission and Charism services stated,

You have to be very forthright and speak to what you believe. You have to speak out. I feel that is one of the pieces that we have to keep calling ourselves to. I
believe it is important that in our academies, our administrators be committed to the Catholic faith and to Catholic education.

The Sister from Healthcare spoke clearly her belief in the importance of appropriate formation programs in what it means to be a leader in an institution that is both Catholic and sponsored by a Religious Congregation:

I think anybody in senior leadership really needs to have a formal formation/educational program in leadership in a Catholic institution and in a Sister of Charity sponsored institution. I think that is critical. I think that some of the institutions have encouraged that. I'm not sure that the Community has encouraged it from the top, but I think that that may be coming with some of the work that is being done now on sponsorship.

Each of the respondents in the leadership positions in the Congregation agreed that in order for the ministry to be effective, spirituality had to have a strong basis in each of their lives. The Sisters in leadership positions in the Congregation have a compelling impact on the leadership of the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. The concept of spirituality appears to be a vital and nonnegotiable characteristic for future leaders of the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

A further non-negotiable leadership characteristic for lay administrators is a clear understanding of the role of sponsorship. In May 2004, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth published a statement on sponsorship. In this statement, the Congregation defined sponsorship as a formal relationship between the Sisters of Charity of Saint
Elizabeth and a particular ministry. The Sisters of Charity, through action of its designated leadership, exercises its responsibility for the ministry, which, in turn, carries out the Congregation’s mission. This sponsorship relationship ensures organizational fidelity to mission, values, and Catholic identity (Sponsorship Statement, 2004). One respondent from Congregational leadership reflected on the sponsorship relationship in this way,

It is this very important relationship, which means that there has to be congruence between the mission of the sponsoring group and mission of the institution. They are not the same. You have to be certain that the missions are in congruence, one with the other. The second thing is there are certain legal and canonical responsibilities that you have to which you have to pay attention. In addition, I think that the other thing is that you need to pay attention to your ability to sustain the relationship. That is very critical.

Competency and preparation for the position of administrator in an educational setting is a non-negotiable leadership characteristic. One of the respondents from Congregational leadership stated,

I think first, you have to be competent in doing what you are hired to do. I think that is critical. Moreover, the more competent you are, the better you are living the mission.

One of the Sisters from Congregational leadership stated that articulation and collaboration are important leadership characteristics for the administrators of the five sponsored academies. She expressed her thoughts in this way,
I think the ability to be articulate and the willingness to risk are important. It is particularly important to be articulate about the vision and mission of the Sisters of Charity. The ability to risk and be a person in dialogue and have good dialogue skills is important. You cannot do this job unless you have administration skills. Relational skills and the ability to work well with people are important because you work with people in so many different ways in all areas. So those are, I would think, key skills.

2. How will the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey develop a process to identify those characteristics?

The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey will develop a process to identify those characteristics of leadership for future leaders in the five academies through the Sponsorship Office. The Director of Sponsorship, when appointed by the General Superior and the Council of the Sisters of Charity, will collaborate with the principals, Boards of Trustees and Advisory Boards, and members of the faculties of the five academies.

Presently three administrators of the five academies are Sisters of Charity, one administrator is a religious from another Congregation, and one administrator is a laywoman. No significant process exists to identify the characteristics for future leadership. As Sisters of Charity resign from the position of administrator, the Board of Trustees or Advisory Board establishes a steering committee for selection of the new administrator. However, the criteria for selection is not exclusive to Sisters of Charity needs but is based on a diocesan model.
The need is to move from a reactionary stance to a responsive posture regarding a process for identifying lay leadership for the sponsored academies. The time is now for Congregational leadership to engage the members of Congregation, the present administration of the sponsored academies, and members of the governance of the academies to form committees to develop a process of leadership succession, which will ensure the continuity of the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity.

In 1998, on the feast of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth established a Seton Scholars for Educational Leadership Program to strengthen the mission of education in the five sponsored academies into the new millennium. The leadership program was in partnership with the College of Saint Elizabeth. Each participant would receive a Masters Degree in Educational Administration/Supervision. The Seton Scholars Program did not succeed. Considering the recent research on succession leadership planning, a program to develop future leaders for the five sponsored academies would ensure the mission of the Sisters of Charity for the future.

The understanding of succession planning is critical to our society. Likewise, it is critical to the future of Catholic education especially in those institutions sponsored by religious communities. There is an increased difficulty in filling administrative leadership positions in Catholic education. Leadership personnel, in order to continue the mission of Catholic education with qualified, mission-oriented personnel, must begin to develop frameworks and/or management processes that will be of assistance in planning strategically for educational leadership (Canavan, 2001, p. 75).
All of the components to develop a process to identify the leadership for the sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are in place but Congregational leadership must sound the call to action.

3. What steps have the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey taken to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership of their sponsored schools so that their mission, vision, and charism continue into the new millennium?

After completing the research and the interview protocol, no clear transition exists within Congregational leadership that ensures a smooth transition from religious to lay leadership in the sponsored academies. A Director of Sponsorship Services will be appointed by Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity to ensure sponsorship effectiveness of all sponsored and co-sponsored works; to serve as a resource to sponsored works in interpreting the sponsorship relationship; to evaluate potential new sponsorship opportunities; and to prepare for sponsorship of the future. The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity is preparing a Sponsorship Manual, which will be directed to the leadership in the sponsored works, their mission delegates, Chairpersons of Boards and Advisory Boards, and to Sisters of Charity Trustees and Advisory Board members. The primary purpose of the manual is to further the understanding of the sponsorship relationship, and to understand the responsibilities and expectations of the sponsor and the sponsored work. Both the Director of Sponsorship and the Sponsorship Manual will assist in identifying steps in the transition from religious to lay leadership in the sponsored academies.

Quinn (2002) identifies several steps that can be taken in the leadership succession planning process: (a) Design and initiate a screening process that will
encourage those teachers who have demonstrated necessary skills and competencies in such areas as knowledge of instruction, a keen work ethic, organizational expertise, communication skills, and the ability to analyze complex issues. (b) Teachers who are seeking or who already possess a Masters Degree and state certification may fill the competencies criteria. (c) Teachers whose daily performance distinguishes them as potential leaders. (d) Self-nomination can also be used as an approach to identify leaders.

In two of the five academies, two leadership developments exist that complement succession leadership planning. First, the principals do not work in isolation but at team leaders. The spirit and model of collaboration are examples for the school community, which fosters the concept of leadership. In addition, collaboration is one of the characteristics seen as nonnegotiable for a leader in a sponsored academy. Second, the principals are preparing potential leaders for future leadership either for that particular academy or for Catholic leadership in another school through professional development and leadership responsibilities within their schools.

All five populations responded affirmatively to mission continuity, which recognizes that the role of leadership in the academies is significant among the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity. One respondent offered this reflection on mission and continuity, which offered hope for the development of a protocol for future leaders:

We are doing the mission. You need to hear that back from the students. It is a daily conscious effort on our part from the prayers that are said to the curriculum to the nurturing. We do a good job of that. I love working with the Sisters of Charity. That sense of openness and the sense of mission are all things I wholeheartedly believe in. Therefore, when you have all of that affirmed, it really
enhances your purpose and your mission. It is supportive and very
nourishing to me. That is why I continue to do it.

At this time, no deliberate steps have been taken to ensure mission continuity in
leadership transition in the five academies. The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth must
consider developing a procedure or mentoring program, which will ensure the clear
transition from a religious leader to a lay leader of their sponsored schools so that the
mission, vision, and charism continue into the new millennium.

Mission, Vision, and Charism

The spirit of mission permeated each of the interviews. The mission of the Sisters
of Charity is to live the mission of Jesus as found in Luke’s Gospel “to bring the good
news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the
downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favor” (Luke 4: 18-19). In the tradition
of their founders, the Sisters of Charity participate in this mission through their ministry.
The respondents, although coming from differing backgrounds and leadership positions,
referred to mission as the “overall, compelling thing that keeps everything going.” One
respondent from among the principals expressed her understanding of mission as “what
drives us and gives us our direction.” Keeping the mission strong is what drives the
ministry and is the inspiration for principals. In keeping with the mission of the
Congregation “to bring the good news to the poor and to set the downtrodden free,” one
principal clearly stated,

You really want to stay true to the mission, and certainly, it has been our mission
at the Academy serving the needs of all the students. Again, we have had very
culturally diverse, religiously diverse students and it has been our greatest asset
and our greatest challenge. It is also an energizing challenge because you see on a daily basis the fruits of your labor. The parents are so grateful for what we are doing with the students, because many of them are immigrants. This is their first opportunity to have their children educated in the United States. Moreover, you feel privileged in doing that. You know, you are giving those families a little leg up.

Throughout each of the interviews, the respondents agreed that the leadership is the five sponsored academies required that the individuals be imbued with the mission of the Sisters of Charity. Those responsible for Congregational leadership in the general community of the Sisters of Charity believe that it is very clear from Toward Boundless Charity, the Constitution of the Sisters of Charity, that mission is "to oversee and to ensure the continuation of the mission and charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth." In consultation with a Council delegate, each Sister prayerfully considers the present needs of the ministry in light of her own gifts and talents. Mindful of the needs of the Congregation and the needs of the Church, each Sister chooses her missioning experience. The ministry is in keeping with the mission of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. Being a spokesperson for the Sister of Charity mission actually influences sponsorship especially for leadership personnel in the particular sponsored institutions. In the first research question, which addresses the characteristics of leadership, commitment to the mission emerged as most important because knowing and understanding the mission is, as expressed by one of the principals, "what drives us and gives us our direction."
Mission is clearly distinct from vision, charism, and ministry. Mission expresses the reason the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth exist. From this mission comes the life, energy, and spirit of the Community. The vision exists within the mission and charism. A respondent from Congregational leadership affirmed,

The vision is to continue the mission in new and evolving ways, as well as in those places where we have been, if the need is still there and the mission is visible. Therefore, it is a critiquing of the reality that we find ourselves in, and asking ourselves questions. I think the planning for mission and ministry that we are entering into is another call for us to do that more intentionally and probably more systematically.

One of the respondents stated, "It is not our mission but the mission of the Church." As stated in the Documents of Vatican II, (as cited in Flannery, 1966) "Christ did not bequeath to the Church a mission in the political, economic, or social order: the purpose he assigned to it was religious" (p. 209). The principals of the five sponsored academies trust in the Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity to impart the mission to all those associated with the academies. One of the principals sees the mission of the Sisters of Charity as:

Centered in Gospel values in different areas like healthcare and education. It is like placing themselves (the Sisters) on the side of the Lord and all of the intrinsic issues that go along with that including the social teachings of the Church and all that entails. So, it is pretty broad, as I understand it, but also really then, a focus.
Another principal stated, "I know that I am not in this mission alone." The five principals affirmed that the importance of the mission of the Sisters of Charity is to meet the needs of the poor. One principal expressed her feelings in this way:

There are some aspects of the mission that are very easy to do, because it is just an easy thing. I know that there are differences in serving the needs of our students and it is my willingness to continue here and do what I do on a daily basis. It is the biggest challenge that we have, particularly serving the needs of the poor. We have the poor in our area, and to be able to serve them is a challenge. Thirty-six percent of our students are at the poverty level. Finances are always a huge challenge, education is changing so rapidly, and with that, change is a huge price tag unlike ever before.

Mission integration is at the heart of a sponsored work. Every person involved in the sponsored work, whoever her capacity, must know and understand the mission of the institution. Grant (2004) emphasizes that building community is the only way to "realize full mission integration." (p. 73).

The members of the Sister of Charity Congregational leadership when interviewed emphasized the need to be articulate regarding the mission of the Sisters of Charity. They believe that articulation about the mission involves willingness to risk. There is an opportunity to influence and direct the mission. Having a "voice at the table" provides the opportunity to persuade "our collaborators to share in our vision for the sake of the poor whom we serve." In this case, it would be especially true of those who direct policy and programs for Catholic education. Collaboration and articulation are two qualities of leadership that emerged as leadership characteristics for hiring leaders in the
five sponsored academies. The discovering of these characteristics are important to the responses for the research questions.

The respondent connected to healthcare administration stated with regard to mission that when she speaks "there is a recognition factor that this is somebody who belongs to the organization that sponsors its role." This particular respondent continued stating that the converse of this mission awareness is true when she is able to listen to what her constituents say regarding their needs and their desires.

A member of Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity affirmed the office of mission as "pivotal, a central role especially in this time as more and more laity collaborate with us." The mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is "extremely challenging" because it is to do the "mission of Jesus" from the Gospel of Luke.

The religious women who were interviewed spoke about their experiences with mission as "why we do what we do." These are simple words for so complex an ideal. The mission of the Sisters of Charity is the compelling force that makes their role in the Church and in society different from all other religious communities. As one respondent from the Mission and Charism services stated,

I need to be motivated by mission in my ministry. Why am I doing what I am doing? Am I carrying out the charism and bringing about the spirit of our founders to the people whom I meet? Do I listen to that Gospel quote from Luke to open the eyes of the blind and to serve the poor? That is the mission.

The five principals interviewed believe that the mission of the Sisters of Charity is the heart of the academies. One principal recognized that it was her "responsibility to
stay true to the mission by serving the needs of all students." A principal of one of the academies connected her response to mission to education and justice. She affirmed that the mission of the Sisters of Charity is firmly linked with education. She explained that, my ministry here is education. I am convinced it is the most fundamental work of justice. Once you educate someone, he/she no longer depends on you. In addition, that whole living out of justice, of the call of Jesus, is our mission.

Two academy principals believed that the mission of the Sisters of Charity influenced every aspect of academy life. One principal stated, I keep that mission in mind in everything that we are doing, in literally every decision that we are making, from what to do with the curriculum, the types of activities we have with the students, and our daily interaction with students.

Another academy principal expressed her thoughts about the mission in this way, The mission here at the Academy is to serve the poor. It is to bring freedom to captives in a different sense than in the past. Captives might be kids that are locked into the rock culture and everything else they are dealing with. Some of them are imprisoned, some of them are messed up by their families, and some of them just have no values that we think are so important to be good Christian women.

These statements from the principals regarding commitment to the mission as being a "fundamental work of justice," including decision making regarding curriculum and "bringing freedom to captive young women," reflect back to the characteristics
necessary for leadership in a sponsored academy. This, too, answers the research questions.

Two secondary teachers believe that the mission of the Sisters of Charity is connected to their individual experiences with education. One teacher explained the mission of the Sisters of Charity by connecting it to ministry. She described her understanding of the mission of the Sisters of Charity in this way,

"The Sisters of Charity, as far as I can see, their mission is to serve people and it's not just in their schools, it's going out into the world and helping those less fortunate and there are different types of poor. They serve the poor."

Two teachers recognized that they reflect to the outside world the mission and vision of the Sisters of Charity. One teacher voiced, "My role is that I reflect what the academies stand for. That they can see a good Christian woman when I teach, and that I am somewhat of a good example."

Each of the respondents expressed in many ways the importance of the mission of the Sisters of Charity. It is vitally essential that all persons associated with the Sisters of Charity whether through membership or position understand the mission and be accountable for living the mission. Overall, the mission of the Sisters of Charity is the motivating force that provides the stimuli for vision and ministry. It affects sponsorship and spirituality, and is the unifying force to the universal Church.

All of the principals of the five academies recognize the importance of passing on the legacy of the mission to the entire school community. The role of passing on this tradition originates with the charism of the founders of the Community. One of the principals aptly stated,
The charism is not written but the willingness and the openness of the Sisters of Charity to want to see their mission continued, with or without their, in all areas that they have been for the past 145 years speaks to their commitment.

Integration of mission into the life of the community or the ministry necessitates an understanding of the foundation, which are the charism and the vision. A Sister from Congregational leadership recognized charism as a “gift.” She stated, “Charism is a significant gift that the community brings to the mission.” The charism of the Sisters of Charity is “charity.” She continued to say,

“We carry out this charity in the Vincentian, Seonian traditions of serving the poor and the undeserved in the name of love, the love of God, which impels us. The love of Christ, which impels us. We do what we do because we're impelled or compelled by this overpowering love that we have for Jesus Christ, and therefore it just propels us into activity for others, especially people most in need.

In discussing vision with the principals of the five sponsored academies, one of the principals stated,

It is the vision of the Sisters of Charity, as I understand it right now, that they are moving into the realm of partnership with lay people. Collaborating with people who run their sponsored institutions, and working with them so they will be able to continue serving in this ministry into the future, with collaboration with many different groups of people, particularly with lay people.

When discussing charism during the interviews, principals emphasized charism as service to the poor. A principal described charism in this way,
Our particular charisma is service to the poor through humility, simplicity, and charity, which means that we do not stand apart from the people we serve. We live and work with them. Our students, our parents, our teachers are not our clients. They become, in a sense, part of the Community.

Charism is an intangible, unearned gift from God. However, as one of the principals stated,

Charism is not in the walls; it can be communicated and felt. You cannot give it to someone; he/she must embody it himself. I think as religious in a sponsored institution, we need to take care not to assume, just because the plaque stays on, the wall with the name of the congregation after we are gone, that the charism of the congregation has stayed within the walls.

Ministry

Mission is the foundation for ministry. Whatever the respondents spoke about mission, they invariably mentioned their ministry. Ministry develops directly from the mission. A member of Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity explained her leadership as a listening ministry "open to working through hearing what people say, and then moving on to act on it when appropriate." Although there are many ministries, mutuality surrounds ministry. This understanding requires respect for one another and the ability to interact with one another.

The word ministry is a term based on the Latin word ministerium, for those activities in the Church that issue from the Holy Spirit and strengthen and deepen the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical lives of the faithful ((Hunt, Joseph, Edis, & Nuzzi, 2004b, p. 439). All of the religious and many of the laywomen who were
interviewed spoke primarily about the relationship of ministries to the mission and to the basic spirituality of people involved in the ministries. One respondent described it in this way:

Ministry is the day-to-day manner in which we carry out our mission. Therefore, our ministry may be prayer; it may be actual work in the fields; it may be supportive of those who do it. However, it is the day-to-day way in which we personally carry out the mission. It is not paperwork and it is not just an organization. We serve people.

An important quality of ministry was found in the Sisters of Charity Constitution and Directory, Toward Boundless Charity "Our particular ministry shapes the way in which we structure our daily lives." Each of the Sisters believed it was important that the ministry happened among the people especially the poor. Each of the populations interviewed saw the role of ministry as pivotal to the Sisters of Charity mission. They viewed this pivotal role from their own perspective of Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity, principals, health administrators, and teachers but the general sense was that ministry is a vital energy in the dynamics of the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity.

The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth share their lives and ministries with a special group of people who bear witness to the same mission, vision, and charism that binds each Sister of Charity. These women and men have made a commitment to live the mission of charity in their daily lives. A large number reside in New Jersey but they also come from different parts of the United States including Connecticut, Massachusetts, Georgia, Florida, Michigan and California. Some Seton Associates are from other
countries including Peru, Salvador, Poland, Ireland, and Scotland. One respondent stated:

If there could not be another Sister of Charity prepared, ready, and willing to assume the ministry when I am not able to then a Seton Associate would be my choice.

Many of the respondents viewed their lives of ministry as co-workers with Jesus especially in His ministerial roles of peacemaker, teacher, and bringing liberty to the oppressed and captives. One of the principals stated,

My ministry is one of leadership, which is the way I understand it. I am a leader in a Sister of Charity institution. It is my job to be a facilitator for the teachers, the parents, the students, all together, to be able to come forth with the best education possible.

All of the principals strongly agreed that ministry was energizing and they were most energized when they were working in a Sister of Charity institution. One principal affirmed her ministry in these words,

When I am working in a Sister of Charity institution, I am working out of my deepest beliefs. It is a place where I do not have to be at all reserved in stating those beliefs, working from those beliefs, and being very clear about those beliefs.

Another principal described her energy in this way,

I love working with the Sisters of Charity. That sense of openness, acceptance, and mission are all things that I wholeheartedly believe in. So when you have all that affirmed, it really enhances who you are, your own sense of spirituality. That
you are all working together for a common purpose, a common goal. It is supportive and very nourishing to me. That is why I continue to do it.

The principals described a special energy about their ministry especially when working with other Sisters of Charity for the sake of the mission.

The mission of the Sisters of Charity is "to bring the good news to the poor." Four academies serve economically poor young women from the inner cities and one academy serves middle to upper middle class young women. One of the principals defined her ministry in the sponsored work of the Sisters of Charity as "challenging."

She sees her ministry as "educating young women to stand on the side of the poor."

Ministry in the eyes of the principals facilitates the formation of the character of the young women they serve. Educating young women to accept their responsibility to affect change in society and the world is "how we define our place in the mission and ministry of the Sisters of Charity."

The leadership of the principals in the five sponsored academies is essential to the understanding of mission and ministry in the school community and in the congregation of the Sisters of Charity. One of the principals describes her ministry of leadership as having "a freedom and an advantage that principals in other schools might not experience in the same way based on ownership." Articulation is a leadership quality that is a nonnegotiable leadership characteristic for administrators in the five sponsored academies. This quality of communication expresses what the principals believe is indispensable to mission and ministry. The principals believe that as administrators of the academies they always represent the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity whenever
they are acting within their ministry. As one principal said when speaking about ministry,

I do not have problems with the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity but sometimes I do have difficulties with the Church. That can be hard because you understand that you are not only representing an educational program and the people in that program, you are also representing your Congregation, so it does limit you in your response to things that you feel are just or unjust.

The teachers described their role in the ministry of the Sisters of Charity as being leaders in their classrooms. They totally believe in the education offered in the academies as a foundation for the future for young women. One of the teachers interviewed said, "Working in a Sister of Charity academy I am able to reach all the students not only by ways of grammar and literature, but taking opportunities to inspire them."

The teachers perceive ministry as carrying out the mission of education. One teacher explained her understanding of ministry in this way; "I hope my ministry helps me produce some students that will go out and spread the word of God and all that kind of stuff." Ministry was closely connected to mission for the teachers. It was carrying out the ideals of the educational mission that grounded them in their ministry. One of the respondents saw ministry as "walking through the halls with the whole school community, rubbing elbows and being grounded in the day-to-day realities."

Sponsorship

In May 2004, the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth published a statement on sponsorship. In this statement, the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity defined
sponsorship as a formal relationship between the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and a particular ministry. The Sisters of Charity, through action of its designated leadership, exercises its responsibility for the ministry, which, in turn, carries out this Congregation’s mission. This sponsorship relationship ensures organizational fidelity to mission, values, and Catholic identity (Sponsorship Statement, 2004).

The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth sponsor five secondary academies for young women, one college, four healthcare systems, and a women’s center. It is important to understand that research in the area of sponsorship has been done primarily in the healthcare systems. There has been some research on sponsorship in the area of higher education. There have been very few studies completed pertaining to sponsored works for elementary and secondary education. In terms of succession leadership, emphasis has been primarily on the corporate aspect of healthcare systems.

All five populations understood that sponsorship is a relationship between the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and the five sponsored academies. The degree to which the populations understood that relationship differed according to the relationship of the person to the sponsored academy. Mission integration is the heart of the sponsored work because every person involved in the sponsored work, whatever his/her capacity, must know and understand the mission of the institution. Grant (2003) emphasizes the importance of knowing the mission and commitment to fulfilling it.

Throughout all the interviews, most of the populations expressed either a desire to provide direct learning with regard to sponsorship as in the case of the members of the Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity or a desire to learn more about the role of sponsorship as in the case of the teachers in the five sponsored academies. Two
principals talked about their need to be "totally involved in both the corporate level of sponsorship and the day-to-day living for the mission to continue."

One respondent identified with sponsorship in this way,

When I hear the term sponsorship, it is different from turning on television, saying, "We are sponsored by Texaco." It means that we are supportive of what we do, that we take responsibility for encouraging the ministry and for ownership of the ministry. Not so much in the financial sense where we control it, but in the sense that we want nothing to go on in the ministry that we would not feel would support, continue, or assist the ministry in some way.

The members of the Sisters of Charity who were interviewed talked about the need to "change with the future." One sister shared her thoughts:

Our age is changing, our numbers are changing, and therefore, it challenges us to find new ways to continue to educate those with whom we work about what we do. Therefore, in the role of sponsorship, we must look to have someone in the field of education who understands the mission and how to carry it out through ministry.

The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth sponsored institutions for 145 years. The Sisters of Charity sponsored 30 educational, social service, and healthcare institutions. Mother Mary Xavier, Foundress of the New Jersey Sisters of Charity, began all but two of the sponsored works during her 56 years of leadership. In all of these years with the changes in educational leadership and the exodus of religious from education to other ministerial positions, no formal process was
pat in place to ensure a well-organized transition from religious to lay leadership in the sponsored academies to sustain the mission, vision, and charism of this Congregation into the future.

The Sisters of Charity who are in a sponsorship relationship have a responsibility to the sponsored work and to the people who lead that work. A member of Congregational leadership responded in this way.

I think as the Sisters look at what we do, we realize that we all know we need to change into the future. Our age is changing, our numbers are changing, and therefore, it challenges us to find new ways to continue to educate those with whom we work about what we do. And so in the role of sponsorship, as we look to have someone as the liaison with these sponsored institutions, to make sure they survive, that people in the field areas of education understand what the mission is, and then how they carry that out into ministry.

There was a strong agreement among the Congregational leaders of the Sisters of Charity and the five principals that sponsorship provides influence, which may or may not happen when a person ministers in a place that is not sponsored by the Sisters of Charity. One of the sisters related to health care administration stated that:

If we have a sponsorship relationship with an institution, we have a responsibility for sustaining it over time to the degree that it is possible. Because I am not sure that, it is always possible. I think we have to be realistic about that as well, and we have to evaluate situations not only for financial sustainability, but also for mission sustainability. And, I think that these two things always have to go
together, and they should not be seen as one against the other. I believe that helps in sustainability.

This was a very interesting thought because it indirectly refers to leadership whether it is in a healthcare institution or in the field of education. It also relates to understanding the sponsorship role as one of the non-negotiable leadership characteristics necessary to the process of leadership in a sponsored academy and is an underlying fact to the research questions. True leadership compels the leader to continuing personal development, a pledge to life-long learning, and a commitment to developing learning communities. Community, according to Parker Palmer (1998) happens when leaders call us back to the heart of teaching and learning, to the work we share and to the shared passion behind that work. Leadership begins and ends with the passion around mission and vision.

Catholic school leadership, especially in a sponsored institution, requires that the mission and vision be articulated and transmitted to the teachers, the students, and all stakeholders who share in the tradition. Oldham (2000) affirms that educational leaders and teachers in Catholic schools must become aware of the histories of their schools because by doing that, they become part of that history. The challenge of the leadership in a Catholic school is "to assist the components of the Catholic school community in the process of formulating the identity for that specific Catholic school" (p. 16). Catholic school leadership personnel become role models for their school community. Most diocesan guidelines stress the need for leadership to be a believing and practicing Catholic and be committed to participation in parish life. Commitment to Catholic education and being a believing, practicing Catholic are characteristics that also surfaced
as necessary to leadership in the five sponsored academies. These characteristics are important to the research questions.

In looking at the impact of the presence of Sisters of Charity in a sponsored institution one respondent remarked:

If the day comes, and the day has come in some institutions, when there are no longer Sisters of Charity at all in the institution, that is probably not true of any of ours because even if we don't have Sisters of Charity employed in the institutions, we may have them on the governance board, which I think is critically important. To solidify governance is a ministry in itself because it has to do with decision-making. If we are not going to be there to do that, we have to have a pool of laity formed in our own theories and sense of sponsorship so that they can carry out that work.

In the past, congregations accepted as limitless that their sponsored institutions, both health care and educational, were administered and staffed by their own membership and a loyal group of laity who were imbued with the mission, vision, and charism of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. According to Grant (2004, p. 1), the word sponsorship was coined in the 1970s and came into popular usage as a way to describe the relationship between the sponsor, generally a religious congregation, and its institutional works. A Sister of Charity respondent shared that idea of the sponsorship movement and the impact it had on the Congregation:

My research brought me to the sponsorship movement in the 70's. That is when it first really began to start moving. Before that, I do not think you heard too much mentioned about it. I think we always knew what it meant intuitively, but I think
now we understand what it means in the nuts and bolts of it. It is this very important relationship, which means that there has to be congruence between the mission of the sponsoring group and mission of the institution. They are not the same. You have to be certain that the missions are in congruence, one with the other. The second thing is there are certain legal and canonical responsibilities to which you have to pay attention. In addition, I think that the other thing is that you need to pay attention to your ability to sustain the relationship. That is very critical.

Canon law identifies two duties related to sponsorship: "the protection of stable patrimony or ecclesiastical goods and the faithful administration of these goods" (Grant, 2003). Direction regarding the latter, faithful administration of a ministry of the Church constitutes the direction pursued by this researcher. One of the respondents from Congregational leadership simply stated, "We have to guard and preserve our sponsorship role." Along the lines of governance and law, a respondent from the Mission and Charism services recognized sponsorship in this way.

Know your goals and know that the role of sponsorship has a steep learning curve if you become a leader in a sponsored work. You have to learn what the Board means and what the Bylaws mean, and the connection to both. You should never feel that you are an independent agent. There is a connection always. It is a relationship — that is how we describe sponsorship. Relationships mean that there is a connectedness between the Community and the sponsored work, and the person who is the leader in that sponsored work.
Guarding and preserving the sponsorship role into the future means developing processes that will identify the characteristics of leadership in the lay people who serve side by side with the Sisters in the academies, health care institutions, and social works of the Congregation. Identifying, developing, and encouraging the leadership of these women and men who work with the Sisters on a day-to-day basis enhances the community spirit and promotes that spirit of mission that Grant (2004) speaks about when she says that mission is the "ground and source of the organization's culture" (p. 38). It also refers to the inquiries from the research questions.

All of the principals affirm the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity’s role of ownership not so much in the financial sense as in the sense of mission, vision, and charism. One principal stated:

When I explain sponsorship to our parents and our alumnae and such, I always start out by saying that the Sisters of Charity founded and continue to operate our academy under the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. It is my understanding that they (the Sisters of Charity) are very involved in the running of this academy and that we have a responsibility to follow that mission.

One of the principals, in responding to a question asking her to describe her ministry in a sponsored academy of the Sisters of Charity, said,

In this particular sponsored work, clearly it has to deliver very good academic background to young women who would be deprived of that, especially living in a city where the public school system is in very deep trouble. However, over and above that is the idea of instilling in people a sense of being responsible to create
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a more just society. Having the vision, values, attitudes, and heart and the willingness to try to make a difference in whatever area you find yourself.

Sponsorship continues to evolve. It was only in the early 70s that the sponsoring institutions truly began to review the sponsorship models and look at new paradigms for development. Understanding sponsorship is not something that can be taken for granted. The teachers understood that sponsorship is relational but they did not grasp the total picture of sponsorship as immersion in mission and stewardship of the ministry.

One of the teachers had surprising expectations of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity in terms of sponsorship and the five sponsored academies. She expressed her thoughts in this way,

Sponsorship is that they (the Congregation) will speak more to the principals of the schools. They have more contact with them than with the school itself. I also know that, just from being here, if the school is in trouble, the Congregation will come up with the money to loan the school to get through. Other than that, I have not seen anything.

It is clear that the teachers have limited understanding of sponsorship but in grasping the relational piece, they have comprehended the spirit of sponsorship.

The respondents had a myriad of ideas when asked what understanding they had of the term “sponsorship.” The Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity sees the term in the sense of its formal quality. They see it as a “sacred trust and legal responsibility” (Grant, 2003). One member from the Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity population described sponsorship very simply,
Sponsorship for me is a very formal term. In addition, for us, it speaks to the relationship that we have to these works that carry our name, and for which we have a responsibility.

Another respondent from Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity said that when she heard the word “sponsorship” she understood it to mean that we are “supportive of what we do, that we take responsibility for the ministry.”

In the health care institutions, time and energy have been given to building relationships regarding sponsorship much more than in the educational institutions. Building relationships over time requires that sponsors must continually emphasize their interconnectedness with the institutions they sponsor. The respondent from the healthcare population, when asked about her understanding of the term sponsorship said, Sponsorship is a special relationship with a ministerial work. And, that special relationship can be defined in a variety of ways. I think we are growing into an understanding of what it means for us today.

All of the principals of the five sponsored academies responded similarly regarding the term sponsorship. They referred to sponsorship as a relationship between their particular academy and the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. They also consider sponsorship to be about the ministry of their particular academy especially the students. One principal expressed it this way:

The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity is very involved in the running of our Academy from the type of programming that we have, the mission that we have, our personnel, and our financial obligations.
It is important to note that all of the populations including the teachers have the perception that the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity should be the leader in the role of sponsorship. One of the principals concisely said of the term sponsorship:

I understand that it is a term of relationship of a particular work to a body. The organizing body is ultimately responsible for the sake of the mission of the place. So that, for example, in this institution, it is sponsored by the Sisters of Charity, so that everything needs to reflect the values, the responsibilities that the Sisters of Charity would want to put on a place.

The principals of the five sponsored academies see themselves as walking hand in hand with the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. One principal mentioned the fact that this Congregation is publishing a Sponsorship Manual, which explains the relationship between the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and their sponsored works. The manual is intended for those people directly connected to the administration, governance, and mission life of the institutions. She said, "I believe that when you sponsor a work, you support it by providing it with its mission, and I know that the Community is coming out with a manual which is very explicit and which will be very helpful to me."

Together the principals of the five sponsored academies believe they have a responsibility and a commitment to exercise sponsorship by faithfulness to the mission. An expectation for collaboration exists between Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity and the principals of the five sponsored academies. The teachers understand sponsorship to be the relationship with the school itself rather than the Congregation of
the Sisters of Charity. Sponsorship requires perceptive leadership and partnership among the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity and the sponsored work.

Leadership

The strong sense of mission and vision revealed a leadership structure that encouraged a collaborative form of governance especially from the three populations representing the leadership of the Congregation. One respondent from the Congregational leadership remarked that,

The responsibilities that we have in leadership, we are constantly carrying out the mission whether it is through planning for the Congregation, work on Boards, work with Advisory groups, and work with all of the various committees and task forces that are established throughout the Congregation. We interact with Bishops of the states that we are in and we engage with politicians when it is appropriate on issues that relate to us in terms of education or health care. So, it’s part and parcel of what we do every day.

Another strong leadership characteristic that emerged as non-negotiable for a leader in the sponsored academies is competency and preparation for the position of educational administrator. Two of the five principals agreed that competency was very important to the position of administrator. One principal remarked,

I assume competence, you know. I do not believe that someone can walk into an inner city high school in this day and age and function effectively – especially a congregationally owned high school with all the financial difficulties that go with that, without a certain amount of competence. You have to make payroll, and if
that is going to throw you, then you cannot supervise the students, the teachers, all the odds and ends. Therefore, I think competence is important.

Bitasé and Blassé (1998) list several leadership processes that establish clear connections between leadership and performance. The eight processes include the following: a strong sense of mission, shared vision, webs of communication, breakdown of hierarchies, shared governance, personal development, lifelong learning, and learning communities. The leader in most religious organizations enhances these eight processes as she/he interacts with the community.

One member of the Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity population responded with these words regarding leadership,

One of the challenges of leadership is to be a listener and to be able to be open to a variety of opinions from a variety of persons both within and without the Congregation. So, I think leadership is a learning posture that you have to constantly be in. To be open, to work through hearing what people have to say, and then moving on to act on it as appropriate.

The institutional structure of the five sponsored academies provides a certain freedom and flexibility to the administrator. This is important because it enriches the role of the administrator. One respondent remarked,

In my particular leadership role, I see that it is important that our academies can continue to keep costs within reason and that tuition do not preclude as many students as possible from attending. I see that we must find alternative ways to the best of our ability to continue to provide quality education at the most
reasonable rates and to continue to encourage people to apply to us so that we can continue to serve them.

Important to the leadership process is the knowledge of the key people in the organization, their behaviors and their characteristics. Individuals in key leadership positions must know their constituents and provide for their leadership potential. The respondent from Healthcare clearly said,

I think that presence is an important part of our leadership. I also believe that we have to foster the leaders of our institutions in what Sisters of Charity sponsorship and mission is all about. I think we have done a good job of that. I think that the Congregation has done a good job at working with trustee education and they are building on that process. I think, though, that we need to get into the organization. I think anybody in senior leadership really needs to have a formal formation/educational program in leadership in what it means to minister in a Catholic institution and in a Sister of Charity sponsored institution. I think that is critical. I think that some of the institutions have encouraged that. I am not sure that the Congregation has encouraged it from the top, but I think that that may be coming with some of the work that is being done now on sponsorship.

The five principals understand their role in leadership more from the standpoint of the educational structure rather than the congregational structure. However, each of the five principals understands the importance of her commitment to the sponsored academy in which she serves. One principal explained her leadership role in this way,

In this particular sponsored week, clearly it is to deliver very good academic background to young women who would be deprived of that especially living in a
city where the public school is in very deep trouble. But way over and above that, it is the idea of instilling in people a sense of being responsible to create a more just society.

Each principal is attempting to provide the educational formation not just for the young women who attend the school but also for the school community which includes parents, alumnae, Boards of Trustees, Advisory Boards, and the broad community in which the academy is located. According to one of the principals, this task of inclusion requires a team approach because the amount of work is overwhelming for one person.

According to one principal,

I think we need to be able to sit down as educators with our General Council, perhaps with an outside facilitator, although I am not always totally convinced that that is important. I think that we need to talk it out. I think we need to be honest with each other. I think we need to negotiate. I think we need to respond to the grace of the moment. I think this is an opportunity. It's not just a problem, what we're going through now. I think we have a lot of resources in our Congregation. But how are we going to reallocate them? Are we willing to reallocate them? And how are we going to come to compromise so that, in fact, the focus is the mission?

One principal spoke about the need to involve faculty in her organizational structure. Involving the faculty means taking time to listen. She said,

We learned to involve the faculty in everything, and that means longer hours, more time talking about stuff when other people just make decisions. So, it is a
whole style of leadership. It is a whole style of running a school, which is very
time consuming. There is a lot of collegiality here. You have to have a lot of
patience for dialogue and meetings where you feel you have accomplished
nothing. You have to want to hear everybody. All of those things are critically
important when you are looking at succession. And I think that the other part of it
is that you have to be willing, when you step down, to allow other people to do
whatever they think needs to be done.

The five principals recognized that the challenges facing the Congregation
regarding their sponsored works are increasing as Sisters of Charity become unavailable
to assume the leadership roles in the sponsored academies. It is less and less likely in the
years to come that Sisters of Charity or religious of any other congregation will be in
leadership positions in the sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint
Elizabeth.

The principals and teachers understand and seem to appreciate the leadership of
the Sisters of Charity especially on the level of the Boards of Trustees and the Advisory
Boards. One of the principals affirmed her relationship with her Board Chairperson in
these words,

There are certain times when something new comes up and I will have to talk
with someone. I might pick up the phone, call the president of our Board who is a
Sister of Charity, and discuss the situation with her. And she may talk with other
people in her office and then get back to me. I always feel like the lines of
communication are wide open and there has never been an issue, a challenge, or a
problem that I have not been able to make one phone call and get an immediate response.

The Sisters in Congregational leadership, mission, and charism, healthcare, and educational leadership recognize that improving the administrative leadership of the secondary academies requires that the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity look at educational leadership with a new vision and clarity of purpose. Leadership personnel, in order to continue the mission of Catholic education with qualified, mission-oriented personnel, must begin to develop frameworks and/or management processes that will be of assistance in planning strategically for educational leadership (Casavan, 2001, p. 75).

To assure the continuation of the mission, vision, and charism of the Congregation it is essential that Congregational leaders begin to take steps to ensure a successful transition from religious leadership to lay leadership in the sponsored works of the Congregation. Succession leadership is a new way to envision Catholic educational administration for secondary education particularly in those institutions sponsored by religious communities.

A Sister from Congregational leadership responded in this way,

We have to have a sense of what is happening, the challenges, the successes, and the concerns that the leadership faces so that we can appropriately support them. Find connectivity between the different parts of the system. That may mean that health care systems work together and it may also mean that health care systems and educational systems work together to support their needs. We also have to be conscious of the social, political, and economic factors that affect each of these so that we as a Congregation can take appropriate stands to assist health care and
education as part of the Church and as part of the United States so that we make a
difference.

Succession Leadership

With the decline of religious in key leadership positions in education, the idea of
succession planning becomes critical to the educational leadership network. The
understanding of succession planning is critical to Catholic education but more
specifically to religious communities and especially the Sisters of Charity of Saint
Elizabeth who staff five sponsored secondary academies.

When asked about succession leadership, all five populations responded
affirmatively that there should be some method or approach to preparing administrators
and teachers for the purpose of education in the five sponsored academies of the Sisters
of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. "Sustainable leadership maintains improvement from one
leader to the next and spreads across many leaders and schools in a district, not just one
or two" (Fallon, 2003, p. 34). The leadership in the five secondary academies influence
more than the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. The leadership in these five
academies affect the lives of the young women they serve, the entire school community,
the diocesan school community, and the community where the school resides.

Leadership is fundamentally important to the very sustainability of the school and/or
organization. Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity agree that succession
leadership requires that people must be willing to put themselves forward to be trained
and mentored in the positions available either on the congregational level or on the
educational level. One person in leadership believes that leadership is different in each of
the academies based on the governance of the particular academy. She explained it this way,

Their way of leading will be affected by the structure, so if it is unincorporated, that is one relationship using advisory groups with a member of the Council as a representative. If it is separately incorporated, then it is a little more removed from leadership, except as leadership sits on the Board. Leadership really must respect and work with the whole element of the Board as a separately incorporated institution.

Another respondent from Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity considers succession leadership critical to continuing the culture of the academies and continuing the charism of the Sisters of Charity. Forming relationships for sponsorship requires open lines of communication with all stakeholders. She believes that “unless we are able to maintain that character and culture, it will be difficult to maintain the charism and something of both could be lost.” Today, as stated by Holland (2001), “we find ourselves in a remarkable era of collaboration” (p. 32). Magnetti (1996) confirms that religious communities are at a turning point. The model is changing from holding the charism of the founder closely or letting go and allowing relationships with those involved in the sponsored works to work with the religious congregation to revitalize the charism of the institution for future generations.

One of the respondents associated with Mission and Charism services suggested that leadership in this Congregation begin to identify people and ask if they are willing to begin to develop their leadership abilities in terms of administration in one of the five
sponsored academies. Working in one of our sponsored institutions is life giving and a means of ensuring the continuation of our sponsored works.

A Sister from Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity, when speaking about succession leadership in the academies and taking steps to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership, stated the following.

I think we will have to look at how we form lay leaders and how we identify on our faculties those people that we believe have gifts for administration. How do we give them the formation that we think they need to continue our charism?

This statement is a basis for the first research question.

The five principals view the concept of succession leadership as necessary to the continuation of Catholic education not just for religious communities who sponsor educational institutions but also on the diocesan level where it is becoming increasingly difficult to identify and appoint administrators to the schools. In the past, diocesan offices depended on religious communities to appoint women or men to the administrative positions in the parish elementary schools or diocesan secondary schools. Today, women and men religious apply through search committees the same as the lay for positions in parish or diocesan schools. The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity adopts the diocesan search process to interview potential administrators for the five sponsored academies.

Three principals interviewed reflected on succession leadership as a process of grooming the lay to “ease into the role.” They believe it is an important role for the future of Catholic education. One principal pondered her hope for succession leadership in this way.
My dream of succession leadership would be that another Sister of Charity would be prepared, ready, and willing to assume the ministry. If there is not a Sister of Charity, then a Setor, Associate or a member of the laity who is willing to learn the charism could be prepared for the position. That takes time. That would be the ideal. That would strengthen my current leadership administration. I would not go into crisis mode trying to protect the charism for the future. I would feel more secure in terms of creativity for the future.

Succession planning on the corporate level or on the educational level is not always successful. Approximately 55% of outside CEO’s and 34% of inside CEO’s who departed in 2003 were forced to resign (Charan, 2007). An outside CEO is one that is recruited from outside the organization. An inside CEO is recruited from within the organization. One principal shared that to make succession leadership truly a success the people selected for the process would have to be committed not just to one particular academy but to the idea of the Sisters of Charity and the sponsored academies. When selecting people from within the organization, this becomes a problem. Their sense of commitment is to the one academy where they serve rather than broader understanding of sponsorship, mission, and charism of the Sisters of Charity for all five sponsored academies. An effective succession plan anticipates vacancies and develops a pool of qualified candidates in advance of critical needs (Quinn, 2002). Succession planning sends a convincing message to the school community that people are valued when a process is in place to identify the leadership that exists among the faculty. This statement from Quinn relates to research second research question, which deals with process.
An interesting concept regarding succession leadership emerged from one of the interviews with a principal. She shared these thoughts.

Knowing that someone was prepared for leadership would make all the difference in the world. To know that this school has a future because there are people willing to assume responsibility for it. That is very critical. Very important. And, I think that if you ever got lucky enough where the new leadership grew out of the people that you have already, then you also have the opportunity to begin to pursue visions that you have for programs, etc., knowing that the new person also has a sense of it, is helping to shape it. That is important.

There was compelling agreement among the principals that succession leadership would have a strong impact on the educational program in the five sponsored academies if the process incorporated an effective component for developing potential leadership. It is important to note that several principals capitalized on the talents of their own faculties. One principal affirmed.

I work with a team approach to leadership. Three of us sit together daily. We have a team approach to what goes on in the school. We discuss everything together. I make sure they understand all of what is happening here because any one of them may need to pick up, if something, God forbid, happens to one of the others. So, I do feel that within this organization, any issues that we have, financial, educational, plant, are discussed with the other administrators, as well as with the Board of Trustees. So, I hope that the issue of another person coming in for leadership would have no one wondering what is going on here and where do we need to go from here.
Two teachers agreed that succession leadership or as they aptly put it, future planning would ease the worry that they sometimes have when an administrator decides to leave a position. On another level, one teacher saw succession planning at teacher replacement. She indicated that she felt that every time she interacted with the young women whether in the classroom or in an extra curricular activity she was preparing her replacements. This same teacher indicated that she was concerned that perhaps not enough people were being educated to “finish the work.”

The five populations recognize the need for succession planning; however, the means to achieve that end remain unclear. The realization of succession planning depends on the commitment to the vision, mission, and values of the educational institution. This means that all members of the institution understand, believe, and can articulate the mission, vision, values, and spirituality of the institution. Formation of the laity in leadership positions especially those who already minister in the sponsored academies creates a positive work culture. A member of Congregational leadership spoke about preparing the laity for future leadership positions within the sponsored works.

Intentionally, we have to discover a way to find people willing to join us.

Formation is a big piece of it.

This statement from Congregational leadership, which addresses formation, relates directly to the first research question.

**Spirituality**

Spirituality is a relationship with the sacred—a relationship that in an apostolic community unites with ministry. Spirituality for the foundresses of the Sisters of Charity, especially Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac, meant going out to the
poor and underserved of humanity and working with the imprisoned and down trodden including the men, women, and children of the French Revolution. Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton continued the Vincentian spirituality of caring for the poor in the United States by founding a religious community that would educate young people especially the poor and young women. Mother Mary Xavier Mehergan extended that Spiritual spirituality in New Jersey with the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. Understanding the tradition is important to understanding the relationship to sponsorship, spirituality, and mission.

The respondents from Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity agreed that spirituality flows from ministry and ministry is nurtured and supported by attentiveness to spirituality. The challenge is to find the time to give to spirituality in order for it to flourish. The respondents from among the Sisters were strengthened in Sister of Charity formation because they were formed in Charity spirituality and educational programs. When asked about spirituality and ministry, one respondent from Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity shared this,

It causes you to pray a lot. It makes you conscious of more of the Gospel stories to reach out to those in need. It gives you a greater sense of the Body of Christ, and how the parts work together. It calls you to a greater sense of the Eucharist in the sense of strengthening the Body, renewing your own resources, and sensing that, as Oscar Romero says, “We build a future that is not our own.”

This reflection from one of the respondents from Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity implies that spirituality is a basis for the ministry that is provided by this Congregation. The Vision Statement of 1995 states,
In the tradition of Saint Vincent de Paul, we participate in the mission of the Church fundamentally through ministry supported and nourished by prayer and vowed life in community.

Therefore, Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity presumes that ministry is nurtured and supported by an active spirituality because in four of the five academies administrative leaders are religious women. As these religious women resign their positions, the lay, while they are not the vowed members of religious communities, will be the new administrators of the sponsored academies. Large numbers of laypersons are infusing the Church with a new vitality, generosity, and commitment. "There is no lack of vocations; they simply look different now" (Amendola, 1995, p. 7).

The effect of spirituality on ministry and the impact of both emerged clearly when the respondent from the Mission and Charism services stated,

The mission, vision, and charism do influence my spirituality. I have, over the years, become fascinated with Louise de Marillac, one of our foundresses. Vincent is always quoted and we grew up with Elizabeth Seton because she is American and has powerful influences. And, of course, I love Mother Xavier; she was such a woman of courage. The reading that you do and the spirituality you begin to develop is deeply influenced by these people. I believe in our mission to the economically poor. Our charism, the beautiful gift that we have given to the Church. It is a gift of the Spirit that is somewhat lucid and a gift that is hard to define. We have been a gift to the Church as Sisters of Charity.

In conducting this research, the first research question referred to non-negotiable characteristics, which in a Catholic environment means ongoing spiritual development.
Ministry strengthened by spirituality through the traditions of the founders and foundresses of religious life based on the Gospel message of Jesus Christ is the foundation for the mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth of New Jersey.

Throughout the year, members of the school communities of the five sponsored academies experienced the spirituality of the Sisters of Charity. They attended orientations on the history of the Congregation, visited the Heritage Room and the Archives, and participated in workshops which gave an overview of what it means to minister in a Sister of Charity sponsored academy. These relationships helped to sustain the mission of the Sisters of Charity in their respective sponsored works. This was the formation process, which led to uncovering the leadership characteristics in the first research question.

The respondent from healthcare approached this question differently. Her instinctive remarks modeled and integrated aspects of both ministry and spirituality. She believes that both ministry and spirituality are integrated and she found that compartmentalizing them was difficult. This respondent shared her thoughts in this way.

As an integrated human being, I hope that the way I live my life, the way I pray, and the way I am attendant to the mission helps me to influence the people I serve and work with. The vision, mission, and charism very much influence my spirituality. I live in because I love it. I am committed to it and it makes sense to me. Actually, I keep probing it. I keep trying to figure it out. And, the issue about charism and sponsorship is a good example of that. The longer you live, of course, the more open you are to looking at something from another side and turning the question around. I try to do that. I think that faithfulness to the
mission and vision and values certainly is prompted by your belief in God and your view of the world, which to me is your spirituality.

Each of the respondents in the leadership positions in the Congregation agreed that in order for the ministry to be effective, spirituality had to have a strong basis in each of their lives. The Sisters in leadership positions in the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity have a compelling impact on the leadership of the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. The concept of spirituality appears to be a vital and nonnegotiable characteristic for future leaders of the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

The five principals who were interviewed spoke about their spirituality as their source of strength and as life giving for their ministry in Catholic education especially in a sponsored work of the Sisters of Charity. One principal reflected on the question regarding ministry and spirituality in this way,

I pray this ministry. I pray it through every day. I believe that I walk through these halls accompanied by God. I also know that this is not a do-it-yourself ministry. So, I walk through these halls with the people of God, with the faculty, and the staff. We all become the community. I know, for me, rubbing elbows with kids who have needs keeps me very grounded in reality, and obviously, makes me turn to God. With all of my expertise, and the expertise of my faculty, I cannot meet the needs of every student. Ultimately, I know that I have to surrender them to God.

The principals’ spirituality in terms of ministry emerges from a different paradigm than the leadership of this Congregation. The principals’ concern is on a local
level. Their role is strengthened by the quality of life they can provide for the students. The principals provide an immediate impact on the ministry of Catholic education through their role as leader. A principal in responding to the question on spirituality and ministry said,

As a preacher, my ministry can enliven my spirituality. In a sense, that gives me opportunities to preach. Whether I’m typing a little fervorino in my school notes for family and students to read, or whether I’m standing at the microphone in Study Hall, or at the podium in Chapel. There is that opportunity for me to live my mission. So, in that sense, my ministry enhances my spirituality.

Two principals believed that ministry and spirituality flowed from each other and grew one from the other. They believed that a strong spirituality supports them in their ministry by giving them an inner strength. One principal described her spirituality in terms of her ministry in this way,

Ministry is my spirituality because I don’t have a very narrowly defined concept of what spirituality is. I can’t separate my relationship with God from my relationship with the people here, the work that I do, and the role that I take on in Christ’s mission. To me, it is my spirituality.

The teachers like the principals see their ministry and spirituality as one. One teacher reflected in these words,

My ministry has to affect my spirituality because I pray not even just every day but every time I even walk by the chapel. I stop in there to pray about a particular situation or just to say, God, You have to help us do this.” So, spirituality has to be a part of your life.
The teachers see themselves as journeying with the Sisters of Charity as they minister in the academies. One teacher very aptly said,

God, I pray a lot. It’s nice to know that I’m not alone because some days you really hit a wall. However, some days it’s nice to celebrate and say thanks. I can continue the work of those who had an influence on me and I don’t let them down.

The five populations expressed their faith in ministry that is rooted in a deep spirituality. They believe that the quality of their leadership whether they are in Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity, principalship, or teaching is ingrained in that spirituality. One principal summed it up like this,

The mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity influence my spirituality because it is who I am. I do not think there is a separation between the Sisters of Charity mission, ministry, spirituality and me. I think it is who I am.
Chapter V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity as they relate to charism, mission, and vision in relationship to educational leadership and, in particular, to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. The focus of Chapter V is to present the (a) Summary, (b) Conclusions, (c) Implications, and (d) Recommendations of this research. The recommendations of this research are found at the end of this chapter. This research is guided by the following three research questions: (a) What leadership characteristics do the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth consider vital and nonnegotiable for lay administrators whom they hire to lead their sponsored academies? (b) How will the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth develop a process to identify those characteristics? (c) What steps have the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth taken to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership of their sponsored academies so that the mission, vision, and charism continue into the new millennium?

For 125 years of Catholic education in the United States, religious communities of women and men embraced leadership positions in Catholic schools. Bryk, Lee, and Holland, (1995) reported that 61% of the leadership positions in the Catholic schools in 1988 came from religious communities (1993). With the promulgation of Vatican Council II in the sixties, religious women and men found new ways outside of the sphere of education to minister to God's people. With the decreasing numbers of religious
women and men in leadership positions in schools, members of the laity emerged as the new administrators (1993).

Traditionally, Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity appointed Sisters from this Congregation to leadership positions in the five sponsored academies. Beginning with the first academy in 1859 until the mid 1990s Sisters of Charity held administrative positions in the five sponsored academies. With the loss of religious vocations and religious women choosing ministries other than education, the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity experienced their own administrative challenges. Today, one academy administrator is a laywoman, one academy administrator is a member of another Religious Congregation, and three remain Sisters of Charity.

Summary

This research was qualitative in nature with a demographic survey. Twelve participants responded to 16 interview questions, which probed the variables of mission, vision, charism, ministry, sponsorship, succession leadership, and spirituality. The populations included in this research were members of Congregational leadership, leadership from Healthcare Administration, the Mission and Charism Services, and principals and teachers from the five sponsored academies.

The research indicated that the leadership characteristics of the administrators in the five sponsored academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are rooted in the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity. The position of administrator is grounded in relationship to sponsorship and is the foundation upon which the five academies relate to the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity and to each other.
Each of the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth exist to continue the mission of the Congregation. The five sponsored academies exist to further that mission through the Catholic education of young women. To live the mission of Jesus according to the Congregation is “to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favor” (Luke 4: 18-19).

Congregational leadership expected the principals to be able to bring the mission of the Sisters of Charity to life in the schools through their interactions with the school community, their service to the economically poor, and their commitment to the education of young women. The Mission and Charism services perceived the characteristics of the administration of the academies in terms of mission effectiveness and integration of mission into the life of the ministry of education.

The five principals of the academies recognized their administrative responsibilities as collaborators with the Congregational leadership in sustaining the mission of the Sisters of Charity throughout the five sponsored academies. The principals expected Congregational leadership to coordinate with them in all areas of educational leadership especially in matters of finances and governance.

The teachers were more provincial in their approach to characteristics of leadership. They connected the administration of their particular academy to the mission of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. They saw their ministry of teaching in terms of carrying out the mission of this Congregation through the mission of their academy.
Articulation about the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity was important to all five populations. For educational administrators, having a "voice at the table" would mean being able to influence and direct the mission especially in terms of the poor with regard to policy. In the domain of education, this would be especially true when influencing educational policy and programs on a diocesan level or state level.

Each of the populations understood, valued, and was able to discuss the mission of the Sisters of Charity. Mission integration is the heart of the sponsored work because each person involved in the sponsored work, whatever her/his capacity, must know and understand the mission of the institution. Commitment to the mission is the quality that resonated as essential to leadership in a Sister of Charity sponsored institution.

According to Joyce (1992), "charism" is the Greek word for gift. The point of "free" is to emphasize that it is unmerited or gratuitous. It is the gift of God, given for building up the body of Christ, meaning that it is not given for the benefit of an individual but for the common good (p. 3). Charism was understood more when it involved the lives of the foundresses and when speaking about the Vincentian and Seconian traditions. When charism was used with mission, it became an ideal to pass on to future generations of young women. All of the principals agreed that sustaining the charism was essential to the continuation of the sponsored work of education.

The ministry of the sponsored academies flowed from the commitment of the Sisters of Charity to their mission. This research showed that whether or not the principal was a Sister of Charity, a member of another religious Congregation, or a member of the laity they felt the commitment to the mission of the Congregation to be the strongest influence in their ministry because they believed the mission is "why we do what we do."
All of the participants viewed their lives as co-workers in the ministry of Jesus. The data strongly stated that all five populations were energized by their ministry especially those working in the five sponsored academies. One principal so affirmed her ministry that she exclaimed that she was working out of her "deepest beliefs." Each of the principals believed she was totally valued and supported by Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity. However, several of the principals voiced their concerns about difficulties with the Church and the Church's stand on issues concerning Catholic education.

All the teachers considered their role in the ministry of the five sponsored academies as vitally important to themselves and to the young women they teach. Each of the teachers interviewed, perceived themselves as leaders in the classroom. They believe their role as teacher is also minister because they understand ministry as 'walking through the halls with the whole school community, rubbing elbows and being grounded in the day-to-day realities.'

Sponsorship is the formal relationship between the Sisters of Charity and the academies. Sponsorship is what makes the academies different from the schools owned and operated by a diocese. The sponsorship relationship ensures organizational fidelity to mission, values, and Catholic identity of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. Significant findings confirm that the five populations understood the relational aspect of sponsorship. The degree of understanding differed according to the relationship of the participants to the sponsored academy. The findings indicated that three of the five principals fully understood the implications of the sponsorship relationship. All the Sisters in Congregational leadership, Healthcare Administration, and Mission and
Charism Services fully comprehend the importance of the sponsored works of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity. Each of the teachers appreciated the commitment of this Congregation to the sponsored academies especially in the matter of finances.

The participants from Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity understand the spirit of sponsorship and the formal quality of sponsorship. Sponsorship is a "sacred trust and legal responsibility" (Grant, 2003). The findings identified a willingness to become involved in the sponsorship relationship as a major characteristic of leadership for an administrator in one of the five sponsored academies.

Catholic school leadership, especially in a sponsored institution, requires that the mission and vision be articulated and transmitted to the teachers, the students, and all stakeholders who share in the tradition. Collaborative leadership was a significant characteristic that all of the populations considered particularly important to administrative leadership in the five sponsored academies.

Oldenski (2000) affirms that educational leaders and teachers in Catholic schools must become aware of the histories of their schools because by doing that, they become part of that history. The challenge of the leadership in a Catholic school is "to assist the components of the Catholic school community in the process of formulating the identity for that specific Catholic school" (p. 16). The five principals recognize the challenges facing the Congregation regarding their sponsored works and the leadership positions.

The research indicated that all of the participants realize that in the very near future it is less and less likely that a Sister of Charity or any religious will be appointed to the administrative positions in the five sponsored academies.
One of the most significant findings suggested that Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity along with the principals, the Boards of Trustees, and others from the school community begin to develop frameworks and/or management processes that will be of assistance in planning strategically for educational leadership (Canavan, 2001, p. 75). Succession leadership planning is a new way to envision Catholic educational administration for secondary education particularly those sponsored by religious communities. The research confirmed that principals understand the need for leadership succession planning. One principal is so convinced that something must be done now, that she would like to see a meeting with Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity and the principals of the five sponsored academies to begin the dialogue.

Succession leadership planning differs from typical principal leadership programs. Succession leadership planning is a strategic process of identifying individuals with high potential for success as a principal based on their current performance and their talents (Gordan, 2005). The findings indicated that all five populations affirmed the process of succession leadership planning for future leadership in the five academies. It is interesting to note that when asked about succession leadership, all five populations responded affirmatively that there should be some method to preparing administrators and teachers for the purpose of educational leadership in the five sponsored academies. This is significant because to date there are no programs in place to prepare future leaders for the administrative positions in the five sponsored academies.

Succession leadership planning began in the corporate world and its purpose was to nurture the talent pool in supervisory competence. Done effectively, succession leadership planning guarantees the ongoing mission of the five sponsored academies by
selecting and training the potential leadership for future leadership positions. The research indicated that within the five sponsored academies talented teachers and assistant principals stand ready to be identified and groomed to continue the work of Catholic education.

Most important to the achievement of succession planning are the skills of interpersonal communication and relationship building (Ready, 2004). Technical knowledge and skills are important to leadership but not without the relational component. On the corporate level, succession planning begins with the Chief Executive Officer and “without leadership commitment and involvement you are left with decaying non-living elements” (Tropiano, 2004, p. 50). Although research findings within this study indicate the willingness and the desire for succession leadership planning, actual steps to begin a process have not been established by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity for the five sponsored academies.

Succession leadership planning for the five sponsored academies requires a revitalization of the characteristics of educational leadership. Two of the five principals agree that working with a team of administrators builds an in-depth leadership capacity as opposed to an individual attempting to accomplish all the leadership responsibilities. Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity recognized the need for succession leadership planning especially among the laity in order to align the goals, values, and mission of the academies' educational leadership with those of the Congregation. One of the characteristics of Catholic school leadership is the ability of the leaders to encourage the organization’s membership to have “clarity and consensus about the organization’s fundamental beliefs, goals, and aspirations” (Vaill, 1986, p. 91). The same would be true
of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth when looking for an administrator for the academies.

Succession leadership planning is one of the most difficult challenges facing the educational community today. Succession planning, according to Manapin (2002) is an ongoing process of systematically identifying, assessing, and developing talent to ensure leadership continuity for all key positions in an organization. Corporations that develop talent from inside the company guarantee strong commitments to mission, excellence, and continuity within the organization.

Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity, the principals of the five sponsored academies and their governance structures face the challenge of succession leadership planning. Succession leadership planning must be interwoven with the academies strategic objectives and should reflect the way the academies need to evolve in order to achieve their strategic goals (Manapin, 2002). The leadership characteristics that develop may be different from those that exist in the academies today.

Congregational leadership, Board of Trustees, and Advisory Boards must be ready to meet the challenges of a changing culture and to pursue the smooth transition of religious leadership to lay leadership. Development of the sponsorship role through education for administrators, Trustees, and Advisory Boards would necessarily become a part of this transition.

The research indicated that spirituality was an important attribute for all of the five populations. Each of the populations varied in their responses to the questions regarding the impact of spirituality on ministry. Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity spoke about spirituality and ministry from the perspective of leadership of this
Congregation, and stated that spirituality unites and bonds the members of an apostolic congregation through its ministry.

The findings regarding the principals were different from those in Congregational leadership regarding ministry and spirituality. The principals emerged from a different paradigm than the Sisters in leadership positions within the Congregation. They find spiritual strength in the quality of life they provided for their school community. The findings were consistent with the research of Poplin (1992) who referred to administrators as servants when they placed them at the top and the bottom of the administrative hierarchy. These servant administrators represent the future leaders who can "tolerate the ambiguity of the role" so that change can happen where everyone is growing (p. 68). The research indicated that the principals respond to the mission, ministry, and spirituality of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth through the sponsored work of education in the academies.

The three most important findings which resulted from this research are (a) integral to the leadership in the five sponsored academies are commitment to the mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and understanding the role of sponsorship as it relates to the relationship between the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and the sponsored works. (b) A formal process has not been developed by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth to identify the leadership characteristics in potential leaders in the five sponsored academies. However, an informal process existed to educate prospective leaders for the five sponsored academies. The Seton Scholars for Educational Leadership Program began in the 1990s to strengthen the mission of education in the five sponsored academies into the new millennium. This program, although short-lived, has intrinsic
value as a basis for a formal program. (c) To continue the mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is vital to this Congregation; however, no formal mentoring processes have been established to transition from religious leadership to lay leadership in the five sponsored academies. The appointment of a Director of Sponsorship and the development of a Sponsorship Manual will be essential to identifying steps in the transition from religious to lay leadership in the sponsored academies. This sponsorship relationship ensures organizational fidelity to mission, values, and Catholic identity (Sponsorship Statement, 2004).

The research confirmed that commitment to the mission was the primary characteristic necessary for an administrator in the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity. A further significant finding suggested that each of the five populations viewed mission effectiveness as the basis for sustaining the institution. These research findings are consistent with those of Terry, (1993) where he confirmed that mission is the central building block of an organization.

The findings indicated that an administrator of the sponsored academies would be a person committed to Christian values and to the Roman Catholic tradition. These research findings are compatible to the characteristics of a leader found in the document Those Who Hear You, Hear Me, (USCC, 1995) which stated that our leadership be defined by an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ, nourished by word and sacrament, and by a dynamic relationship with the Catholic Church (p. 3).

Throughout the research, the relational element of sponsorship was established. The research emphasized that understanding the role of sponsorship was a non-negotiable leadership characteristic for an administrator in the sponsored work of the Sisters of
Charity. These findings are consistent with the research of Grant (2005) who states that the concept of sponsorship describes the relationship between an organizational ministry and the association identified as sponsor. In this case, the organization is the sponsored work and the association is with a religious community. Five tasks are identified with sponsorship: mission integration, relationships, continuity, accountability, and sustainability.

The research indicated that competency and preparation for the position of administrator in a secondary school is an important nonnegotiable leadership characteristic. It was interesting that throughout the research references were made to professional development and the importance of education but more significance was placed on the actual relationships and the culture of leadership that was developed throughout the school. Fulfan (2003) talks about the culture of leadership in this way,

The main mark of an effective leader at the end of his or her tenure is not so much the impact on the bottom line (of profits or student achievement), but rather how many good leaders he or she leaves behind who can go even farther (p.35).

Throughout the research, it was evident that an administrative leader in a sponsored institution of the Sisters of Charity would demonstrate the characteristics of collaboration and articulation. The ability to communicate one's vision and purpose is at the heart of the mission. This research is consistent with that of Guarino (as cited by Snowden & Gorton, 1998) who maintains that in the area of leadership there is no talent more essential than one's ability to communicate (p.31).

Leadership qualities emerged from the individual qualitative interviews, which revealed specific leadership characteristics: commitment to the mission, Catholicity and
spirituality, understanding the role of sponsorship, competency, articulate and collaborative. These attributes answer research question one which is formative in nature and provides a starting point for the Sisters of Charity to begin the process of succession leadership planning.

Very little research exists to provide quality succession leadership planning in a sponsored institution for an educational setting. Throughout the research, studies confirmed that succession planning in corporations exists as a matter of survival. Mammano (2002) confirms that leadership transition is an integral process that begins long before the outgoing leader departs and it presents a remarkable opportunity to move forward with new understanding of the complexities, challenges and changes the organization must address. A proactive outlook is needed in the five sponsored academies to develop a process for recognizing the characteristics of leadership in potential administrators and for establishing a clear method of transition from religious to lay leadership.

Given the pattern of religious vocations today and considering the choices of those in religious life for ministries other than education, the reasonable step for continuity of mission of the Sisters of Charity in the sponsored academies is professional development for the layly interested in leadership in the academies. The data revealed that in several academies layly committed to the teaching mission of the academies and to the mission of the Sisters of Charity were interested in pursuing administration.

Principals in general identify leadership characteristics in teachers as part of their professional development. Principals, especially in Catholic school settings, often provide teachers with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership capabilities. Acting
in leadership positions often has a positive influence on teachers’ leadership goals. Professional activities that give teachers leadership responsibilities are the seeds of succession leadership planning. This process requires significant input from educational leadership and extensive planning. Congregational leadership of the Sisters of Charity, the administrators of the academies, and their governance structures would be required to allocate time to work on strategies to recruit, develop and retain a group of potential school leaders.

Given the analysis of research findings from this study and the important literature review, several compelling leadership characteristics emerged from the data. The nonnegotiable characteristics could not be described in a single word. They were framed out of the context of the mission, vision, and clarion of the Sisters of Charity Congregation. Although this response suggests a Congregational nature to the research, there was significant input from the nuns who were involved in the research. Identifying the nonnegotiable characteristics is only one part of the answer to the problem of succession leadership planning for the five sponsored academies. The leadership characteristics that emerged from the research are: commitment to the mission, Catholicity and spirituality, understanding the role of sponsorship, competency, articulate, and collaborative.

While the five populations believe in succession leadership planning, they realize that at this time no process exists to begin the steps for succession leadership planning or to identify the characteristics of future leadership for the five sponsored academies. It should be noted that in some academies, future leadership is being developed through the efforts of their administrative teams. In two of the five academies, two leadership
developments exist that complement succession leadership planning. First, the principals do not work in isolation but collaboratively with team leadership. The spirit and model of collaboration are examples for the school community, which fosters the concept of leadership. In addition, collaboration is one of the characteristics seen as nonnegotiable for a leader in a sponsored academy. Second, the principals are preparing potential leaders for future leadership either for that particular academy or for Catholic leadership in another school through professional development and leadership responsibilities within their schools.

When a layperson becomes principal in one of the five academies, there is no established policy to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership so that the mission, vision, and charism continue to flourish in that academy. Commitment to the mission was a principle characteristic for a leader in a sponsored academy. This research revealed that mission continuity in a sponsored institution, according to Grant (2004) should give the organization its critical edge, its anchor in difficult times, its renewing leverage. Mission is the ground and source of the organization’s culture (p. 38). The mission of the Sisters of Charity is to live the mission of Jesus as found in Luke’s Gospel “to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the lord’s year of favor” (Luke 4: 18-19).

Conclusions

In summary, the following points are the conclusions of this research:

1. A formal process has to be instituted by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth for leadership succession to ensure a smooth transition from religious leadership to lay leadership in the sponsored academies.
2. Present leaders believe in the mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

3. The Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth should continue their sponsored works because the sponsored works carry on the mission, vision, and charism of the founders of the Congregation, which is service to the poor.

4. Specific leadership characteristics such as: articulation, commitment to the mission, Catholicity, spirituality, understanding the role of sponsorship, competency, and collaboration are nonnegotiable for leadership in the five sponsored academies.

5. Not enough research exists on the subject of sponsorship or sponsored works in the field of education.

6. Two academics have recognized the need for collaborative leadership and have successfully implemented team leadership.

7. Groups of people connected to the Congregation such as the Seven Associates are underratized in areas of leadership and professional expertise.

Implications

The following are implications for policy, practice, and knowledge:

Policy

1. Superintendents of Catholic archdioceses and leaders of Religious Congregations face the challenge of the shift in administration from religious leadership of Catholic elementary and secondary schools to lay leadership. It is important that in this new era of Catholic schooling that the core of the Catholic school remains the men and women who lead the schools. The formation of these new leaders is critical because they will be asked to lead the schools in the exceptional gift that is the school’s Catholic identity. Catholic archdiocesan leaders and leaders of Religious Congregations must recognize
that deep change is necessary on their part regarding recruitment, development, and retention of lay administrators. The lay administrator comes to the organization not as a member of the Religious Congregation and therefore, must not be expected to function as a religious regarding his/her time commitments. Both the Archdiocesan models and those of Religious Congregations must develop more broad-based styles of leadership capacity throughout the school community to encourage succession leadership in individuals who demonstrate skills in administration. This weaves ongoing leadership development into the life of the school community and fosters continuous professional development for teachers and administrators.

Practice

1. Religious Congregations, like the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, face similar challenges regarding sponsored works. Religious communities are at a turning point today regarding the leadership of their sponsored works and the vision is not what has changed—it is the heart of that vision. The Religious of Sacred Heart of the Child Jesus began a Network of Sacred Heart Schools. The Sacred Heart Schools are sponsored works with religious and lay leadership. The religious community has 19 Sacred Heart Schools with lay boards of trustees and some religious who really want to be part of their mission. What the Religious of the Sacred Heart of the Child Jesus have in common with the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is the reliance of the Boards of Trustees on the Congregational Leadership and the other religious for ideas and dialogue about the state of the religious congregation and the status of the school. The responsibility does not stop with them. Ownership is what leads to great strength in an
institution (Magna, p. 36). The challenge both communities face is how to continue the legacy of the sponsored work in the changing climate of Church and society?

Another religious community, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, confronts the same dilemmas as those facing the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and the Religious of the Sacred Heart of the Child Jesus regarding sponsored works and education. Sister Maia Yeck, RSM (1996) believes the answer is to create "collaboration and leadership" (p. 42). Letting go of the vestiges of the past and inviting people to journey in whatever capacity they can to bring spirit and life back to the Catholic schools. Through leadership development, setting long-term goals, and transforming the culture, Religious communities will be the major channels of leadership for Lay administrators.

Knowledge

1. Catholic dioceses in Australia began a study on principal succession as the task of finding principals became more difficult. The change from religious to Lay leadership is causing complex problems in attracting qualified and experienced leaders to take up the administrative positions in the schools. This goes to the core values of the mission and vision of the Catholic school leadership.

Due to the changes in the Church and in society, Catholic dioceses in Australia were concerned about the administrative positions in their Catholic schools. In 1998, the Catholic Education Office Sydney developed the Catholic School Leadership Framework in consultation with school principals and system leaders. The goal of the committee was to "identify core competencies required by school leaders if the school vision, mission, strategic priorities and daily work realities are to be effectively implemented" (Kleinheinz & Ingvarson, 2004, p. 7). The leadership qualities identified in the Framework link to
the "core purpose of the Catholic school" which is identified in the vision and mission statement of each Catholic school community in the archdiocese. They identified six foundations of leadership: religious leadership, leadership for learning, human resources leadership, strategic leadership, organizational leadership and personal dimensions of leadership. The Framework was developed for integrating professional development programs. It is also intended as a reference for procedures related to selection, role negotiation, personal development and review of leaders (Kleinhenz & Ingvason, 2004, p. 6).

The Australian archdioceses in conjunction with the Catholic Education Leadership have suggested the following to make the principalship more manageable and enjoyable: improvement of educational and support structures and services to schools; improvement of staffing schedules, given the increasing demands on schools; restructuring of the role of the principals to reduce the multiple areas of responsibility; review of the demands and expectations on principals in terms of upholding the Catholic identity of the school in a period of significant change in the Church.

Recommendations

The following are the researcher's recommendations for policy, practice, and knowledge:

Policy

1. Develop an appraisal process to begin to look at the leadership characteristics that emerged from the study and initiate a process to identify those characteristics in potential leadership candidates.
2. Introduce a mentoring program designed to integrate mission, vision, charism, and the sponsorship relationship to ensure a clear transition from religious to lay leadership in the five sponsored academies.

3. Initiate an In-service program for all employees in the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity to review the new Sponsorship Manual and to understand the role of the Director of Sponsorship Services.

Practice

1. Establish a professional development program to prepare lay leaders for their roles in the sponsored academies. This program should include three components: spirituality, religious studies, and educational leadership. As lay leaders emerge in education, emphasis on the qualifications needed in their administrative role in the sponsored institution is important.

2. Provide time for an annual retreat for the administrators of the five sponsored academies to focus on the charism of the founders of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity so the sponsorship relationship and fidelity to the mission become passions for the administrators.

3. Seton Associates: the Sisters of Charity are laywomen and men who have made a commitment to the Sisters of Charity in their daily lives. Develop a survey to identify their professional education, experience, and willingness to respond to the leadership call for the five sponsored academies or to act as mentors for new administrators.

Knowledge

1. Conduct research on the role of the sponsorship relationship in schools owned by Religious Congregations. There are countless research articles on sponsorship and
healthcare systems but there is a scarcity of research on the sponsorship relationship and education.

2. Initiate a research study pertaining to succession leadership planning for Catholic schools sponsored by Religious Congregations and those under the auspices of an arch/diocese for sustaining qualified leadership for the future of Catholic education.
References


APPENDIX A

Letter from

Mother Mary Xavier McKeegan
Vicarress of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth

to the

Honorable T. F. Randolph
Governor of New Jersey
August 5, 1870
Your very respectfully,

M. M. Xavier
Superior of the Sisters of Charity

MOTHER M. XAVIER TO THE HONORABLE T. F. RANDOLPH, GOVERNOR OF NEW JERSEY

Honorable T. F. Randolph
Governor of New Jersey

St. Elizabeth's Academy
Matawan, N. J., August 9, 1870

Honorable Sir,—The old saying: "One good turn deserves another" is, I think, capable of two constructions, and I am at present inclined to put upon it the one, that in accordance with our wants shall do us one more favor, a very great one too? We have at present an Industrial School and at Paterson, a Hospital for which we are desirous of obtaining an yearly appropriation from the State; money can you obtain this for us? I say for us, but it is for so pittance gain to ourselves that we desire it. The reasons for which we ask it, and even feel that we are entitled to it, are that both these institutions are for the benefit of the public, irrespective of creed, country, or place of residence. Our most earnest wish is to devote both all deserving applicants this our present resources would not allow us to do. In the Industrial School, (at Paterson by name), there is, of course, a certain yearly charge to pupils, so that by many it is considered a self-supporting institution, and a claim such as we are making in its favor might be called preposterous. But there is another side to the question. It is connected with the intention of making it a charitable, not a money-making institution; it is yet in the infancy, and there is upon it a debt of $25,000 upon which the interest has to be paid. It has already received as many pupils free, as its income can possibly afford, yet we are almost daily obliged to refuse applicants whose admission would be a great act of charity, and a public benefit— for God only knows how many poor young girls go to destruction for the want of such aid as they would receive therein, but have not the means to procure for themselves. The pupils receive daily a certain number of hours tuition in the branches of a good common education, and are taught housekeeping and useful trades, and are thus prepared to become useful and virtuous members of society, instead of idlers and burdens, not to say pests.

St. Joseph's Hospital too, is at the service, all—want of room is the only obstacle to admission, and again, how many have we not been obliged to refuse on this account. It is full to crossing—even the patients are used for sick rooms. The building needs enlarging, and we are most anxious to do it, but again, want of means forbids it, and we must stand still and turn from the door numbers of poor sick, perilous for want of proper care. There is a debt on the hospital of

No answer yet, yours ever after.
$40,000, with interest, amounting to $34,400, a year. Up to this time the chief support of the institution has been charitable contributions — the income from paying patients being comparatively but an item, as so many are received free; no one is refused for want of means to pay; if they are sick or suffering and have no one to care for them that is their ticket of admission, no matter where they come from within the state, since then the state may claim itself of the Institution, it is only fair that it should contribute its quota towards supporting it. The citizens of Petersburg have contributed freely and still do so, but up to the present we have only been able with great difficulty to meet the payment of the interest on the immense debt — to even think of building some ward under such circumstances, but in a manufacturing place like Petersburg filled with a working population living in boarding houses, the most frightful accidents are of almost daily occurrence and to be obliged as we so often are, to refuse admission to these poor minded creatures, who sometimes have not a relation in the place to see to them and have no refuge but the poor-house, is too heart-rending to allow it to be borne in silence, and we cannot refrain from at least raising our voices in their behalf — shall we plead in vain? Surely not; do not the miserable claim to be the most philanthropic nation on the globe, and is it not for suffering humanity that we now implore their aid? And should you, dear Sir, consent to be instrumental in obtaining what we ask, you will have the consoling assurance of having done for your fellow creatures a good work, the extent of which is incalculable, but whose reward will be surely last up for you in heaven, and for yourself and all who may contribute to this good work shall daily ascend the fervent prayers of

Your humble suppliants,

M. M. Xavier and the
Sisters of Charity
APPENDIX B

Correspondence
February 2005

Dear Sister Maureen,

As a doctoral candidate in the Educational Administration and Supervision program in the College of Education at Seton Hall University, I am writing to request your permission to conduct research for my dissertation entitled "Leadership Characteristics Necessary for Succession Leadership in the Sponsored Academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. I am contacting you to request permission to interview the leadership and a select group of teachers as part of my research.

The purpose of my research is to examine the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity as they relate to charisma, mission, and vision in relationship to educational leadership and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. For this research, I have chosen our five sponsored academies. It is my goal to determine the characteristics necessary for leadership succession in the tradition of "Charity."

I would like to interview the principals and a select number of teachers from each Academy. I would also ask that each participant complete a short, demographic survey. The data from the survey and interviews will be collected, analyzed, and presented in a systematic manner so that I may ascertain the characteristics necessary for leadership succession in the five sponsored academies.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. If you require any further information, my home telephone number is 973-377-4377 and my work number is 973-290-5439. You may reach me by e-mail at tbuno@scnj.org.

Sincerely,

Sister Teresa A. Bruno, SC
May 2005

Dear,

As a doctoral candidate in the Educational Administration and Supervision program in the College of Education at Seton Hall University, I am writing to request your permission to interview you as part of my research for my dissertation entitled: Leadership Characteristics Necessary for Succession Leadership in the Sponsored Academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

The purpose of my research is to examine the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity as they relate to charism, mission, and vision in relationship to educational leadership and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. For this research, I have chosen our five sponsored academies. It is my goal to determine the characteristics necessary for leadership succession in the tradition of "Charity."

Participation in this study will require approximately one hour of your time. You will be asked to complete a short demographic survey and participate in an interview of approximately one hour. You will be asked to complete an Informed Consent Form.

In the event that you are willing to participate in my research, I will send you the Demographic Survey and the Informed Consent Form in a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Participation in this research study is, of course, voluntary. You may be assured that your interview responses will be kept anonymous. You will be free to withdraw from the research at any time. Your taped interview will be coded for confidentiality and kept in a locked cabinet. No one but the researcher will have access to the interview scripts.

In the event that you are willing to participate in my research study, I would kindly ask that you forward a letter on letterhead to me (via US Mail, or E-mail) stating your willingness to participate. Furthermore, if you require additional information, or have any questions, please feel free to phone (973-377-4377) or e-mail me (bruno@snu.org). I would be more than happy to answer any of your questions.

Sincerely,

Sister Teresa A. Bruno, SC
APPENDIX C

Demographic Survey
Demographic Information

The following information provided a simple profile for each respondent in the research. This information is for descriptive purposes only. The purpose is to gain knowledge of your professional background. All information will be held in strict confidentiality.

1. Please list your name, age, and your current leadership position.

2. How many years have you worked in your current position?

3. If you are a Sister of Charity, how many years have you been professed?

4. What is your highest degree? In what field of study did you earn that degree?

5. Please circle one:
   
   Married     Single
APPENDIX D

Sample Interview
This is an interview with a Sister of Charity.

1. How would you describe your ministry in the sponsored works of the Sisters of Charity?
The office of mission and charism is pivotal, central and this is a central role especially in this time as more and more laity are collaborating with us and we need to continue to educate them in the mission of the Sisters of Charity. My ministry is very pivotal.

Can you add to that? How does your central role affect sponsorship?
Well, mission is central to what we do. It is not our mission but the mission of the Church. It is different from other places and being sponsored by the Sisters of Charity is essential right now. I see a lot of our future in our sponsored works because we have "same control" over them. We do not in some of the other places. Therefore, how do we promote the mission, charism, and the works of who we are as Sisters of Charity is very essential so we need to continue to work with our Sisters and the laity to educate them to that role.

2. What are the mission, vision, and particular charism of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth? How do you carry out the mission in your particular leadership role?
Well, I think we have a number of statements — we have our mission statement and our quote from Luke “to proclaim good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives” and to set the downtrodden free,” and if we really, really, meditate on those words, they are extremely challenging, and call us to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.
We just saw this video about the Catholic social teachings of the Church and that was the question at the end — “How are you being called to travel in the footsteps of Jesus?” They use that quote from Luke twice in the video, which meant a lot to us as a statement in our Constitution — Toward Boundless Charity.
We have our Vision Statement from 1995, which asks us to look at service and advocacy. We have our Direction Statement from 1999 and we affirmed that statement in 2003 to work toward the elimination of oppression of women, to work for health care for all. In addition, just because it is in my head so recently, those pieces are so pivotal to the Catholic social teachings of the Church.
I feel that we are on the mark as a Congregation but we need to say, “What can we do?” “How can we do it?” I think that each day that is a challenge to us to carry it out in our own paricular ministry and especially in my own particular leadership role as Coordinator of Mission Services.
How do I challenge other folks? I do believe that we need to educate our employees here at Convent. We need to continue to put our that mission and vision. I think that when we are on a Board, it is our role to call folks back to remembering why we are serving - it is a challenge. Let me just put it that way - it is a challenge each day.

Do you see any characteristics that come out of that for leadership in the Sisters of Charity? Reflect on the characteristics of your leadership role.

I think that every person who is a leader in our particular institutions really needs to be imbued with the mission and to understand fully the role of sponsorship. I think that as a Congregation we have an obligation to continue to educate leaders in that role of mission and sponsorship. I am talking not only about our lay colleagues but also about our own sisters.

You have to be very forthright and speak to what you believe. You have to speak out. I feel that is one of the pieces that we have to keep calling ourselves to. I believe it is important that in our academies our administrators be committed to the faith and to Catholic education.

I think I do that when I meet with folks and talk about what is the mission of the Sisters of Charity and ask them how they look at the Direction Statement. How do we inculcate that into all of our daily ministries?

Do you meet with lay in your role?

I do not particularly at this moment. Most of the mission leaders in our hospitals are sisters at this point. I have had occasion to meet with a few of them and we are going to try to be more intentional about that. In our academies, they do not have the luxury of having an extra person. It really is the role of the administrator and/or to call on this office. I do not think this has been fully utilized by some of our institutions and I have to work harder at that also. I have to be more intentional regarding these pieces.

3. How has the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity helped you perform your ministry? What suggestions would you have to assist the Congregation to advance your ministry of mission and charism?

When I first took this position in '99, it was totally nothing. There was never an office before this. Therefore, it was very difficult at the beginning. Things kept evolving and I do think that the leadership of the congregation helped and assisted so that many things have happened over the last six years and I think I have been challenged by the Congregation to continually improve. What more can we do? What can we do differently? How can we reach out? Be more intentional about needing mission leaders, etc. The council/leadership has been pushing me to do that and I have been pushing them to set up an orientation program that we can do for our employees here at Convent. So, I think that as it evolves each year something new has happened. Therefore, I do think the Congregation has helped me to improve and they challenge me, certainly to continue to improve. Assisting the congregation to advance the ministry - I do not feel that our
Sisters utilize the office as much as they could. I could be available for faculties, parents, boards. I have done some and some have called on me. I have offered services but it has not been picked up. So, I guess I have to be more assertive and say, what can I do to help you? People seem to be looking for help and maybe they are looking in other places. If so, that is fine but if they are doing nothing in the realm of mission and charism of the Sisters of Charity, which is, also the mission of the church then I think we need to be more intentional.

If they are doing nothing how does that affect the present ministry -- academies, hospitals, etc?

It will be a ministry but it will not have the characteristics of the Sisters of Charity. I think we need to leave our mark. We have places where we have withdrawn where there is totally lay leadership and the charism has continued for many years. An example is Saint Michael's in Newark. Up until a few years ago, they came every year with their students for a heritage tour. Our sisters have not been there in a number of years. That is what I am talking about when I say an imbuing of the Spirit. I know there are probably some other places, I just happened to think of that example.

Do you think considering your six years in this job and mission and charism, do you think if we don’t do that in our academies or hospitals, what will the end result be?

It will probably have another spirit and not our spirit. If we sponsor it, it is incumbent upon us to be sure of the mission and charism.

The responsibility, then, is ours.

Yes

4. What motivates you to minister as a Sister of Charity institution?

I have been connected with a sponsored work since 1961. I was in a sponsored academy for 24 years. I have to say that I learned -- I really did not know what that meant when I went there. I had taught in a co-ed high school before that. I knew I was going to this all-girls' school and I wasn’t too thrilled. Anyway, I guess as the years went on, I learned more and more. Of course, we had many sisters there and it was obvious that it was a Sister of Charity place when I first went there. Then, as the Sisters became fewer, and I moved into a new role in administration, and then really learned at the feet of Sister Hildegarde Marie, what sponsorship meant and how we had to guard, preserve, I guess is better, preserve our sponsorship role. Some other communities had lost their institutions because they had not paid attention to the bylaws. Members should be Sisters of Charity and they had opened it up very wide and some institutions were lost to religious congregations. I was very conscious of that and very imbued with it. I was very conscious that we were a piece of the whole. Even though we were separately incorporated with a Board of Trustees, the connector was always the Congregation. I never felt that I was an independent agent out there. I was very accountable to the
Congregation and I learned a lot. That is when sponsorship really first started in the 70's. Since then, I became Provincial and that whole piece, I became a member of hospital boards, and you saw how important it was to talk about who we are as Sisters of Charity and the mission of the Sisters of Charity. Then when I finished, and this office opened, I applied. I didn't know where it was going to take me. I love it. I do feel that I am imbued with the mission of the Sisters of Charity. I understand what sponsorship means and it doesn't mean that it is better or worse than anything else, I loved being in a parish school. There is no better competition and I wish our sisters would understand that.

You talked about accountability. Do you see that as a link to sponsorship?

Absolutely. There has to be accountability from the sponsored work to the sponsor and from the sponsor to the sponsored work. That has to be clear. What are the expectations?

You talked about your experience at the Academy of Saint Agnes. When you went there, it was almost all Sisters and now if you went there from the leadership down, it is mostly lay except for one sister.

What do you see as the characteristics necessary for Sisters of Charity to leave this legacy of leadership to the lay people? What should they be picking up on?

I think we have been blessed in the leader of that particular institution. She is the only lay leader in our educational institutions. I think that she was mentored. I think I was mentored by different people. Not necessarily by someone in administration but by people on the board, by the provincials. I think that I mentored my successor. She mentored the lay woman. Mentoring went on and I find that she is extremely thirsty for knowledge about what are the expectations. What do we expect from her as Sisters of Charity and of the institution? Whenever I am present at an event, Sisters of Charity are always mentioned. Well versed and I think she understands our mission sometimes better than some of our own sisters. That is not really a criticism; they take it for granted. If you talk to some of our lay colleagues from the healthcare institutions, they don't take it for granted. They are always asking, what do the Sisters want? What do you expect of us? I think that is what I am talking about regarding the education. We have to keep educating on who we are and what is the mission.

Was there a process – did you know that you would not be in that position and so you began to mentor that person?

No, I knew that I was not going to be in it about five months before it happened and the person who took my place had worked with me as an assistant for seven years and I think it was by consensus and I use to talk about things.

Then it was an inside appointment.

Yes
Is that how it has been at St. Alf’s all along?

I would say. Yes, the present principal was too.

Was there a seeking of anyone from the outside or was it by appointment? Was there a search?

It was an appointment by the Board of Trustees without a search. Tina was the principal. The other person moved from Principal to Director. Then the Director left and we did an outside search. That person lasted for a few years but it was not a good match...it was not a good fit.

What could have been done to make it a good fit?

A search committee was set up from among the members of the Board. We interviewed three or four applicants. It is interesting because the woman came across wonderfully well. She had been a graduate of the school. I think the mission was not the problem necessarily. I think when you are looking for someone you need to talk about who the Sisters of Charity are especially in an institution where there are’t that many Sisters. Do they understand the structure – separately incorporated or advisory – I think we haven’t been fair even with some of the Sisters in putting them in positions where they didn’t really have a good orientation. That’s my observation over the number of years that I have watched this happen. I think there has to be a better orientation of our own Sisters. Unless you are involved in something you cannot know all the ins and outs of it. I think we as a Congregation have to do a better job

6. What do you understand the difference to be between ministry and mission? How does our relationship with the ministry help you to live the mission of the Sisters of Charity?

Ministry is what we do. Mission, I believe, is why we do it. I need to be motivated by mission in my ministry. Why am I doing what I am doing? Is it answering questions like who am I as a Sister of Charity? Am I carrying out the charism and bringing about the spirit of Vincent and Louise, Elizabeth and Mother Xavier to the people whom I meet? Do I listen to that gospel quote from Luke to open the eyes of the blind and serve the poor? Aaah, our own direction statements that tell us different directions and I think that is the mission. Therefore, when I look for a ministry, I need to ask myself some of those questions. Does this fit with who we say we are as Sisters of Charity? Absolutely, there is a relationship that helps you to live as long as you are doing it for the right reasons. I believe I am.

8. What characteristics do you see as necessary in your role as leader in a Sister of Charity sponsored work?
First, I hope you would be imbued with the mission and then have good administrative skills and organizational skills, people skills. You have to work at balancing all of the relationships, balancing your life so that you don't become a workaholic. I think, to be open to hearing what people say and what the congregation asks you to do. Open to learning. Know your goals and know that the role of sponsorship has a steep learning curve if you become a leader in a sponsored work. You have to learn what the bylaws means, what the bylaws mean and what is the connection. You should never feel that you are an independent agent. There is a connection always. It is a relationship — that is how we describe sponsorship. Relationships mean that there is a connection between the community and the sponsored work, and the person who is the leader in that sponsored work.

10. How does your ministry affect your spirituality? How does mission, vision, and charism of the Sisters of Charity influence your spirituality?

The mission, vision, and charism do influence my spirituality. I have, over the years, become fascinated with Louise de Marillac, one of our foundresses. Vincent is always quoted and we kind of grew up with Vincent and Elizabeth Seton because she was American has powerful influences. And, of course, I love Mother Xavier, she was such a woman of courage. The reading that you do and the spirituality you begin to develop — it deeply influence these people. I believe in our mission to the economically poor. What can each of us do? What can I do even if I cannot go personally to a certain place? How do I keep that foremost in my mind? The vision statements and where we are going for the future is a concern to me. Our charism, the beautiful gift that we have given to the Church. It is a gift of the Spirit that is kind of a lucid and a gift that is hard to define. We have been a gift to the Church as Sisters of Charity. This Congregation has been a tremendous gift to me personally and spirituality. My spirituality has deepened over the years. I pray differently than I did twenty-five years ago. I have been influenced by some of the movements within the Church. I'm very cognizant of inclusive language and all of that kind of thing. I like to think broader — God has no gender. It's funny, I went back and I looked at my 25th jubilee program when I was doing my 50th and I thought, oh wow! The language in particular hit me. I didn't even realize that whole thing was happening in me. All the places I've been, all the people I've met, and some of our own Sisters have challenged me in a lot of ways and all the other folks I've met have influenced my spirituality. My ministry sometimes affects my spirituality in that I get to imbued with work. I work hard and I have to work hard at balancing.

I think many Sisters of Charity have that high work ethic.

Sometimes I do think the ministry does affect my spirituality. I like being here because I do believe this is holy ground. Working out of here has affected me for the good. I think the balance is critical. We work hard at that.

5. What do you understand when you hear the term "sponsorship?" Do you see a correlation between your place of ministry and the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth?
The term sponsorship is one that is not defined in Canon Law. It wasn’t really used until the late 60’s or early 70’s. It was on all of our things that we were “sponsored.” I’m not sure it was always clear. In some cases, even today, it is not clear. I think we have been working hard over the last four to five years as a congregation to try and clarify that term and the essential elements. That connection to the Congregation and our fiduciary responsibility. When I think about sponsorship, I think about the word relationship because that is what it is. I think it is different from being in a parish or in a social work which has no connection necessarily to the Congregation and sponsorship. We are working as a group to develop a manual which will be very helpful especially to our lay colleagues. It will also be a help to some of our Sisters who have not been involved in sponsorship. There is absolutely a correlation between place and the Sisters of Charity. Did I feel that when I was at St. Al’s Academy? Absolutely. I felt a correlation that where we were ministering as Sisters of Charity, the Congregation was there. I’ve never felt abandoned by the Community. I always felt that they were there. They didn’t have to be there to hold your hand every day.

Do you think that ministries that are not part of our sponsored works feel that where they are the Sisters of Charity are? Does that make a difference?

Sometimes, I think they don’t. Sometimes they see it as they are the ones responsible. I think that people have to come back to that connectedness. A number of people do feel they are connected. Sometimes it is hard especially if you are in a diocesan setting of a regional school. The Diocese is really the sponsor if you want to use those words. You have to have an allegiance there but I would always hope that people would be able to come to the congregation for support. I think the Congregation has worked hard in trying to support every ministry through the years. It has not always been seen that way.

So, what is the biggest difference between a sponsored work and another ministry?

It is a different relationship that is the best way to describe it. We are the direct sponsor of our sponsored works. We are not the direct sponsor of where we staff. The connection is there but it is different.

7. In looking for solutions to the challenges that you encounter every day, how do you see the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity helping you?

From where I am today, I don’t necessarily have challenges every day. I do have challenges within the framework of this governance piece. There are challenges to develop the offices, to have a little bit more authority, to keep the lines of communication open. I think that the Congregation has been helpful. When I use the word Congregation I mean leadership in this particular role. I’m not always sure that the Congregation as a whole understand all the pieces that go into these service areas. I think the Leadership helps me. I’m someone that if I don’t understand or I don’t agree, I will talk to the person I need to talk to. I bring it up. In that way I help them too. In the same way, they
help me. The communication piece is probably the biggest piece. You have to keep the lines open.

9. How would your ministry be strengthened if you were sure of leadership succession in your role as a leader?

I think that if I could put a hat on from my past, I was only willing to leave because I knew there was someone willing to come. I think in this day and age, however, we have, even in this position, if I want to leave or move on to something else, I do have a concern. I think it is about who will take our place. Even sometimes when you do succession planning, it doesn't work. We did that in one of our health care institutions and the person left and wasn't there to do the succeeding. Sometimes it works out for the best anyway.

What works out for the best?

Sometimes if the person you thought would be the successor leaves, someone comes in just as good or even better.

What about your position?

If I thought someone was coming in, it would make me feel a little freer.

If you were interested in leaving, how would you put in place the beginnings of leadership succession?

It wouldn't be any time actually. It would be leadership's role to do that. We would have to do a lot of prodding and pushing and planning. I think I could be helpful working with someone or orienting them to the next piece. Even on a Board you try to help with succession planning. Who may come next? It's really hard. It is a very difficult thing to do in this day and age. It is obvious in many of our roles that it will not always be sisters.

Do you think it is valuable in these internal roles to do succession planning of some sort?

Yes, I do. I think we can try. I think a lot of people don't see the value of the internal roles. And yet, there is so much to be done. The Congregation is running a corporation. I think it would be very helpful and we need to begin to tap people and say, would you be willing. Especially in terms of our educational institutions. Who knows where it is going to go.

Do you have any questions or comments now that we are finished the formal interview?

I love doing sponsorship. I find it is life giving. We have to look at it in the positive way. To do all that we physically can to ensure the continuation of many of our
sponsored works. Maybe some of them will take a different shape. We may not have all of them. We may need to let go. That is always difficult. The way things are going today in society – some of the places where we don’t really have control are sliding away from us. We believe in education and we believe in health care and social services since our very foundation. I hope there are ways we can continue to focus on those directions. It is a real challenge.
APPENDIX E

Informed Consent
May 2005

Dear

As a doctoral candidate in the Educational Administration and Supervision program in the College of Education at Seton Hall University, I am writing to request your permission to interview you as part of my research for my dissertation entitled: Leadership Characteristics Necessary for Succession Leadership in the Sponsored Academies of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

Purpose

The purpose of my research is to examine the leadership characteristics of the Sisters of Charity as they relate to charisma, mission, and vision in relationship to educational leadership and in particular to appointed leadership in the five sponsored academies owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. For this research, I have chosen our five sponsored academies. It is my goal to determine the characteristics necessary for leadership succession in the tradition of "Charity."

Procedures/Instruments

Participation in this study will require approximately one hour of your time. You will be asked to complete a short, demographic survey and participate in a taped interview of approximately one hour. You will be asked to sign and date this Informed Consent Form.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this research study is, of course, voluntary. You may be assured that your taped interview will be kept confidential and anonymous. You will be free to withdraw from the research at any time. Your taped interview will be coded for confidentiality and kept in a locked cabinet.

Anonymity/Confidentiality

You may be assured that your interview will be kept confidential and anonymous. You will be free to withdraw from the research at any time. Your taped interview will be coded for confidentiality and kept in a locked cabinet.

Risks/Benefits

There are no anticipated risks or benefits because of your participation in this study.
Contact Information

In the event that you are willing to participate in my research study, I would kindly ask that you sign and date this consent form, and complete the demographic survey. Once all materials are completed, please return them to me in the enclosed stamped and addressed envelope that I have included. Furthermore, if you require additional information, or have any questions, please feel free to phone (973-377-4377), or e-mail me (tanwe@cnn.org). I would be more than happy to answer any of your questions.

Thank you for offering your time to participate in this research study. I truly appreciate the opportunity to engage in the interview process with you.

Content

I agree to participate in this research study as it has been described to me.

_____________________________  _________________________
Signature                      Date