Catholic Social Teaching in Their Own Words: Oral Histories of College Students Learning CST

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Abstract

This research offers insight into what undergraduates at five Catholic colleges and universities learned about Catholic Social Teaching (CST) during their college experience. The study used a purposive sample of twenty-six personal interviews with students who were exposed to CST either in the classroom or through some co-curricular activity. The interviews consisted of open-ended and demographic questions resulting in oral histories about the students' opinions and experiences relative to CST. Qualitative and quantitative analysis of the interviews revealed generally consistent findings, with some variation among the most diverse students in the sample. The results provide support for the intentional teaching of CST in Catholic institutions and suggest potential practices for teaching CST with diverse populations.[1]

The oft-repeated claim that Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is the "best-kept secret" in the Church[2] suggests that CST is a relatively new phenomenon, one that just needs to be "discovered" by those who have not been fortunate enough to know about it. Yet, as readers will know, the "modern" tradition of CST began in 1891 when Pope Leo XIII issued

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[1] Other researchers who contributed to this study include Kathleen Maas Weigert, at Loyola University Chicago, who collected initial focus group data; William Purcell and Shawn Kenney, at the University of Notre Dame and Fordham University, respectively, who conducted several of the interviews; and Jennifer Reed Bouley, at the College of Saint Mary, who helped code many of the interviews. Jay Brandenberger, Notre Dame, assisted with editing early drafts.

[2] Edward DeBerri et al., *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003).

the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of Labor), which was written during the height of the industrial revolution.[3] Two documents from the last quarter century are especially important as guideposts for the promotion of CST in parishes and Catholic educational institutions. In 1998, the United States Conference on Catholic Bishops issued "Sharing Catholic Social Teaching" to proclaim the essential place of social teaching in the Catholic faith.[4] In 2008, the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) published "Catholic Higher Education and Catholic Social Teaching: A Vision Statement," which was refined and reissued in 2012.[5] That document calls for Catholic colleges and universities to implement CST across the curriculum.

In general, CST is transmitted to students in three ways: through traditional classroom teaching, advocacy, and direct service.[6] In the classroom, students learn the basic principles of CST through lectures and reading official documents and theologians' reflections.[7] In a few instances, institutions provide courses leading to a minor or concentration. One example is the Catholic Social Tradition minor at the University of Notre Dame. This program, with faculty and courses from a number of departments, introduces students to both current CST and the classic texts and teachings of the broader Catholic Intellectual Tradition. A similar program at Creighton University, called Justice and Peace Studies, provides students with a minor that includes a three-credit required course titled "Catholic Social Teaching." (For a detailed list of Catholic institutions that include CST in the core curriculum or a specific program, see Weigert et al. in this issue.)

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[3] Pope Leo XIII, "Rerum Novarum: Encyclical Letter on the Conditions of Labor," http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html (accessed March 26, 2018).

[4] United States Conference on Catholic Bishops, "Sharing Catholic Social Teaching," http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/sharing-catholic-social-teaching-challenges-and-directions.cfm (accessed March 26, 2018).

[5] Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, "Catholic Higher Education and Catholic Social Teaching: A Vision Statement," http://www.accunet.org/CST (accessed March 26, 2018).

[6] See Susan Crawford Sullivan and Ron Pagnucco, ed., *A Vision of Justice: Engaging Catholic Social Teaching on the College Campus* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014).

[7] Although there is some question as to the number of Catholic Social Teachings, one extant paradigm in the literature states that there are seven basic principles of CST. See http://www.catholiccharities-md.org/parish-social-ministry/catholic-social-teaching.html.

A second way that students become exposed to and learn about CST is through advocacy. One excellent example is the Human Rights Program at the University of Dayton. The program was created in 1998 with the goal to educate and train future human rights professionals. The program integrates CST with human rights principles and the study of the law.[8] In 2010, for example, students in the program worked through the Ohio state legislature to pass a law (SB 235) that addressed human trafficking within the context of CST.[9]

Finally, it would be difficult to find a Catholic college in the United States that does not support some form of direct service or service learning for students either as a course requirement, as a campus ministry activity, or as volunteer work. The hope with service, in relation to CST, is that engagement with those on the margins might inculcate in students the values of CST. For example, the CST principle of option for the poor and vulnerable calls on us to assist immigrants in need. In Philadelphia, both La Salle University and St. Joseph's University have programs that send students across the city to work with a variety of organizations that aid immigrants. Similarly, DePaul University in Chicago provides its law students opportunities to assist immigrants seeking legal assistance.

This short list of examples makes it clear that Catholic educational institutions across the United States have sought to promote CST. It is a different question, however, whether these efforts have been successful in teaching CST to students. We addressed this question by using interviews to capture the ways students *talk about* CST. We wanted to learn: (1) What principles and/or texts of CST do students across different campuses talk about the most? (2) How do they talk about CST? What terms or concepts seemed to have resonance across campuses and why? (3) How has Catholic Social Teaching in higher education influenced how students define justice? (4) Can we see differences in student responses that reflect students' different backgrounds in terms of race, class, and gender? Finally, in sum, we sought to know: (5) Have our recent efforts to promote CST in our Catholic institutions made any difference in the views and behaviors of our students? This question was answered by listening to students across multiple campuses.

[8] Ron Pagnucco and Mark Ensalaco, "Human Rights, Catholic Social Teaching, and the Liberal Rights Tradition," in *A Vision of Justice: Engaging Catholic Social Teaching On the College Campus,* ed. Crawford Sullivan and Pagnucco (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), 139-160.

[9] Pagnucco and Ensalaco, "Human Rights," 157-158.

Oral Histories Show Patterns

The value of these interviews is that they allow us to examine how students narrate their opinions about, reflections upon, and perceptions of CST. As historian Linda Shopes describes oral history, it is "self-conscious, disciplined conversation between two people about some aspect of the past considered by them to be of historical significance and intentionally recorded for the record…. [O]ral history is, at its heart, a dialogue."[10] By listening to how students describe CST, we can observe and evaluate how they are forming judgments from and about that experience. Further, we can see both whether and how they are integrating CST with other life choices.

Methodology

The CST Learning and Research initiative conducted twenty-six oral histories with students across five Catholic colleges and universities. Of the five Catholic institutions, four are affiliated with the Jesuit religious order, and one, Notre Dame, is sponsored by the U.S. Province of Priests and Brothers of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Subjects answered questions about how they define justice, what CST taught them about the purpose of their life, what specific college experiences stood out as formative, what research and internship opportunities they took advantage of, and how they think CST will figure in their lives after college. Our group also collected basic demographic data about the students' education, class, and ethnic and religious background, as well as their majors.[11] All subjects were upper-level (junior or senior) undergraduates, between the ages of twenty and twenty-two, who spent their entire college career at the same institution. They were either minors in Catholic Studies or CST programs, or part of a campus community engaged with CST.[12] Focus group interviews were held at the University

[10] Linda Shopes, "What Is Oral History?" *Making Sense of Evidence Series on History Matters: The U.S. Survey on the Web*, n.d., http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/oral/what.html.

[11] See the Appendix for the demographic and open-ended questions asked of respondents.

[12] Two of the subjects from Loyola University Chicago were not Catholic Studies minors, but Gannon Scholars, part of a four-year progressive program that awards students scholarships while imbuing "personal growth, academic excellence, and commitment to social justice." See https://www.luc.edu/gannon/gslp.shtml (last accessed March 26, 2018).

of Notre Dame and Loyola University Chicago between 2011 and 2013 to pretest the questions and length of interviews to see if they would provide relevant and significant results. Oral histories were collected at the University of Notre Dame, Loyola University Chicago, the University of Scranton, Fordham University, and Fairfield University between 2014 and 2016.[13] The oral histories were conducted one student at a time and by the same interviewer at each institution. Prior to the interviews, students signed an informed consent form clearly stating the nature of the research, the participant's voluntary choice to participate, and assurance of confidentiality of their responses.

Hypothesis

Because we deliberately chose Catholic Studies minors and students with informal or formal contact with CST, we expected uniformity in the responses of the interview subjects. Because the students were identified by professors as good representatives of their departments, we imagined that the subjects would be enthusiastic about their undergraduate experience with CST. We assumed that they would have careful responses to our question about justice because Catholic Studies curricula highlight social justice themes. We also thought that most subjects would have taken advantage of some co-curricular experiential learning opportunities, whether that be engaged learning courses on campus, alternative break immersion trips, internships, or other ways of earning credit involving hands-on work away from desks and lecture halls.

As for differences, we expected answers to vary according to students' majors and religious background. We thought, for example, that a student with no, few, or geographically restricted service learning opportunities would have very different things to say about CST from a student who was able to travel long distances across continents. We also thought we might see differences across disciplines. We wondered if students majoring in business fields, for example, might have different values as compared with students in health fields or the humanities and social sciences.

[13] Interviews were recorded with digital audio recorders. In most instances, the interviews were conducted in person, but in some instances they were conducted over the phone. All interviews were professionally transcribed.

Observations

The most impactful lessons were described by students involved with some version of social justice or CST-engaged learning outside the classroom. These lessons were derived from a broad range of co-curricular activities, including alternative break immersion courses, practicums, internships, and community-based instruction.

The Primacy of Alternative Break Immersion Experiences

Twenty-three of twenty-six students across the five campuses described "Alternative Break Immersion" as a cornerstone of their college education experience. Eight of the twenty-six students traveled abroad either to conduct research or to complete service-based projects. Some University of Scranton students worked at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama (STRI), for joint summer internship projects. Students across multiple universities spent time in various locations in Appalachia, including Bethlehem Farm in West Virginia and Appalachia-Science in the Public Interest, Mt. Vernon, Kentucky. Students also participated in academic or CST work in Uganda, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti.

When asked about their social justice or CST education, students reported two recurring impressions: (1) a coming to awareness of "structural" or "systemic" injustice that, in their words, produced feelings of transformation; (2) a determination that the practice of solidarity presented an important response to injustice. Interviewees talked consistently about how classroom readings and community work, in tandem, taught them to see the building blocks of social change within larger frameworks. Students felt this was transformational because it expanded their perspective of service beyond the transactional levels of almsgiving they were typically taught in elementary and secondary schools (parochial, in most instances). We assign the word *transformational* to experiences that students describe as worldview-changing — characteristic of events, encounters, or classes that significantly complicate or disrupt established beliefs or perceived truths. Loyola 1 described a trip to Los Angeles during which his eyes were opened by observing the multiple overlapping levels necessary to operate a community non-profit: "We didn't do a lot of hands-on service in that experience…. [W]e were just looking at different structures, different agencies and how they address the population of homelessness in Los Angeles." Responding to the question, "What is justice?" Notre Dame 2 answered

by describing what it *is not* based on her experience working in the Dominican Republic, where she observed the mistreatment of Haitians. She called low wages and discrimination "structural injustice." Fordham 2 talked about a favorite engaged learning seminar in the Bronx that included classroom discussions of how the students' community work intersected with assigned interdisciplinary readings on Catholic social justice. "[The professor asked us] to relate our services out in the Bronx and also connect it to the system, which I think is like… it makes it easier for people to see injustice when they're working with people rather than just look at it from afar and look in the history books."

The Importance of Classroom Learning

Students also placed significant weight on assigned readings, lectures, and instructors for shaping their ideas. Many related how the classroom experience moved them by opening doors to foreign places, introducing liberating concepts, or helping them find their own particular way forward. For Fairfield 1, a liberation theology class brought the world into the room for her: "It changed my whole life. Basically, the class was all about El Salvador, talking about people like Oscar Romero and… Ignacio Ellacuria and just wonderful theologians that did their work on the ground…. Like we do our work at a desk but not from the desk." Scranton 3 described how a prison literature class focused "on one specific topic so in depth and gaining all sides, all perspectives and reading from different people's experiences across time… and then applying like what can we do and how can we fix this, how can we make it better…." For Fairfield 2, it all happened on campus in the classroom. She had not been able to go on immersion trips, but joined Engineers without Borders. Even the introduction to her major embedded justice goals: "It included this huge teaching of clean water [which]… especially at our taps, is probably the greatest human achievement out there. Second is probably the lightbulb. But there are so many parts of this world that don't have access to clean water and yet in the United States, we'll pay hundreds of thousands of dollars for bottled water."

Coming to Awareness of Class Privilege and Structures

Students also expressed how meaningful it was to develop awareness of their own positionality and responsibility in the larger structures and systems they learned about in CST classes. The word *privilege* was mentioned by ten of the twenty-six students at four of the five

universities. As Fordham 4 described lessons gained during an "urban plunge" experience that launched her college years: "I'm from a very small town, and so you kind of start to see these inherent privileges. There's a lot of talk about white privilege and what does that mean…. A lot of students…, growing up in very homogenous places, haven't understood this." Notre Dame 3 came to awareness of her privilege in an influential "Inside/Out" course on criminal justice that meets in a prison. She became acquainted with prisoners mainly by interviewing them about what they wanted to do, their "hopes and dreams." These conversations caused her to see "how stacked society is against these people." This class, she claimed, "flipped [her] world upside down." Fordham 2 spoke about her enthusiasm for a class that combined service with interdisciplinary readings, noting how illuminating both were for students who "don't realize they have privilege."

Classes that focused on CST also provided bountiful learning experiences that went well beyond exposure to systems and structures. For example, Notre Dame 1 talked about a class called "Heart's Desire" that challenges students to think about their future in terms of vocation. She remembered that it raised questions for her like, "What are you passionate about and how can you help people with it? Where do your gifts align with your calling?" An introductory class on the papal encyclicals also influenced her: "The Catholic faith really asks for us… to serve," she reflected, "to know, love, and serve what our Catholic faith really asks us to do and then [mixes] with developing that moral conscience and just really living out our morals and what it means to us." She stated that she is letting this moral imperative guide her career path.

CST That Reverberates

Interview responses resonated with one another across universities. Students echoed one another's language with words like *privilege* (ten times), *structures* (six times), *solidarity* (eleven times), and *human dignity* (fourteen times). Other common words or phrases included *magis*, a word popular at Jesuit institutions. *Magis* — Latin for "the more" — describes a spiritual ideal of living in full generosity, a state of being that St. Ignatius claimed is achievable when one's vocation is discerned and paired with the needs of the world.[14] Students at

[14] "A Pocket Guide to Jesuit Education: The Habit of Discerning," Division of University Mission and Ministry, Boston College, http://www.bc.edu/offices/mission/publications/guide/discernment.html (last accessed September 21, 2017).

Loyola and the University of Scranton mentioned *magis* nine times. The term *preferential option* was used only four times, but the words *poor*, *poverty*, and *marginalized* were mentioned twenty-four times. Many students talked about a life of service either by way of specific career paths or by committing significant parts of their lives in service to others. Students did not tend to mention specific authors, saints, historical figures, events, or texts. This was somewhat surprising to the researchers because we anticipated that the students from Jesuit schools would likely invoke the name of St. Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits, while Notre Dame students would be prone to mention the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Blessed Basil Moreau. The terms that reverberated across all five campuses suggest that students are remembering common concepts if not signature pieces of CST literature, key persons, or institutions. Except for the frequent mention of the term *magis* by the students from Jesuit institutions, it appears that the charism or religious affiliation of the institution the student attended had minimal impact on their responses to the interview questions.

Solidarity as Principle and Concept

Though repetition of particular CST principles would surprise few instructors, the manner in which students interpreted these principles indicated a variety of cognitive appropriations of these common principles. For example, the word *solidarity* was mentioned forty-one times across eleven of the twenty-six interviews. A close reading of the transcripts shows students regarding solidarity as an idea both with *moral* value for helping them establish just relationships and *intellectual* value for framing their ideas about the components of a just society. Thus Fairfield 1, deeply influenced by the course "Finding God in All Things," came to recognize solidarity as a way of seeing the common humanity he shares with marginalized people. He described how the course changed the way he talks as a politics major "about issues of immigration and of border control and about [the] human family as opposed to [a] nationalistic family." By contrast, Notre Dame 1 used solidarity to talk about how she understood justice: "I think that through solidarity you really start to understand this deeper definition of justice."

In still other instances, students paired words such as *sitting* or *being* with the word *just*, as a way of explaining how they learned to get beyond charity and alms-giving to practice solidarity. They learned, in

other words, from the opportunity to "sit" in solidarity or "be" in solidarity with those they came to serve. For the students, solidarity is a means of recognizing and honoring the humanity and dignity intrinsic to members of the human family. Fordham 3, a non-Catholic whose CST education inspired her to commit her immediate future to service work in the neighboring Bronx community, stated: "It definitely would not have been this strong of a bond [between her and the Bronx] had it not been for me doing community service and seeing how there's a whole community that doesn't necessarily need us to fix them, but appreciates us being in solidarity with them." For Loyola 1, solidarity emerged from his courses and alternative break immersions as the most resonant principle: "'Foundations of Christian Morality' really opened my eyes to walking with others and being on a journey that is a human experience that we all experience in some way, shape, or form, that you can't really invalidate anybody's experience. Solidarity is about [being] with and for others, like I've said, but it's about a mutuality, a receptive-like response to the other." Solidarity was the conceptual framework through which Notre Dame 10 described the process of both spiritually and mentally stepping out of her prosperity bubble to make life-changing connections. In a description of her Appalachian service trip, she observed: "I didn't know that that kind of poverty existed here in the U.S., so that was a really big eye-opening thing for me. We worked alongside the family, rebuilding their trailer, and I really learned the importance of working alongside people instead of handouts to just kind of get to know their story, and that's where solidarity comes into play."

Talking about Race

Race issues were an area of tension in a small but significant segment of the interview population. Only three of the twenty-six interview subjects identified as students of color, and two of the three talked about their personal discomforts with and criticism of racial dynamics at their university and within Catholic social justice pedagogy. Yet both students noted the deep and positive influence of CST on their lives and possible career choices. It is worth noting that neither of these students is Catholic; they come from other religious traditions. Yet both plan to continue with lives of service, decisions they attribute to their CST educations. Fordham 1 remembered attending the Ignatian Family Teach-In, an annual Jesuit event in Washington, DC, which impressed her with its discussions about immigration reform, but not with the line-up of speakers:

> There was only one person of color that was a keynote speaker and probably fewer than five… fewer than three people of color that actually spoke. So that makes me, as a student of color, know you can't hear that or see that because this is a recording but as a student of color that really upset me, that they weren't represented. And it [was] crazy. We're talking about Salvadorans and at some point I remember seeing some people that looked Hispanic and I feel like they were part of the network but they were never [re]presented. Every person that… presented as part of the network was from the great U.S.A., like no one from El Salvador. … I have problems with all of this. I have problems because I'm thinking… my family is from the Dominican Republic, right? And I feel like if we're going to do a whole week on talking about the Dominican Republic, don't we need someone from the Dominican Republic to go up and speak?[15]

Fordham 1 also found herself relating to the marginalized people often studied in CST classrooms. She expressed her frustration with white students who appeared to suggest that poor people in foreign countries were content with their lives. She mimicked her peers, saying: "[T]hose people have so little and they're so happy…. [I]f I hear somebody say that… like my family or anyone that could be my family, I think I would freak out because they don't exist for you to feel this way." In other words, the actual priorities of Latin American people get lost in the need for students to connect and feel solidarity. This student was wary of the ways that many of her fellow students understand and inhabit the concept of solidarity. Fordham 2 was likewise dismayed by the racial hierarchy of the university: "[A]ll the administrators are white. We have barely any professors of color. Then of course you know everyone who cleans and is maintenance are… brown people. I think that's really messed up."

Both students indicated, however, that despite their frustration with what appeared to be racism embedded in the structures at their own institutions, it was experiences at those very institutions that inspired them, indeed putting them on their future paths. Though Fordham 1 observed ignorance among her cohorts, this did not temper her zeal for CST. She had posters of the Salvadoran martyrs from the 1985 massacre in her bedroom. After graduation, she planned to lead service-learning trips to El Salvador and Guatemala. This Protestant evangelical was passionate about Catholic social justice. She might have been critical of the racism she observed, but it clearly came from a place of love nurtured at Fordham. Fordham 2 found it "despicable" for the university's administration and staff to be so white, yet declared, "I think Catholic

[15] Fordham Interview 1.

Social Teaching was the only thing that made me be proud of my ethnicity and proud to be here."

Reflections

As we hypothesized, the interview responses were similar in terms of enthusiasm for CST, description of its transformational aspects, and expectations for how students imagine community service in their future lives. Students not only tended to be careful with their responses, speaking thoughtfully and precisely as well as elaborating at times, but many also offered the same or nearly the same definitions for concepts and terms. Nine of the twenty-six students underscored the importance of dignity or human dignity in their narratives. Contrary to our expectations that we would find significant contrasts among students across various majors, we discovered that students experienced nearly the same impact as a result of their CST experiences. Catholic Studies minors and majors across universities similarly participated in multiple immersion programs, describing these experiences as formative, inspiring them to consider careers that would serve the public. Students from all campuses spoke fervently and repeatedly about poverty, their own privilege, exposure to people "on the margins" or "marginalized," and the opportunity to leave their "bubble." The impact of and enthusiasm for one's CST curriculum does not seem to correlate with how distant the immersion program was from the home campus. Co-curricular activities like Urban Plunges, Appalachia services trips, and immersion abroad inspired students differently, but all transformed them to some extent. The topics of race, marginalization, sustainability, and solidarity were common concerns expressed by both the respondents at the Jesuit institutions and the Holy Cross institution (Notre Dame).

Recommendations

The responses of students collected in this oral history survey suggest recommendations for both continuity and change in CST education at Catholic colleges and universities.

What to Build Upon

The frequent mention of alternative break experiences and ways in which students describe alternative break immersion experiences as

"transformative" indicate that programs should continue supporting and, in some instances, seek to expand these experiences to make them more available to students within Catholic Studies and beyond. In an academic economy where students are looking outside the humanities for professional majors to launch themselves directly after graduation, such experiences that affect both heart and mind could very well make CST a robust second major or minor to complement business, STEM, or economic degrees. The consistent language used to describe CST principles indicates that programs should continue to develop and build upon current trends in the curriculum: It seems to be working. Indeed, our interviews support the literature on CST pedagogy that recommends vigorous programs in engaged learning paired with classroom interrogation of texts.[16] Students and professors together critically probe how this work in the community corresponds to the ideas and values of CST as it is explored in assigned readings.

What to Reform

This study suggests that CST programs need to address blind spots when it comes to race and ethnicity. The responses from two non-white students could be especially useful to faculty and administrators in their planning of future CST courses and curriculum (though admittedly the sample of two non-white students is very small). As Fordham 1 and Fordham 2 bring to our attention, they feel — just like other student subjects of this study — that classroom readings combined with immersion brought them to awareness of acute systemic injustice. Both expressed criticism and frustration with CST faculty and administrators in some parts of the interview, but in other parts they expressed warmth and appreciation. Their interviews might offer models for critical CST pedagogy. If we can usefully flip the classroom to quiet the professors somewhat and yield to intellectually responsible students, how also might we yield more *intellectually* to the marginalized people referred to in our classrooms and served in immersion programs?[17] How would these communities dictate the

[16] Scott C. Seider et al., "The Impact of Philosophy and Theology Service-Learning Experiences upon the Public Service Motivation of Participating College Students," *Journal of Higher Education* 82: 5 (Sept./Oct. 2011), 597-628; Marshall Welch and Kent Koth, "A Metatheory of Spiritual Formation Through Service-Learning in Higher Education," *Journal of College Student Development* 54: 6 (Nov./Dec. 2013), 612-627.

[17] As J.W. Brandenberger asks, "For whom do service learning programs exist: those served or those serving?" J.W. Brandenberger, "Investigating Personal Development

conversation about themselves, if given the choice? This could create opportunities for breakthrough learning. For this intellectual flip to succeed, the service learners would need to submit themselves and their institutions to receive the power of ideas from people they serve. Non-Western indigenous ideas about spirituality, self-liberation, work, gender, and family life would have to be allowed to challenge the liberal, Western ideologies that currently dominate U.S. higher education. Overall, these twenty-six interviews show that our programs are succeeding in inculcating CST principles, such as the preferential option for the poor, human dignity, solidarity, and *magis,* in students. Fordham 1 and Fordham 2 remind us, though, that the people to whom we extend solidarity might not want to be categorized as "marginalized" and "poor." What categories would they choose?

Conclusion

From a pedagogical perspective, the results of this research reflect at least two themes. First, students clearly resonate with CST when the teachings are brought to light within an academic or service-orientated setting. They do not find CST too doctrinal or "too Catholic." Second, a number of respondents claimed that contact with those on the margins, and with CST, can be a transformative and life-changing experience. These findings bode well for those of us who support bringing CST to the classroom, to service learning, and to the integration of mission at our Catholic institutions.

This article has its origins in the authors' participation in the CST Learning and Research Initiative, a collaboration of faculty and administrators at eleven Catholic colleges and universities across the United States. Through national meetings over the last five years, the Initiative has facilitated campus focus groups and collected oral histories of student understanding of CST, developed a rubric for curricular and research purposes, and conducted conversations leading to the peer-reviewed articles in this issue of the Journal of Catholic Higher Education. *For more information, see both the introduction to this issue and http://sites.nd.edu/cstresearch.*

Outcomes in Service Learning: Theory and Research," in *Research on Service Learning: Conceptual Frameworks and Assessments,* Vol. 2A, P. H. Clayton et al., eds. (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2012), 147.

Appendix

Demographic questions to provide context and comparison of respondents:

1. Where did you grow up?
2. What is your family background? (Probe: Ask about their parents' occupations and religion practiced in their households.)
3. Can you describe your educational background before [name of university], such as your high school attended, academic year, major?

Qualitative questions:

1. How do you define justice?
2. How has your education in the area of social justice taught you about the purpose of your life?
3. What specific experiences (ranging from memorable readings, speakers, professors, or interactions with peers) were most important and formative for you in learning Catholic Social Teaching?
4. How have you been able to take advantage of internships, practicums, or research opportunities to learn or to practice Catholic Social Teaching?
5. How will you allow what you learned about the social teachings of the Catholic Church to form your life after college?