LANGUAGE AND CHANGE:

THE IMMUNITY-TO-CHANGE LANGUAGE TECHNOLOGY

AS A TOOL FOR INTEGRATING THE ECCLESIAL VISION OF

THE CENTRE FOR MINISTRY FORMATION

INTO ITS MINISTRY FORMATION PROCESS

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AUTHOR: Lorraine Ste-Marie

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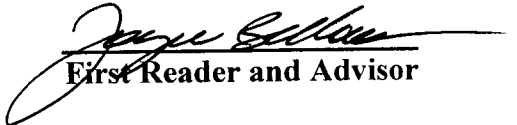## McMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE
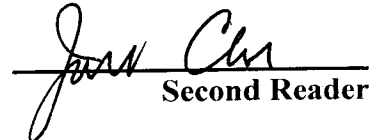
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To Louise Auclair

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the relationship between language and change and assesses the effectiveness of the immunity-to-change language technology for integrating the ecclesial vision of the Centre for Ministry Formation (Saint Paul University in Ottawa) into its ministry formation process. The Centre offers pastoral leadership education for candidates for both lay and ordained ministry in the Roman Catholic Church and its ecclesial vision is a post-Vatican II model of church as communion. In order to ground this exploration of language and change in the context of the Centre's ecclesial vision, I draw upon evolutionary and feminist thought, trinitarian theology, ecclesiology, psychology, education theory, leadership education and organizational development.

The immunity-to-change language technology is a language form for deep structural change. Deep structural change is epistemologic change, change in our ways of knowing. The language form is intended to help people make changes to which they are truly committed. In the qualitative research process, I presented the immunity-to-change language technology to persons actively engaged in a variety of pastoral ministries and who are affiliated to the Centre. The ultimate goal of my research process was to assess the potential usefulness of this language form for enabling the Centre's candidates for ministry to identify and work toward changing their built-in resistances to integrating the Centre's ecclesial vision into their own pastoral practice.

The findings of this research indicate that the immunity-to-change language is a powerful process for deep structural change. It has the potential to be an effective tool for integrating the Centre's vision into its ministry formation process, if the process includes the appropriate follow-up stages and built-in supports after the initial presentation of the diagnostic phase.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

You must become the change you want to see in the world.

—Mahatma Gandhi

A quotation hangs on the wall in my room at Mount Saint Joseph in Hamilton—a room

that has become home during my many visits to McMaster Divinity College for the

Doctor of Ministry program. It says: "You must become the change you want to see in

the world." This call to "become the change" I "want to see" is the guiding impetus for

this research project. Change must begin with the very person who desires change. This

idea of change resonates with my life experience and, in particular, my learning

experience in this doctoral research process. This doctoral-level learning process has

been marked by change at the personal, professional, and academic level. One of my

greatest catalysts for change has been to discover how historical foundations seen in a

new way can be integrated into the present so that their integration enables change.

In this chapter, I present two histories, my own story and the story of the

development of the institution in which I currently minister, the Centre for Ministry

Formation at Saint Paul University in Ottawa. My purpose is to show that a critical

retrieval of history and its integration into present experience enables change at both the

personal and collective levels. However, simply remembering the past does not lead to

change. Rather, it is in the process of taking a critical look at our historical sources, in dialogue with the issues and questions of our present time, that we notice how history has shaped us and continues to have a significant impact on whom we are and what we do. The relationship between history, integration and change is central to my entire dissertation. I propose that we all look at our histories, in order to see how they have formed us into who we are so that we are free to become the people we are called to be.

In addition to the formative nature of our histories, language also has a powerful influence in shaping our identities, attitudes and behaviours. Throughout my doctoral studies and research, I have carried a deep interest in language within the Centre's[1] formation community, particularly language as it relates to greater consciousness and human development. The language we choose to speak can be a means for either preventing or enabling us from fully realizing our mission to become all we are called to be. All language is formative; it shapes and socializes us. The intentional use of language may serve toward bringing about change or toward maintenance of the *status quo*. I contend that the intentional use of language is a vital means for change in order to fully realize our mission on both a personal and collective level. By mission, I mean the call to the fullness of life, a call which is made to all of humanity. For Christians, the call to the fullness of life includes the call to participate in Christ's mission of tranformation and humanization of the world.[2] Our language can either able or disable us from answering that call.

In my claim for language as a means for change, I suggest that there are two

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[1] When I refer to the Centre for Ministry Formation, I will use the upper case "C" for Centre in order to avoid confusion with the general use of the term centre as core or middle.

[2] The glory of God is the human person fully alive! This basic truth of human destiny and mission is attributed to Saint Irenaeus in the 2nd century.

kinds of language, neither of which is mutually exclusive since both are integrally related and necessary to enable change. One language is the language of content or, as referred to in French as *parole*. This is the language of "what" is spoken. The other language is the form of language, or language as process. This type of language is referred to in French as *parler*.[3] This is the language of "how" or "the way in which" we speak. In this dissertation, I explore various *paroles* for what we speak about God, church,[4] humanity and world. The language which I present has been intentionally chosen to express an inclusive and dynamic view of reality. The basis for this language is rooted in a critical retrieval of our historical sources that is brought together in dialogue with our current socio-historical context. These *paroles* draw heavily from insights and concepts found in evolutionary and feminist thought, which in turn inspires the theological and ecclesiological perspectives that form the basis for this dissertation.

The language of *parler* or process that I present is a language form called the "immunity-to-change language technology,"[5] which is designed by Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey as a vehicle for fully realizing the change to which we are truly committed. The title of the book on which I base this research, *How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation*, aptly indicates

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[3] Here I use the French terms to signify the difference between the language as an act or way of speaking (parler), and language as what we speak (parole). As one is a verb (parler) and one is a noun (parole), both are needed for communication and both are integrally related to change.

[4] In this dissertation, I will refer to church in lower case. I use upper case only when I use the names to identify the church to which I am referring.

[5] Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, *How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001). Because of the length of the term "immunity-to-change language technology, I will use its full name when I refer to it for the first time in ach chapter, and then subsequently refer to it as the ITC language technology.

that the choices we make in the way we talk can enable change. My research focus is to assess the effectiveness of the use of the first four of the seven languages that they have developed[6] as a means for change within the Centre for Ministry Formation. The Centre's vision of change is at the core of its ministry formation process. The essence of that vision is captured in the values and significant changes in the Centre's ministry formation process. Those values and significant changes are clearly identified in the Centre's mission statement.[7] It is my view that our use of language enables this change to come about.

Language and story are contexts for discovering meaning and truth in both evolutionary and feminist thought. For feminists, beginning with the story of personal experience is essential to the course of renewal and reconstruction of meaning. As we take a critical look at our own histories, we come to see more clearly how they have shaped us into who we are. In the process of telling our story and reflecting on it, we become more self-aware by seeing how our histories continue to hold us in certain patterns of behaviour, some of which keep us from fully realizing our mission. In this chapter I critically retrieve my own personal historical foundations as well as the historical foundations of the Centre for Ministry Formation. In the telling of these two stories, it becomes clear that my own story is interconnected with my ministry in the Centre, as well as to the issue of language and change in the Centre, which is at the heart of this research process.

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[6] My emphasis is on the first four languages which are designed to transform customary mental arrangements. The last three languages are designed to transform customary social arrangements. While the latter is also of great importance and interest with respect to my focus on ecclesial vision, that exploration must await another research opportunity. Kegan and Lahey, *How The Way We Talk*, 10.

[7] See Appendix I.

My Personal Story

The starting point for my personal story is my current ministry as director of the Centre

for Ministry Formation at Saint Paul University. In this leadership role, and in

collaboration with a team of formators, I have the responsibility for the development and

delivery of the Centre's ministry formation and vocational discernment process for

persons who present themselves as candidates for ordained and lay ministries. Although

the candidates for ministry are mainly members of the Roman Catholic Church, we

welcome persons from other Christian denominations for vocational discernment and

ministry formation opportunities.

Since I myself have been converted to feminist thought throughout the course of

my studies, I have heard the call to contextualize my research. As a result, I have

become more articulate about my own starting place for my operative theories[8] and

frames of reference for church and ministry formation. In other words, I have been

challenged to become clearer about the place from which I speak, not only with respect

to the Centre itself and my area of responsibilities, but even more importantly as a

woman in a pastoral leadership role in a Roman Catholic academic institution within the

Roman Catholic Church in Canada.

The challenge to begin with *my* story has been difficult. Over several years of

pastoral practice and theological studies, I had unconsciously convinced myself that it

was safer to speak from a theoretical stance in order to maintain a certain neutrality. For

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[8] By operative theories, I mean the theories which are actually revealed in my choices and
actions. These might be different from my professed theories to which I might give intellectual consent,
yet, there are times when I am confronted with a situation in which I am uncertain or am feeling
threatened that I find myself acting or operating out of a theory which is different from what I profess.

me, theory did not touch the rawness of some of my concrete experiences of exclusionary practices in the Roman Catholic Church. However, I have come to realize that to avoid naming the experience is to collude with the theory and structures that are the very source of legitimation for those exclusionary practices.[9] All women are impoverished by the lack of role models perpetuated by the sparse historical evidence of women's contribution to the evolution of church and culture. Women have a responsibility to articulate their context and tell their stories of call to discipleship and of ministry.

My own story is marked by a series of changes in close relationships, church membership, and career paths. The death of my mother in my early adolescent years had a significant impact on my sense of self as well as on my ways of relating to others. In my feeling of abandonment, I had unconsciously been engulfed and driven by fear and anger. As I moved from my early adult years, I became conscious of my assumptions and the fears that kept me from the fullness of life to which I knew God was calling me. Although I was truly committed to realizing the fullness of life inherent in God's call, my actions indicated my need to control and maintain perfect order. With the support and challenge of others, I came to see how my behaviours and sense of self were actually driven by my fear of abandonment and I gradually learned to trust and open up to the creative process of life. That change was not without some pain in letting go of some of my familiar patterns of acting and interpreting reality.

As I reflect on that period of intense change in my life, I see it as the beginning

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[9] This insight I credit to the many authors and theologians I read as part of my course in ecclesiology; the issue was raised in many of the authors/theologians whose works are cited in the bibliography, e.g., Bernice Morgan, David Noble, Mary Malone, and Lavinia Byrne.

of truly hearing the call to discipleship. Jesus' call to "follow me!" came in the midst of a very busy life, with a young family and a family business to manage. However, that call to follow Christ was not about leaving behind my life commitments, rather it was a call to carry, integrate, and transform those commitments into what I was beginning to understand as a call to participate in Christ's mission in the world. As I discerned how I would respond to that call, I became actively engaged in pastoral and social ministries in local parish communities. I found myself seeing others and relationships in a different light as I was being freed from my need to control my environment.

As I gained a deeper trust and closer relationship with God, I found myself praying for two gifts in particular. The first was the gift of discernment as I had sensed a call to develop a greater attentiveness to God's presence in my life and in the world. I knew that a deeper attentiveness would allow me to be a little wiser in the choices I make. The second gift for which I prayed was the gift of language so that I could communicate that which I had seen, heard, and done, and perhaps even accompany others on their own paths to freedom. As with all gifts that are given, they are offered for the common good of the community. I have put those gifts at the service of those with whom I journey.

With my new awareness and convinced of my call to discipleship, I gradually took on more and more responsibilities in the life of the church—pastoral ministry, diocesan committees, theological studies at Saint Paul University, and then immersed myself in the area of pastoral theological education and ministry formation. My early desire to become an elementary school teacher—a desire that was thwarted by my life's events—has taken a different shape in my current role of pastoral theological educator in

a university. I am now walking with adult learners attentive to their own particular call to change and to integrate their own life stories, as they seek to fully participate in God's mission of transformation in the world.

My ministry and research are also shaped by my family history, a history which is deeply influenced by both the Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions, and by both English and French cultures of Canada. My family roots in the Roman Catholic Church were severed when my paternal grandfather left the Roman Catholic Church, taking his whole family with him including my father, because of incidents of clergy control and sexual abuse. Although my grandfather chose never to share the story of those incidents with his own family, I have come to appreciate how my ecclesiology, my theology, as well as my identity as a pastoral minister have been shaped by those un-spoken events. My early years in an Anglophone United Church with my family of origin were followed by my immersion into a Francophone Roman Catholic community with my husband. After several years of being actively engaged in the Roman Catholic Church as a Protestant, I eventually chose to respond to the call to full communion with the Roman Catholic Church in an Anglophone community. In an odd turn of events, the pastor of that same community was convicted of sexual abuse only five years after my Confirmation. All these events that have been formative for me, and in turn are formative for those with whom I journey. In my attempts to make meaning of those experiences, I have come to heed the call to transcend categorical thinking with its deep division of dualisms found in exclusivism, sexism, classicism, elitism, and clericalism. I have become clearer about two of the values that shape my own practice of ministry; namely, integration and interdependence.

For me, interdependence is mutual dependence, in which each person is both independent *and* in relationship with the other. I have come to adopt interdependence as a way of living, in that I recognize I am one amongst many and I like others, must trust and rely upon the support and challenge of others in order to realize my mission. As an interdependent self-aware minister, I am called to contribute my own gifts and accept my own limits, as well as receive the gifts and limits of others. For me integration refers to the act of unifying or "incorporating into a larger whole."[10] The call to integration is a call to openness and wholeness for the sake of others. Integration unites the divisive categories of 'them and us,' body and spirit, doing and being, mind and emotions, in order to embrace the fullness of our humanity. And as I continue in my life-long journey of critically integrating my own personal history into my current ways of living, I catch myself at times contradicting my own values and commitments. This is most apparent in my attempts to defend my own boundaries and control situations when I experience loss or uncertainty.

This critical reflection on my own ministry, particularly in dialogue with the immunity-to-change language form and the conceptual language of feminist and evolutionary thought, has given me opportunities to develop greater self-awareness with respect to my own world views, assumptions, and frames of reference with which I make meaning of my experience. I have come to discover ever more deeply that our understanding of any issue or concept is deeply affected not only by our history, but also by where we "stand" within a particular tradition or culture. As a woman who is responsible for the formation of both lay and ordained ministers, I feel, I intuit, and I

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10 Bernard S. Cayne, editorial director, *The New Lexicon Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language: Canadian Edition* (New York: Lexicon Publications Inc., 1988), s.v. "integration."

reflect on my own practice of ministry and my own experience of church and its traditions. I make claims and use theories based on where I stand, some of which are not necessarily congruent with those who minister within the hierarchy of my faith community.

I have come to realize that I am not alone in that incongruity. In my ministry, I have the privilege of hearing stories and accompanying different people who seek to discern their particular call to discipleship. Here, I experience deep frustration with the exclusionary structures and practices of my chosen faith community. I question why vocational discernment for the women who present themselves for ministry formation necessarily excludes full inclusion in pastoral leadership roles in the Roman Catholic Church. I carry a deep sense of powerlessness in my responsibility for orienting some of these women to minister outside of the ecclesial structure in which there is little place for their gifts to develop and flourish. I continue to struggle with my assumption that if I am perceived as being angry at exclusionary practices, I will not be taken seriously as a woman in the ministry of the Roman Catholic Church. As I work out of this anger, I also work very hard at carefully articulating my questions and deep-seated desire for transformation of structures and practices. Hence, intentional language has become both a fascination and passion for deepening my understanding and use of language that enables change.

Through the process of telling my story, reflecting on it with others, and intense academic research, I have come to adopt the stance of a reformist feminist pastoral theologian. As a reformist feminist, I am in solidarity with all feminists who uphold the critical principle for all feminist theology—the affirmation and promotion of the full

humanity of women. As a Christian reformist feminist theologian, I recognize that a

faith community shapes its God-language to express its view of the world, and the order

that flows from that view.[11] As I explore and I speak from within the Roman Catholic

tradition, I am in solidarity with other reformist feminist theologians in that I have not

given up on the church's capacity to be inclusive of all who are on the margins,

especially women. And with other reformist feminist theologians, I recognize and

struggle with the transformation of the life-giving, liberating nature of Christian

symbols. This is the context in which I carry out this research. I now turn to the story of

the Centre for Ministry Formation, a story which, like my own personal story is

characterized by a "complex web of events, ideas, circumstances and shaping factors."[12]

The Centre for Ministry Formation at Saint Paul University

The Story

The official origin of ministry formation at Saint Paul University goes back to

1939 when its seminary first opened its doors to welcome seminarians from several

dioceses across Canada and the United States, as well as from a number of male

religious communities. Like my personal history, the history of ministry formation has

been marked by significant periods of change. That history of change can be divided into

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[11] For this brief introductory comment on my personal, professional, and theological stance, I refer to the insights of Donald K. McKim, "Feminist & Womanist Theologies: Scripture as the Mother of All Models," in *The Bible in Theology and Preaching: How Preachers Use Scripture* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 172-191. A more detailed theoretical exposition of reformist feminist theology is found in Chapter Two.

[12] James P. Wind, *Places of Worship: Exploring their History* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1997), 111.

four ages,[13] each of which is marked by a particular vision of church and ministry, and each of which continues to be incorporated, at times unconsciously, into our current ministry formation process.

The first age spanned from the seminary's opening to the Second Vatican Council in the mid-1960s. For about 35 years, the Rule of seminary life was to "provide regularity, observance of its religious obligations, and an orderly Seminary life in accordance with the directives of the Holy See and Seminary discipline."[14] Its overall purpose was to foster inner freedom, confidence, sanctity, and a solid doctrinal formation. This Rule not only shaped the formation community of that age, but also reflected the prevailing vision of church and ministry. That vision was characterized by order, regularity and strict observance of religious obligations.

The second age was ushered in by the Second Vatican Council's burning desire for renewal, during the second half of the 1960s. This desire for change carried with it a vision of church and ministry which no longer fit the Rule of the first age. Given the profundity of change immediately following the Second Vatican Council, the turmoil of the second age was inevitable. This disorienting experience of instability was symbolic of what was happening at every level of church life. Not only was there was a drastic drop in candidates for ordained ministry in seminaries across the country, there was a mass exodus from religious communities and presbyteral ministry. This radical decline was also experienced in the Sunday assemblies, especially in the Francophone

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13 Eugene King, OMI, *Apostolic Visitation to Canadian Seminaries: Report of Saint Paul University Seminary, Ottawa,* September 1993 (unpublished) in which he states that "the formation program of the Seminary has known three ages," 8. Given the changes which have occurred since the time of this report, I have added a fourth age, which is described below.

[14] Pierre Hurtubise O.M.I., *Cum Apostolica Sedes: Centenary of the Pontifical Charter 1889-1989 Saint Paul University* (Ottawa, 1989), 79.

population in Quebec. Without the familiar framework in which church members had

forged their identity, many sensed a deep loss and disorientation. Many members of the

clergy, religious communities and the laity chose to abandon a way of life which had

lost both its power over them and its capacity to speak to them at the core of their

being.[15] Saint Paul University Seminary was no exception to this radical decline. In this

time of intense change, the Rule of the first age with its the vision of church and

ministry, no longer spoke to the aspirations of the candidates nor the needs of the

Canadian church.[16]

The third age dawned in 1971, when the Rule of the seminary was updated in the

spirit of renewal desired by the Second Vatican Council.[17] While traditional structures

were preserved such as spiritual direction, initiation to prayer, daily Eucharist and the

Office, other elements were added to foster social and personal development. These

elements are significant with respect to the emerging vision of church and ministry.

Faith-sharing groups were formed, a student council was established to help create and

promote dialogue between the formation team and the seminarians, committees of

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[15] I refer to two important works, which serve to elucidate the socialization structure that forges identity, as well as a sense of belonging to a particular group that is well-defined by its structures, privileges, and expectations. See Zeni Fox, *New Ecclesial Ministry: Lay Professionals Serving the Church* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1997), 31-36; and Michael L. Papesh, "Farewell to 'the Club,' " *America*, vol. 186, no. 16, 7–11.

[16] King, *Apostolic Visitation*, 10.

[17] This Rule is summarized as follows:
Traditional structures were preserved: spiritual direction, initiation to prayer, daily Eucharist and the Office, studies enriched by the Word of God, respect for individual development. Various other elements were added: class groups to reflect and pray together, a Student Council to help create and promote dialogue between the formation team and the seminarians, committees of seminarians to take on certain responsibilities toward the community, a more elaborate evaluation procedure involving the student. These were the main innovations enhancing the climate of mutual confidence. As well, pastoral activities designed to allow students to remain in contact with the world took on an increased importance. King, *Apostolic Visitation*, 12.

seminarians took on certain responsibilities in the community, and a more elaborate evaluation procedure was developed to involve the student self-evaluation and feedback. These were the main innovations enhancing the climate of mutual confidence. It was in this age that pastoral activities were intentionally designed to encourage students to remain in contact with the world during their theological studies and ministry formation process.

A close look at this new Rule reveals that while regularity and order of the daily devotions are not dismissed, there was a move toward basing seminary formation on principles of adult education. There was an intentional move to provide a formation process in which seminarians had input into their overall programming, decisions and evaluation.[18] The defining vision was marked by the language of co-responsibility and empowerment and this was the beginning of an understanding of ministry formation as a dynamic and on-going process. This move was monumental not only in the delivery of the formation program *within* the seminary but also with respect of the relations of the Seminary with the *outside* world. In this Rule of the third age, the vision of church and ministry was characterized by the movement from a child-like dependence on order, obligation and outer authority, toward a more adult, independent stance of co-responsibility and empowerment for both the ordained and the laity. In this age, the vision of church was becoming less triumphant and more dialogical with others outside the boundaries it had defined for itself.

The transition into fourth age began with the opening of the Centre for Ministry

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[18] This continues to be the way in which we engage in ministry formation today, with an added emphasis on co-responsibility not only in one's own personal formation, but also in one's contribution to the well-being and formation of the other. This is detailed in the section below.

Formation in 1997. Like the Rule of the third age, this transition was also faithful to the

seminary tradition as well as to the renewal begun in the Second Vatican Council. As the

number of candidates for ordained ministry diminished and the role of laity in the church

increased, Saint Paul University had recognized the growing need for a ministry

formation process for preparing lay pastoral associates for ecclesial ministry.[19] Rather

than provide a completely separate formation track for lay ministers, the Centre was

developed to offer formation for candidates for both lay and ordained ministries. While

the university seminary maintained its canonical status as a separate entity, it also

became one of two integral parts of the Centre,[20] one for lay ministry and one for

ordained ministry. When the Centre opened its doors in 1997, it welcomed eleven

candidates for ordained ministry and its first candidate for lay ministry, a woman[21] soon

to be followed by other women and men seeking a space for vocational discernment and

preparation for ministry.

This indeed marked the beginning of a visibly new vision of church and ministry

at Saint Paul University. It is this vision which first attracted me to ministry in the

Centre itself and it is this same vision that continues to animate my passion for change.

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[19] The original intention was to offer formation for candidates for lay ecclesial ministry. We are also welcoming persons who have no intention of living out their baptismal call *within* the ecclesial structure, but rather as persons fully engaged in society at large, be it in their workplaces or respective communities.

[20] Article 5 of "Statutes of Centre for Ministry Formation," in *Centre for Ministry Formation: Handbook for Members 2004-2005* (unpublished) states: "The Centre incorporates Saint Paul University Seminary which was founded in 1937. The Seminary, as a full partner in the work of the Centre, is also regulated by the requirements of Canon Law, and the particular norms of the Canadian bishops."

[21] This is the person, Louise Auclair, to whom I dedicate this dissertation. Louise died of leukemia in September 2002.

Core Assumptions

A critical retrieval of the historical foundations of the Centre calls for an attentiveness to our current ecclesial context as well as the core assumptions which shape the Centre's vision of change. I present below seven core assumptions in the Centre's context which are directly related to this exploration of language and change.

First, this research takes place more than forty years after the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1963, with its calls to *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*. The call to *ressourcement* is understood as a call to return to our theological and ecclesiological sources as the core of our identity. The response to that call must be critical and in dialogue with the particular questions and issues of our time.[22] Those questions and issues emerge from our growing consciousness of reality as neither static nor exclusive, but rather dynamic and inclusive. The call to *aggiornamento* is a call to engage in a process of modernization—a process of renewal and reconstruction in which we critically return to the sources in order to be faithful to our present and future calling. In responding to that call, we are reminded that it is Christ who "summons the church, as she goes her pilgrim way, to that continual reformation of which she always has need, insofar as she is a human institution here on earth"[23] and it is the Spirit who is the agent of this continuous renewal.

Second, the Centre combines tradition and innovation as it continues the Seminary's more than 60-year old tradition of ministry formation for the Roman Catholic Church. From 1939 to 1997, that formation process was restricted to men who

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[22] Dennis M. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2000), 139.

[23] Walter M. Abbott, S.J. "Decree on Ecumenism," in *Documents of Vatican II* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1967), para. 6, 350.

presented themselves as seminarians. As its mission states:

> [The Centre] innovates by offering formation for a variety of ministries in the life of the church, thus enriching and expanding the living tradition of preparation for presbyteral ministry in Saint Paul University Seminary[24]

While this type of ministry formation is new, it is not a radical break from the Seminary's tradition. This move reorganizes and builds on the developing story of ministry formation at Saint Paul University. The Centre seeks to transform its own ecclesial culture, which has continuously undergone transformation since the opening of the university's seminary. Because the Centre forms ministers as pastoral leaders who will take leadership roles in their respective communities, the Centre is also at the service of transformation of the ecclesial culture at large.

Third, the Centre's vision of formation is inspired by the model of church as communion in which all the baptized and all ministries are valued.[25] As the Centre attempts to live out of an authentic communion ecclesiology, it seeks to move beyond the narrowness of polarized theological categories, toward an ideal vision of unity that embraces ecclesial and theological diversity.[26] This model of church provides the ecclesiological framework for a community of disciples which lives out its mission in an ecclesial vision of "moving toward a more inclusive church."

Fourth, the Centre is an authentic faith community that struggles to live its call to participate in Christ's mission[27] in its current socio-historical context. In other words,

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[24] See Appendix I.

[25] See Appendix I.

[26] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 20.

[27] I identify Christ's mission with the church's mission of transformation and the humanization

the formation community is neither an experiment nor a laboratory, but is, in itself, a particular expression of, *and* an integral part of the universal church.

Fifth, the Centre is a community of disciples, in which members exercise co-discipleship and co-responsibility as co-educators. The mission of the Centre is marked by the call to discipleship as pastoral leadership in the mission of the People of God. Building on the values of co-responsibility and empowerment first named in the vision of the third age, the Centre offers an integral formation process[28] in a formation, community which is identified as a community of disciples in which the call to discipleship is a call to interdependence.[29] The behaviours and attitudes of an interdependent disciple have become the measuring stick for assessing healthy relationships and pastoral practice.[30] As a community of disciples, the Centre is a mentoring community in which new learning relationships emerge as its members exercise co-responsibility in accompanying one another in their growth and developing a greater attentiveness to the common good of the formation community. This core assumption is itself based on the assumption that each of the candidates is truly committed to the values and significant changes in the Centre's ecclesial vision. Although the initial assessment of readiness for ministry formation in the Centre

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of the world. The Saint Paul University Mission Statement also identifies its mission as a participation in Christ's mission by contributing creatively to the humanization of the society. My research shares this same mission.

[28] Integral formation includes human, pastoral, spiritual and intellectual development.

[29] We could say that the 1st rule gave priority to the mode of dependence in which the overall formation was determined by an external authority; the 2nd Rule gave mainly priority to independence, and the centre's vision gives priority to interdependence which attempts to hold together autonomy, trust, and mutual dependence.

[30] These are explained further in Chapter Five which presents pastoral leadership education.

includes an evaluation of a person's openness to the vision and change, all candidates

demonstrate varying degrees of commitment to the Centre's ecclesial vision.[31]

Sixth, ministry formation in the Centre is, first and foremost, formation for

pastoral leadership. Pastoral leadership education includes the development of certain

skills and competencies, yet is primarily about the shaping of attitudes and the forming

of one's identity as a collaborative, interdependent, integrated, and transformative

pastoral leader. This particular attitudinal profile and pastoral identity is rooted in the

renewed vision of church and ministry expressed in the Vatican II documents and in our

developing ecclesiologies and theologies which are faithful to the spirit of the conciliar

texts.

And seventh, the Centre's practice of ministry formation and education for

pastoral leadership is praxis. Praxis is action that is both value-directed and theory-

laden.[32] Pastoral leadership education is practical theology. It is not practice to which

theory is applied. It is theory in action. Pastoral leadership education in the Centre is

value-directed and theory-laden. Its vision of church and ministry is both the source and

goal of its practice. Its vision actually shapes the means it takes to accomplish its

mission of preparing pastoral leaders for moving toward a more inclusive church. A

close look at its praxis reveals values which are embodied in particular theological and

ecclesiological framework. Those values and theories are revealed in our action, in both

the content and process of pastoral leadership education. In our praxis we reflect on the

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[31] This assumption is a major element in the overall effectiveness of the immunity-to-change language form to effect change in the Centre. This demonstrates the complexity of the many factors which contribute to any possibility of transformation. I return to this assumption in the concluding chapter to this dissertation.

[32] Ray Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 47.

Centre's inner vision that informs it. We cannot afford to be casual or unintentional in our actions or in our language. The action and language we intentionally choose in the Centre affect us. They make a difference to how and if we are successful in fulfilling our mission of forming pastoral leaders for moving toward a more inclusive church.

Through my research process in this Doctor of Ministry program, I have become clearer about the challenges and obstacles of living out the Centre's vision of "moving toward a more inclusive church." I have come to appreciate that there is no simple way of engaging in the change to which this vision calls us. Change cannot be legislated. Neither coercion nor censure of exclusive behaviour serves any serious or long-term change of behaviours and attitudes. As I ponder some of my experiences in the Centre, I am aware of the complexity of providing an integral formation process that gives equal value to the diversity of the ministries, *charisms* and gifts and offers a formation that is specific to the ministries for which the candidates present themselves. In dialogue with the questions and issues in our current socio-historical context, we struggle with the challenge of offering formation for ordained ministry in a way that moves us beyond clerical elitism.

The very fact that the Centre's praxis is moving toward a more inclusive church is a sign that the model of church found in the seminary Rules of the first and third age no longer fit our current realities. While the best of those rules should and do continue to have a hold on us, it is also the case that the Centre continues to embody built-in supports and behaviours which maintain exclusive practices of clericalism. It is oft-times difficult if not impossible to transform those counter-praxes.[33] Clericalism is well

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[33] As I reflect on our current situation, I am struck by how those "counter-praxes" carry within themselves their own meaning, truth, and *telos*. For example, the style of celebrating daily mass in the

imbued with what some would call an ingeniously designed and historically rooted

philosophical, theological and ecclesiological system. The practices which are supported

by that system stand as a contradiction to the Centre's commitment of moving toward a

more inclusive church and thereby serve to maintain the *status quo* rather than change. It

is my thesis that the ITC language technology can be an effective tool for surfacing and

working toward transforming structures that maintain the *status quo*, both on a personal

and collective level at the Centre.

Like all praxis, the Centre's praxis is theory-laden. I am attentive to the

responsibility to reflect critically upon the Centre's theology and ecclesiology which is

revealed in our praxis. In that process of reflection, questions must be raised as to how

we enable transformation according to our mission and vision of church. In fulfilling

that mission, we are accountable to both the candidates for ministry and the faith

communities in which they will minister. Therefore, the Centre's mission is twofold: to

form collaborative, effective, faith-filled, discerning pastoral leaders as agents of

transformation; and, in doing so, to be leaven for the ecclesial vision of moving toward a

more inclusive church in our particular socio-historical context. The guiding question for

me is: How can the Centre's ministry formation process make a difference to the future

life of the church? Although my question is future-oriented, its answer needs to be

rooted in our current praxis into which we critically integrate our rich history.

As I conclude the story of the Centre for Ministry Formation, I summarize the

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small chapel which embodies a elitist theology of priesthood; the lack of critique of the language in the daily breviary which reinforces patriarchy, monarchy, and dualisms of body and spirit; social and ecclesial practices which overtly single out candidates for ordained ministry from candidates for other forms of ministry; in many cases, more readily accessible financial support for future priests; and, recommendations for institution to orders of acolyte, and lector, which are essentially hierarchical ladders.

seven core assumptions which ground my inquiry into the relationship between language and change. The first two assumptions indicate that the Centre's mission is consistent with change in our ecclesial culture since the Second Vatican Council. This change is reflected in the ministry formation process in the Centre for Ministry Formation at Saint Paul University. The third assumption defines the model of church as communion, a post-conciliar ecclesial vision. This vision inspires and guides the Centre's overall mission. The fourth and fifth assumptions situate the Centre as an authentic faith community which struggles to live out of its ecclesial vision as a community of disciples. The community of disciples model of church is one of a variety of expressions of the post-conciliar model of church as communion. The sixth and seventh assumptions define the Centre's specific goal of pastoral leadership education and situate that education process within the praxis of the Centre. An understanding of the Centre's ministry formation process as praxis calls for a heightened attentiveness to the intentional use of language which is spoken in the Centre. These seven core assumptions are intrinsically necessary and related to each other, particularly as they form the context for this exploration of language and change in moving toward a more inclusive church.

In the telling of the story of the Centre and my story, there are some terms which I have used and which will be used consistently throughout this dissertation. Interdependence, integration, empowerment and co-responsibility are terms which are deeply interconnected with my exploration of language and change. Together, this vocabulary expresses a view that all persons are called to be active and unique subjects in mutual relationship with others. As subjects, we have the ability to be author of our own actions and the meaning we give to our own stories. Because subjectivity and

relationship cannot be separated from each other, subjects cannot and do not exist as solitary or isolated beings. It is my contention that intentional language we use can be a means to either enable or disable our becoming interdependent, co-responsible, integrated, and empowered subjects who are moving toward a more inclusive church. This is the primary claim of my research.

The Goal of this Research

Based on this claim, my research goal is to assess the effectiveness of the ITC language technology as a tool for integrating the Centre's vision of moving toward a more inclusive church into the ministry formation process. I believe that by integrating the Centre's vision into the ministry formation process through the use of ITC language technology, candidates could become more aware of their own assumptions and fears that prevent them from making the changes to which they are called. My assessment of the effectiveness of the ITC language technology is based on the findings of a qualitative research process, and is supported by an exploration of theoretical and theological foundations for church and pastoral leadership education. My research has given me the opportunity to cross into a variety of disciplines, including evolutionary and feminist thought, trinitarian theology, ecclesiology, psychology, education theory, leadership education, social research, as well as organizational development. With this multidisciplinary approach to my research, I have come to appreciate the insights and richness gained in the dialogue amongst these discipline.

I began this chapter by citing Gandhi who tells us that we "must become the change" we want to see in the world. The ITC language technology is designed to help

leaders claim their role as language leaders in order to become catalysts of new social arrangements.[34] I conclude with the wisdom offered to us by the authors of this language form: "It may be nearly impossible for us to bring about any important change in an organization without changing ourselves."[35] As I present this dissertation as the final stage of my Doctor of Ministry research project, I claim that responsibility for being an agent of change, both for myself and for others. And, it is in a spirit of adventure and openness to new horizons by which we give meaning to experience, that I invite the reader into this dissertation.

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[34] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 9.

[35] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 63.

CHAPTER TWO

ELEMENTS OF EVOLUTIONARY AND FEMINIST THOUGHT AS A

CONSTRUCTED OPERATIVE FRAMEWORK

If there is one thing that is certain in life, that is change.[1]

—Jane Jacobs

In Chapter One, I explained that providing pastoral leadership education for

moving toward a more inclusive church is at the heart of the Centre for Ministry

Formation's mission. I presented my basic thesis that moving toward a more inclusive

church can be possible through the use of an intentional language which aims to bring

about change rather than maintain the *status quo*. In this claim, I referred to two kinds of

language; one which is basically content or *parole*, and the other which is process, or

parler.[2] *Parole* refers to what we speak; whereas, *parler* is about how or in what way

we speak. Both are necessary, and both must be intentional in order to integrate the

Centre's ecclesial vision into its ministry formation process.

In this chapter, I locate the relationship between language and change in a

framework that I construct from evolutionary and feminist thought. Both feminist and

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[1] This saying is found on a publicity brochure for a four-week intensive Process Facilitation Training, offered by Renée Stevens and Brenda Peddigrew.

2 I also note here that evolutionary-feminist thought also provide the framework for both informational and transformational learning. This is explained below in Chapter Five.

evolutionary thought reinforce my belief that change can occur through the intentional use of language. From the two broad perspectives of evolutionary and feminist thought, I extract five key concepts which are energy, consciousness, story, praxis, and system. These concepts, together with some of the general principles from both evolutionary and feminist thought, form the framework in which I situate my research into the intrinsic relationship between language and change as it applies to my context of ministry formation. Together, these five concepts provide a language for expressing reality as dynamic and inclusive. This view of reality is the backdrop for the Centre's ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church.

The five concepts are taken from evolutionary and feminist thought in the following ways: both evolution and feminism share an interest in consciousness and story. On its own, feminism elucidates an interpretation of praxis, while evolution contributes the concepts of system and energy. As noted below, energy is the unifying concept for the four others. It is my aim that this framework serves as both a critique of our conventional epistemologies and as a reconstruction of our relationship to change in order to embrace the evolutionary nature of change in all aspects of creation.

Evolutionary Thought

Contrary to popular belief, evolutionary thought is not new. The idea of a gradual unfolding universe has been traced back to the early Greeks who understood everything as evolving according to universal forms. However, for the first 1600 years of Christianity, the church succeeded in repressing the development of any alternative views to a literal interpretation of the Book of Genesis. In scripture, the genesis story

conveys creation as a one-time event that retains its basic structure until the end of time.[3] In contrast, the story of evolution intimates creation as a process in which life has not only been evolving over fifteen billion years, but it continues to be in an ongoing creative process of change.

The reasons for the church's suppression of the idea of evolution are complex and beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, I single out two of them which are pertinent to my interest in the relationship between language and change. First, ecclesiastical authorities have and continue to give priority to the maintenance of stability and order, especially in times of challenge and change. Second, the idea of an external, interventionist God who creates in an orderly and predetermined fashion upholds the church's primary concern for order and stability. Our image of God and world is shaped by the God-language we intentionally choose to speak.

As a historical review of the relationship between religion and science illustrates, the monopoly of ecclesiastical control began to loosen in the seventeenth century, with the momentum of scientific discoveries.[4] This opened the way for a flurry of research and exploration which over a period of over 200 years, led to the first treatise associated with evolution being published in 1859 by Charles Darwin. The Darwinian theory, characterized by randomness, survival, self-preservation. and adaptation, continues to dominate the Western worldview. However, in recent decades evolutionary thought has shifted to a much larger vision of cosmic and planetary evolution. In this new vision,

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[3] Diarmid O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith: Rediscovering God in Our Great* Story (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbris Books, 2003), 10.

[4] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith,* 10. The most popular of those discoveries have been attributed to Nicolaus Copernicus, Galileo Galilei and Isaac Newton.

which is often referred to as the new cosmology, not only is the earth and its surrounding cosmos alive, but the universe as a whole is hospitable to life.[5] Concepts that were once reserved for the sphere of biological life forms are now extended to the larger evolutionary picture, including a broader understanding of the dynamism of human and organizational development.

This new vision engages our contemporary imagination with respect to all of creation as well as our image of God. We move from knowing a transcendent God, who intervenes in creation as external cause, to an immanent God, whose internal causality calls forth the dynamic and co-creative dimension of the evolutionary process.[6] In this new cosmology there is a greater emphasis on the deep interconnectedness of the universe. Our attempts to express this new consciousness calls for a new language to articulate the co-evolutionary nature of change as well as our changing relationship with God, self, others, and all of creation. This new language to which evolutionary thought is calling us is a language of *parole*(content) which expresses a view of reality that is both inclusive and dynamic. Evolutionary thought invites us to embrace an alternative view of God, world, self and others which has the potential for enabling change in ministry formation and pastoral leadership education in the context of the Centre for Ministry Formation.

Feminist Thought

As with evolutionary thought, language and change are intrinsically connected to

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[5] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 59.

[6] Cletus Wessels, The *Holy Web: Church and the New Universe Story* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2000), 113.

feminist thought. Feminism is about advocating for the needs of women, ones that "cannot be met without change in the lives of both men and women."[7] The process of change that feminism advocates stems from its critique of patriarchy. The feminist worldview calls for moving from a patriarchal worldview which is associated with domination and exclusion, toward an inclusive and dynamic view of reality which is based on the principles of co-creation and interconnectedness. Feminist thought provides a hermeneutical lens for examining "the ways in which power and control have been exercised at the expense of women, rather than for the liberation of the human community."[8]

Feminists uphold one critical principle: the affirmation and promotion of the full humanity of women. This principle however is not exclusive to women; it is concerned with all who are marginalized, be it because of gender, culture, religion, economic status, education, or disabilities. Feminism offers an alternative way for both men and women to interpret reality and make sense of life. Although feminism is in itself a modern word, the concern to include marginal persons who were considered less than human by society, is not new. For many feminist theologians, Jesus persistently made it clear that all persons were welcome in the reign of God. Furthermore, "Jesus' inclusion of women as disciples, followers, and witnesses stands as a constant correction to the patriarchal biases of religious leaders in his time and in ours."[9]

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[7] Letty Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1993), 22.

[8] Lavinia Byrne, *Woman at the Altar: The Ordination of Women in the Roman Catholic Church* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1994), 57.

[9] Russell, *Church in the Round*, 23.

The first agenda of feminist theology is to raise our consciousness as to the masculine bias in Christian theology and anthropology. Once that consciousness is raised, the bias can be critiqued and analyzed according to its effects in shaping the theological understandings of God, church, ministry, creation, and person. The second agenda is to discover and construct alternative historical traditions that are supportive of the full personhood of women and their full inclusion in leadership roles. Among the different responses to this quest for alternative traditions, two are the most popular: one is revolutionary feminism which situates itself *outside* the Judeo-Christian tradition, and the other is reformist feminist which locates itself *inside* the tradition.

As noted in Chapter One, I stand with the reformist tradition *inside* Judeo-Christianity in its choice to seek alternatives by holding together tradition and innovation. The starting point for reformist feminist theology is that the women's experience as examined critically through the principles of feminist thought provides the insight from which that oppression may be recognized and transformation may occur.[10] With other reformist feminist theologians, I call for the renewal and reinterpretation of Christian symbols. I do this with the hope of contributing to the liberation of the Word, the *Parole*, and our developing faith tradition from the biased, predominantly white, and male, middle-class interpretations.

As with evolutionary theory, a critical retrieval of reformist feminist trinitiarian theology yields insights as it stresses relationality, interdependence, and connectedness.[11] Reform cannot occur without addressing the exclusive male imagery

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[10] Donald K. McKim, *The Bible in Theology and Preaching*, 172-191.

[11] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 84.

that has been used for the triune God for nearly two thousand years. If we are to be faithful to the Second Vatican Council call to retrieve our trinitarian theology as the "starting point, context, and goal of all theological reflection and practical planning for matters internal and external to ecclesial life,"[12] then it is essential that we develop a critical attentiveness to our God-language as it relates to the concerns of our time. Feminist critique and analysis of trinitarian theology must work through the patriarchal garb of the traditional Christian sources toward a revelation of a God of mutuality and equality. Because language is formative and has a significant socializing function, the re-shaping of our God-language cannot be dismissed as a contemporary exercise in political correctness. What is involved is "nothing less than the full humanity of women and men and humanity's proper relationship to God."[13]

I believe that a critical rediscovery and deeper understanding of particular aspects of the triune symbol will inspire a renewed and intentional language in the movement toward a more inclusive church.[14] Intentionally shaping our religious language, particularly our God-language, is an integral element in the "reordering [of] unjust and deficient religious systems."[15] My overriding interest in the relationship between language and change is congruent with feminist ecclesiology which proposes more

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[12] John P. Markey, *Creating Communion: The Theology of the Constitutions of the Church* (Hyde Park, N.Y.: Newcity Press, 2003), 101.

[13] Patricia A. Fox, RSM, *God As Communion: John Zizioulas, Elizabeth Johnson and the Retrieval of the Symbol of the Triune God* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press), 18.

[14] This exploration is situated in a particular time in history and in a particular place: the beginning of the twenty-first century in North America. Although the insights gleaned from this exploration could be helpful in other geographical or temporal contexts, they are not my intended focus.

[15] Elizabeth A. Johnson, *SHE WHO IS: The Mystery of God in Feminist* Discourse, (N.Y.: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992), 46.

inclusive models of church which are based on the intentional shaping of our God-language which is reflected in the nature, structure, and mission of the faith community. A recurrent theme in feminist ecclesiology is the commitment to justice for all marginalized persons as it proposes alternatives to the patriarchal symbols and exclusionary practices that have evolved in the interpretation of the Judeo-Christian story. In Chapter Four, I propose an ecclesial vision which is faithful to the evolutionary-feminist framework.

Feminist and evolutionary thought are conjoined in ecofeminism which upholds the intrinsic value and equal worth of *all* of creation, and draws us beyond ourselves into the preservation of the whole universe. I stand with ecofeminists, such Elizabeth Johnson and Joan Chittister, who call for deep structural change, as they challenge us to go "beyond the simple 'technological fixes' in order to build a new earth, a new society and a new religion based on the principle of equal dignity, rights and responsibilities for both women and men, and on the earth principle of the community of all species with their respective dignity, rights and responsibilities."[16] As a means to equip us for that challenge, I now turn to building a theoretical framework from five concepts found in evolutionary and feminist thought, which will provide us with a new language for expressing an inclusive and dynamic worldview for moving toward a more inclusive church.

Building the Framework

The five concepts of energy, consciousness, story, praxis and system serve as the

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[16] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 81.

theoretical framework for my research into language and change, particularly as it relates to moving toward a more inclusive church. Each of these concepts reveals a particular aspect of reality which is both dynamic and inclusive. Together, these concepts can serve as a lens, giving us a fresh way of knowing God, creation, world, and church, and an alternative way of understanding human and organizational development.

Energy

The mechanical notion of energy provides the predominant view of energy in our Western world. In a mechanical worldview, energy is the ability to do work and work means a change in position, speed, state or form of matter. Therefore, energy has the capacity to change matter. It is generally recognized that everything we do involves energy and everything that happens in the universe takes energy. Although, energy surrounds us and is abundant, it has no mass and cannot be touched. It cannot be created or destroyed. However, we can see the effects that energy has on materials. All energy can be in two forms—either potential or kinetic. Potential energy is stored energy which is ready for work; whereas, kinetic energy is energy actually at work. Potential energy can be viewed as motion waiting to happen. For instance, a lawn mower filled with gasoline or students waiting to go home from school are examples of potential energy. Most of the energy under our control is in the form of potential energy. When the motion is needed, potential energy can be changed into kinetic energy. A lawn mower cutting grass and students running home from school are examples of kinetic energy. Whenever we use energy, it is in its kinetic state. Energy can be changed from one form into another and it is by changing energy from one form to the other that we control energy

for our use.[17]

Evolutionary thought builds on the mechanical notion of energy and expands it to a view of energy as mysterious reality with unlimited resourcefulness which not only defies all categories, but also "gives shape and direction to all being and becoming."[18] In an evolutionary view of reality, energy is the "common underlying factor in our search for unity among all material things."[19] Because of its mysterious force, energy is usually characterized by movement, instability and unpredictability.

A critical historical retrieval of ancestral religions before the emerging of our main world religions five or six thousand years ago, reveals that the prevailing image of God was that of a spiritually-active life force. For some evolutionary theologians today, energy and Spirit-power coalesce. Energy is seen as "the mysterious power that is active and at work in things," and power is attributed to God as Spirit.[20] Energy is a primary characteristic of divine creativity, manifesting itself in "connections and relationships."[21]

In the new cosmological approach to evolution, there are three fundamental energies which "provide the 'lifeblood' on which evolution unfolds and thrives."[22] These three energies are referred to as differentiation, autopoiesis, and communion, each of which is integrally related to the continuous creative process of life as it unfolds. The

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17 This mechanical notion of energy is taken from the Alternative Fuels Research and Education Division of the Railroad Commission of Texas, www.propane.tx.gov/education/objectives.html, accessed February 19, 2005.

18 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 46.

19 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 45, quoting Eric J. Chiasson, *Cosmic Evolution: The Rise of Complexity in Nature* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001), 133.

20 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 48, quoting Peter C. Hodgson, *Winds of the Spirit: A Constructivist Christian Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress; London: SCM Press, 1994), 279.

21 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 49.

22 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 66.

energy of differentiation is characterized by diversity, variation, complexity and heterogeneity.[23] Differentiation is the power to move away from homogeneity or control by external forces toward autonomy and heterogeneity. This variety is enhanced by the movement toward continuous innovation, rather than toward consistent preservation. In evolutionary thought, differentiation keeps the universe from collaps[ing] into a homogeneous smudge."[24]

Autopoietic energy is characterized by subjectivity, interiority, self-organization and inner-centeredness.[25] Autopoiesis is the power *within* all life forms to self-organize, self-renew and self-transcend themselves in ways that are consistent with their histories. As living systems renew themselves, their autopoietic energy regulates the process of change in "such a way that the integrity of their structure is maintained."[26] Paradoxically, it is a system's need to maintain itself that may actually lead it to change. Because of its inner-centeredness which guides the system through change, that change is not random or incoherent with the system's own history.

The energy of communion is characterized by mutuality, interrelatedness, interdependence and connectedness.[27] Communion is the power which draws all of creation into mutual interdependence. Because relationship is the essence of existence, communion is the destiny of all beings in a universe that is "begotten out of a relational

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23 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 67.

[24] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 66, quoting Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry, *The Universe Story* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992), 73.

25 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 67.

[26] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 51.

[27] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 67.

matrix."[28] Diversity and subjectivity "can only be fully realized in a community of species, [in which] each carries out its proper role in relationship to the others."[29] For people of faith, the universe exists to "manifest the abundance of divine communion."[30] For Christians who embrace evolutionary theology, the energy of communion is God's triune relationality and the universe is known as a "great relational matrix which is imbued with the trinitarian connectedness."[31]

Evolutionary thought stretches our understanding of communion even further with the theory of holons which is based on the evolutionary view of the universe as creatively interacting systems in which "there are no isolated objects; everything belongs to creative interactive systems."[32] Building on the scientific principle that the "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,"[33] this theory proposes that "reality is composed not of things nor processes nor wholes nor parts, but of whole/parts, of holons."[34] That is, every whole is a part and every part is a whole and "the whole is contained in each part."[35] In this evolutionary holarchical view of reality, it is not possible to isolate any dimension of reality in order to explain its individuality. Individuality and communion

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[28] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 66.

29 Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 85.

[30] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 127 quoting Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society*, trans. Paul Burns (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1998).

[31] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 200.

[32] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 19.

[33] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith* 19.

[34] Wessels, *The Holy Web*. 57.

[35] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 19.

are intrinsically interconnected as they co-exist as one reality. Therefore, we must look at the larger whole of reality in order to explain its individuality. This idea of whole/parts challenges our more conventional categories for interpreting reality, and is intrinsic to my exploration of developing ecclesiologies in Chapter Four.

Consciousness

Like energy, consciousness evades concrete definition. Although, consciousness is sometimes referred as autopoietic energy, I have chosen to present consciousness as a separate concept because it is a key element in my exploring the relationship between language and change. Consciousness is generally defined as a quality of awareness of oneself as well as one's surroundings.[36] In an evolutionary worldview, the human qualities of awareness and self-awareness are deeply interconnected with the consciousness of universe. Human beings are "conscious creatures because we are the progeny of a conscious universe" and we participate in the unfolding of the universal consciousness by bringing to "conscious awareness the consciousness out of which our own self-awareness is born."[37] This deep interconnectedness between human consciousness and universal consciousness would keep consciousness from being measured, quantified, or reduced to neural, brain-based processes. In contrast to the narrowness of the general definition, consciousness cannot be confined to the human mode of being in the world, nor can it be restricted to what some religions refer to as the state of afterlife.

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[36] *Webster's*, s.v. "consciousness."

[37] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 22.

Evolutionary consciousness is the inner wisdom and intelligence of evolution which discloses to us a world of greater complexity, openness, fluidity and creativity.[38] And as energy, although it does not belong to the sphere of observable material reality, consciousness is structured and present within universal life. In an evolutionary worldview, this is evident in the continuous series of self-organizing processes that become more and more complex throughout the universe.[39] An example of this evidence is found in the study of holons which claims that all of reality has the potential for transformation to a higher order of complexity.[40]

As the autopoietic energy of creation, consciousness belongs to the realm of inwardness and its inherent will to meaning in reference to its environment.[41] In a self-organizing system, consciousness is not restricted to interiority, but it also embraces information in the external environment as it transcends and renews itself in a way that is both self-coherent and responsive to external stimuli. This is explained in greater detail below in the concept of system.

As we move into a broader evolutionary view of the world as growing in universal consciousness, we can perceive behaviour in a new light. In this new way of

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[38] O'Murch, *Evolutionary Faith*, 177.

[39] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 174.

[40] Although I use the *parole* of "higher" I struggle with finding a word to convey its meaning in dialogue with the issues and questions in our current socio-historical context in which feminist thought reminds us that language functions; it is never neutral. The evolutionary sense of word "higher" recognizes that the universe evolves as multidimensional, a unified whole, in which even the four dimensions of length, breadth, depth, and time are being surpassed. This struggle with the language of "higher" and its counterpart term "hierarchical" is evident in the work of Cletus Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 59 (see Chapter Four) and Robert Kegan, *In Over Our Head: The Mental Demands of Modern Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 33 (see Chapter Six).

[41] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 176.

seeing, we can begin to discover that the Darwinian stress on randomness and competition is displaced by an emphasis on cocreativity and cooperation."[42] We are moved from reliance on predictable outcomes through cause-and-effect explanations, to a discovery of patterns, rhythms, and relationships that begin to make sense.[43] In engaging with an evolutionary consciousness, we can grow out of subject-object relationships with all of creation and grow into a new intersubjectivity.[44] This movement has an immense impact on our self-awareness as individuals, as communities, as well as on our image of God. And as evolutionary theorists are quick to remind us, this growing evolutionary consciousness carries with it the ensuing responsibility of action.[45]

Feminism is an example of evolutionary consciousness. The story of feminism shows that it began to develop with the first stirrings of a feminist consciousness back in the early nineteenth century. Until this gradual awakening, there was very little awareness that women's experience *as* woman's experience was actually relevant to intellectual work. Women's experience was basically invisible, and when noticed, it was included as part of men's experience.[46] With the rise of self-consciousness[47] of women as women, specifically in a Christian context, the Bible became a basis for arguing either for or against women's rights and injustices. This growing self-awareness marks the

[42] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith,* 120.

[43] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith,* 120.

[44] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith,* 13.

[45] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith,* 33.

[46] David Noble, *A World Without Women: The Christian Clerical of Western Science,* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[47] I use the term "self-consciousness" as an awareness of one's own acts or states as belonging to or originating in oneself; aware of oneself as an individual. (Webster's)

beginning of women's movement toward self-empowerment, of acquiring greater control over their own lives as subjects of their own actions and authors of the meaning they give to their own stories. In the unfolding of feminist consciousness, autopoietic energy gives shape and direction to the process of renewal and reconstruction.[48]

For feminists, consciousness opens the way to discernment, responsible action, and, in some cases, activism. The feminist movement has been and continues to witness to the call to action. Research in feminist education indicates that women's consciousness-raising groups provide optimum opportunities for both personal and social transformation in the narrative learning process—the process of telling one's story, reflecting, and theorizing—a process which is oriented toward change.[49] And in that process, language has the power to shape our identities and either enable or disable change toward greater inclusivity and intersubjectivity. This is a key issue to feminist consciousness.

Story

Language and story are at the heart of feminist thought.[50] Story is generally defined as "an account of events or "facts pertinent to a situation in question."[51] In its general understanding, we see that story anchors our lives in the concreteness of the contexts in which we live. Furthermore, story is vital to our search for meaning and truth in our own

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[48] Morwenna Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self: The Web of Identity* (New York: Routledge Press, 1995), 63.

[49] Ann K. Brooks, "Transformation" in Elisabeth Hayes and Daniele D. Flannery, *Women as Learners: The Significance of Gender in Adult Learning*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 144.

[50] Brooks, "Transformation" in Hayes and Flannery, *Women as Learners*, 139.

51 Webster's, s.v. "story." I am referring to story as a narrative of events as they have occurred.

lives and in the lives of others.

As we combine feminist thought with an evolutionary worldview, we come to appreciate that as stories are told and reflected upon in community, we become self-aware. In that self-awareness, the energy of differentiation bids us to claim the uniqueness of our story and keeps us from collapsing into uniformity and homogeneity. Without the concreteness of our story, we remain disembodied, homogeneous and faceless in a mass of anonymous others. Until the rise of feminist consciousness, women's stories were not spoken; there was no space for those stories to be heard. As a result, women remained faceless with respect to men. They were not recognized in the fullness of their dignity as human beings; hence, denied the rights and responsibilities that are attributed to those who were regarded as fully human.

As we look at reality through a feminist lens, we see that beginning with the story of personal experience is crucial to the process of renewal and reconstruction. In contrast to a conventional emphasis on neutrality and objectivity which is most often associated with a patriarchal, scientific worldview, feminists maintain that the subjective position provides a sound epistemological base. However, telling the story is only one component in our search for truth and change. Each story must be received, honoured in its own dignity, and treated critically in a process of reflection and rethinking. For feminists, this process of reflecting and rethinking must necessarily include attention to politically-situated perspectives, power, and of course, language.[52]

For feminists, truth is encountered, and meaning is constructed, in the continuous back and forth movement between experience and reflection. This feminist process of

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[52] Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self*, 6.

reflection, rethinking, and theorizing is not a solitary activity. Rather, it must be a dialogical process with others, in a spirit of openness to critique from other viewpoints and perspectives.[53] We are all called to embrace this spirit of openness, which leaves us at risk of not only discovering new information, but also of changing the structures of our ways of knowing. This issue of openness to epistemologic change is intrinsic to my exploration of the relationship between language and change. Feminist theory is attentive to the power of language to determine what we know, how we know, and what we do because of what we know. For feminists, epistemologic change carries the responsibility for engaging in action that is oriented to social and individual change.

As in feminist thought, in the new cosmology story is pivotal to discovering and constructing an alternative view of reality.[54] Those who hold the story of the new cosmology report what they have witnessed and seen, treating their stories critically in a process of reflecting and rethinking in dialogue with other theorists not only from within their own disciplines, but in other disciplines as well. For evolutionary theorists, the critical process of reflecting and rethinking necessarily calls for an attentiveness to the limits of our language to express what we have seen and the meaning we give to the story. As we reflect on the new *paroles* which are created in the unfolding evolutionary story, such as cocreativity and coevolution, we come to see that these *paroles* are in themselves self-organizing systems in which tradition and innovation cohere in response to both internal and external stimuli.[55]

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[53] Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self*, 67.

[54] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 13.

[55] Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self*, 66.

The insights gleaned from the continuous back and forth movement between story and theory have provided us with an evolutionary consciousness in which our narrow understanding of creation as a one-time externally-caused event no longer fits. The stories of evolutionary theorists are inviting us to embrace a new way of seeing reality as self-organizing, creatively interacting, dynamic systems which have the potential to move toward greater complexity and inclusivitiy. Animated by an energetic consciousness that fosters creativity and self-renewal, the evolutionary story has the potential to broaden our horizons, to break open our familiar views of reality and ways of knowing, and to call us to freely engage in the evolutionary process in which we are all held.

Praxis

The concept of praxis is integrally related to the concepts of story and consciousness, in that all three are characterized by attention, reflection, and change which is future-oriented and liberating. To illustrate the concept of praxis, I compare and contrast the terms praxis and practice. Both practice and praxis mean action that aims to achieve a particular end or goal. The action taken in both practice and praxis is never value-free nor is it without meaning.[56] This is where the similarity ends. What distinguish practice from praxis are attention, reflection and change. These three qualities are present in praxis and they are not in practice. All our actions, everything we do, are laden with beliefs and values; however, in practice, we do not pay attention to them. The difference between praxis and practice is found in a well-known saying: "An unreflected life is not

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[56] Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology*, 47

worth living."[57]

In practice, our attention is only focused on the goals of our action, and not on the means we take to achieve those goals. Our actions are unreflective and superficial, *if* we do not attend to the values and beliefs in our actions and *if* we do not pay attention to the means *and* goals of our actions. Unreflective action is superficial because we remain unaffected by the action itself. Without reflective or intentional action, we are not moved to change, to think or act differently from what we are already doing. Unreflective actions perpetuate more unreflective actions, creating a cyclical pattern of action in which there is no possibility for change to occur. A familiar way of expressing this phenomenon is "going in a vicious circle" or "chasing our tails." Because we do not notice the meaning or operative theories in the actions themselves, we cannot reflect on them and we are not moved to change.

On the other hand, praxis is reflective; it is action that is both value-directed and theory-laden precisely because it is reflective. In praxis, we pay attention both to the means *and* the goal of our action. We pay attention in order to assess the validity of both in light of the vision which guides the action to achieving its goal.[58] In praxis, reflection and action occur simultaneously. Because praxis is intentionally reflective action, we pay attention to the meaning within our actions; we notice the values and operative theories that are present within our actions; we think about them and critically reflect on them in dialogue with our professed theories. [59] Operative theories are revealed in what

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[57] Unfortunately, I do not have a reference to this saying.

58 Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology*, 47

[59] I have intentionally posited operative and professed theories side by side. Operative theories are revealed in what we do and they are not necessarily congruent with the theories or beliefs we actually

we do and they are not necessarily congruent with the theories or values to which we actually profess our commitments. In praxis, we can come in touch with the incongruence between our behaviours and our values, and in dialogue with alternative theories, we can broaden and deepen our understanding of the truth as it is revealed in our actions. Praxis is always future-oriented and yet it is not to be equated with or limited to physical action. Critical reflection can be in itself change-oriented and liberating, particularly as it is catalyzes a deeper consciousness and change in our ways of knowing. An evolutionary-feminist view of change is always future-oriented toward greater freedom, for women, for men and for all of creation.

Feminist theory is embedded in the praxis of justice and advocacy for the poor and oppressed, especially for women. The ultimate goal of feminist theory is the affirmation and promotion of the full humanity of women. At the heart of this goal, we discover a yearning for a world which is based on the principle of equal dignity and its ensuing rights and responsibilities for both women and men.[60] This is the vision of the fullness of life in which all of humanity is called to freely partake. As ecofeminists remind us; this is the vision in which all of creation is called to freely participate. This idea of fullness of life is also found in the evolutionary view of communion as a unifying power "that forever draws [all of creation] into mutual interdependence."[61] Nothing is to be excluded from the reach of the energy of communion. For feminists, praxis can be either authentic or inauthentic. Anything that denies or diminishes the full

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profess. In praxis, we come in touch with the incongruence.

[60] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 81.

[61] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 66.

humanity of women is deemed inauthentic. For feminist theologians, inauthentic praxis does not reflect divine revelation, authentic relation to the divine or authentic faith community. Inauthentic social and inauthentic ecclesial praxis hides the truth of God's being; it hides the truth of God's being-for-us and it hides the truth of our-being-for-each-other.[62]

The narrative process of story and reflection is a process of action and reflection. The back and forth movement between experience and theory is a praxeological process which embodies attention, consciousness and action which is oriented toward greater freedom. Liberation has already begun in the action of telling the story, reflecting on that story, and rethinking it in community, in light of our vision and opening ourselves to alternative frames of reference.

System

The evolutionary concept of system illuminates how change can occur in our frames of reference. In particular, the insights of quantum theory have opened up a new way of seeing organizational and human development. In this section, I will explore some of the characteristics of system found in evolutionary thought. Those characteristics refer both to the internal and external processes of change, which coexist in an evolutionary view of reality. In order to lay the foundation for understanding the concept of system, I begin with a more generic definition of system as "a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a whole"[63] In this general description, we notice that a system is

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[62] Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *GOD FOR US: The Trinity and Christian Life* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), *228*.

63 *Webster's,* s.v. "system".

comprised of individual parts which are interdependent and which together form a whole. Systems can be material and visibly concrete, such as our bodies or our institutions. Systems can also be invisible to the eye, and at times even hidden from our own consciousness, such as our mental structures or ways of knowing.

Mental structures are the organizing principles for our making meaning and our ways of knowing; they are lens through which we view reality and understand truth.[64] Mental structures are not limited to the realm of the intellectual; rather they include our thinking (cognitive), feeling (affective), and social-relating.[65] Because this concept of mental structures is attributed to humans on both an individual and collective basis, it has implications for both personal and organizational development. The immunity-to-change language technology is designed as process for deep structural change. Deep structural change is change in our mental structures, each with its own inner logic around which meaning and reality are organized. Because of my overall focus on the relationship between language and deep structural change, I use system and structure interchangeably in this section.

Quantum theory builds on our more generic definition of system by giving us key insights into the relationship between energy and structural change. Here, energy is classified in two categories, entropy and negentropy, both of which are integral and necessary to the creative process of life. Entropy is used energy or the dissipation of energy. The entropic force is the process by which dynamic systems gradually wear down or fall apart. Rather than avoid entropy, evolutionary thought is calling us to

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[64] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 29.

[65] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 32.

"befriend entropy" [66] and to trust the "processes of growth and rejuvenation."[67] Negentropy is the concentration of energy into a system's capacity for change. The negentropic force is the process by which dynamic systems reorganize at a new level of capacity or complexity. Entropy is associated with death, and negentropy with the newness of life; both are integral to the creative and dynamic process of life. In my exploration of ITC language technology and deep structural change, I have discovered that certain language forms concentrate more energy than others; some of which serve the entropic force toward the self-preservation that leads to degeneration and eventual death. And, there are other language forms that enhance capacity, and can be used as tools for negentropy and cocreativity.[68] This understanding of energy is explored further in Chapter Six.

In a quantum view of reality, energy is constitutive of life and "*all* life takes form as dissipative structures."[69] There are profound differences in dissipative structures, particularly in their diverse structures as either open or closed systems. Knowing the difference between open and closed systems is the linchpin for understanding the various ways in which structures either open themselves to change or eventually die.

Closed systems are associated with entropy and equilibrium. As noted above, entropy is wasted or used energy[70] and is the inverse measure of a system's capacity for

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66 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 26.

67 Margaret Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1999), 19.

68 Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 7.

69 Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 80. *Italics added for emphasis.*

70 O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 45.

change. When a closed system has reached its end state, it "has exhausted all of its capacity for change, done its work, and dissipated its productive capacity into useless entropy. The more entropy there is, the less the system is capable of changing."[71] Equilibrium is the "end state in the evolution of a closed system."[72] In closed systems, regulatory or negative feedback from either its internal or external environment signals deviations from its predetermined outcomes and goals. In venerating equilibrium, stability, order, and self-preservation become ends in themselves. By giving preference to rigidity and insularity, closed structures defend themselves from, and blind themselves to the very processes that foster life.[73]

Open systems are associated with disequilibrium and negentropy or usable energy. Open systems use disequilibrium to continue to grow and evolve by exchanging internally produced entropy for negentropy, from the environment. Rather than the closed structure's way of using information to regulate and fend off change, the open system's feedback loops use information "to notice something new and amplify it into messages that signal a need to change."[74] This "positive or amplifying feedback" is the usable energy that facilitates the open system's capacity to stay viable over time.[75] As a self-organizing structure, open systems move through the evolutionary process of deep structural change, utilizing the energies of differentiation, autopoiesis, and communion,

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[71] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 76.

[72] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 76.

[73] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 77.

[74] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 78.

[75] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 78.

and becoming increasingly more complex in a way that is coherent with their ultimate purpose.

Open systems are traditionally associated with chaos; we may fail to trust the inherent capacity of an open system to be self-organizing and regenerative. Our experience of chaos usually entices us to rush in and attempt to stabilize that which is out of order to prevent further dissolution. Yet, when faced with increasing levels of disturbances, open systems have the innate ability to reorganize themselves in dealing with the new information as they work with their environment. Rather than defend themselves against disequilibrium and disturbances, over time, open systems freely dissipate or give up their form in order to recreate themselves into new forms.[76] Positive feedback is essential to life's ability to adapt and change.

The amount of time a system takes to adapt and change is dependent on a variety of factors. Those factors include how much error we are willing to tolerate, how precisely we can measure the initial state of the system, and a time scale that is beyond our control in that it depends on the inherent dynamics of the system itself. Time is an important component in understanding of both organizational and human development, particularly in the Centre for Ministry Formation. For instance, the time period for which candidates for ministry present themselves for formation is usually fixed anywhere between two and four years. Yet a person's capacity for change over a period of time is not always congruent with the time specifically allocated to ministry formation. I will return to this issue in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

In the Centre, the focus of my interest in change is deep structural change. As

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[76] Stephen H. Stogatz, Sync: *The Emerging Science of Spontaneous Order* (New York: Hyperion Books, 2003), 190.

we engage in the work of changing our mental structures or ways of knowing, it is the energy of the ultimate organizing mystery that holds our behaviour within a boundary and keeps us from wandering into formlessness.[77] The autopoietic energy in the process of self-reference is most often associated meaning. Meaning is the centering force out of which we make sense of the world. As we gain a greater consciousness of our ultimate meaning and purpose, we gain a greater clarity as to our identity, values, and vision, along with a deeper confidence in the process of change.

As the system matures and develops self-knowledge and a greater consciousness of its ultimate meaning or purpose, it gains greater stability. The system becomes more adept at working *with* its environment, rather than fearfully reacting *to* its environment. The notion of working with the environment, calls for a different way of understanding freedom, boundaries, and autonomy. Over time, openness to the environment makes for stronger systems—systems that are less susceptible to externally-induced changes. Boundaries are not defined externally for the system. Rather, "the boundary lives *within the system*," becoming visible as the system explores its space of possibilities as the order becomes visible.[78] Those boundaries are inherent to the very process of self-reference. Among open systems, boundaries create distinctions, as well as become places for communication and exchange. In this continual exchange, the systems develop greater freedom and autonomy from their environment as they develop new capacities that make them increasingly resourceful.[79] The process of self-reference as the

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[77] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 132.

[78] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 118.

[79] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 85.

self-organizing principle in structural change is a fundamental concept in my exploration of developing ecclesiologies in Chapter Four.

Conclusion

The five concepts from evolutionary and feminist thought that I have presented in this chapter serve as a theoretical framework for my continued exploration of the relationship between language and change. Energy, consciousness, story, praxis and system are integrally related to the question of language and deep structural change. Energy is the all-pervading interior force that calls us to engage in the process of creativity and change. My exploration of the energies of differentiation, autopoiesis, and communion has signified the various stages of the change process, each of which is integral to vitality and growth. Consciousness is the autopoietic energy that keeps us faithful to our mission as we self-transcend into more complex and inclusive systems. Story is the starting point for any possibility of change. Story and reflection lead to responsible action for change. Praxis is reflective action, an action which incorporates and reveals the change to which it is oriented. Authentic praxis upholds the critical feminist principle of affirming and promoting the full humanity of women; whereas, inauthentic praxis diminishes the fullness of women's humanity. In the concept of system, we see that self-preservation is the ultimate goal of all systems. All systems are equipped with the internal capacity for self-organizing in faithfulness to their mission. However, it is in the distinction between open and closed systems that we come to see that closed systems which defend themselves against change and their environments in order to preserve themselves, eventually degenerate and die. On the other hand, open

systems freely interact with their environments in order to preserve themselves in a way that is coherent with their identities. These concepts serve as a critique of our conventional epistemologies and as a reconstruction of our relationship with change. In this reconstruction of our relationship with change, I have presented ways of perceiving and embracing life as a dynamic process, into which we are called as active and fully engaged participants.

Language can function as a means to enable change, and it can function to maintain the *status quo*. In this evolutionary-feminist framework, we all bear responsibility for denouncing behaviours, attitudes, and structures that deny the fullness of life, for all humanity and all of creation. Language, both as *parole* and *parler*, can be a powerful and political force in the evolution of consciousness, and as a life force towards communion. As many feminists remind us, each in their own words, "structural change and linguistic change go hand in hand."[80]

In the evolutionary-feminist worldview, we perceive energy as the divine creative force that continually differentiates, renews, and draws all of creation into communion. In an evolutionary-feminist view of communion, we see that uniqueness, subjectivity, diversity, unity, interdependence, and mutuality are the signs of an immanent, intentional God, who calls us to fully participate in divine creativity as responsible and active participants in a "universe which is imbued with the energy of trinitarian interconnectedness."[81]

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[80] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 40.

[81] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 19.

CHAPTER THREE

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS I:

A TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY OF RELATIONSHIP

FOR AUTHENTIC PRAXIS

In Chapter Two, I constructed an evolutionary-feminist framework from insights and concepts from evolutionary and feminist thought. That framework provided a lens for viewing reality as a continuous, creative and dynamic process of moving toward greater complexity and inclusivity. Feminist thought is deeply rooted in the praxis of justice and advocacy for the poor and oppressed, especially for women. The ultimate goal of feminist theory is the fullness of life for all women, for all of humanity, and for all of creation. This expansive notion of fullness of life is congruent with an evolutionary understanding of communion, which is characterized by integration, interconnectedness, and unity-in-diversity. Communion is both the goal and the power of all movement, energy "that forever draws things into mutual interdependence."[1]

In this chapter I provide a theological foundation for the contribution that evolutionary and feminist thought makes for understanding the Centre's mission of "moving toward a more inclusive church." As noted in its mission statement, the Centre's praxis is oriented toward the transformation of the ecclesial culture as it

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[1] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 66.

"embraces a renewed vision of pastoral leadership whereby both ordained and lay ministers are co-responsible in the service of the people of God."[2] Because praxis is practice that is value-directed and theory-laden, the Centre's praxis is open to theological reflection and critique. As I have reflected on the Centre's praxis during this research process, I have come to appreciate the existential power of the symbol of God. Because the image of God is the ultimate reference point for the values of all Christian communities, the structure of the triune symbol stands as a profound critique to its praxis.[3] I believe that a rediscovery and deeper understanding of certain aspects of the triune symbol will inspire a renewed ecclesial praxis.

The conciliar call to *ressourcement* includes a summons to retrieve the trinitarian foundation as the defining core around which every dimension of Christian life and practice is to be interpreted and understood.[4] However, as noted in Chapter One, the response to that call to *ressourcement* must be critical and in dialogue with the particular questions and issues in our socio-historical context.[5] If trinitarian theology is to serve as the "starting point, context, and goal of all theological reflection and practical planning for matters internal and external to ecclesial life,"[6] then it is essential that we develop a critical attentiveness to our God-language as it relates to the concerns of our time. Some of those concerns are echoed in both the evolutionary and feminist principles noted in

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[2] Centre for Ministry Formation Mission Statement. See Appendix I.

[3] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 223

[4] Markey, *Creating Communion*, 101.

[5] Dennis M. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 139.

[6] Markey, *Creating Communion*, 101.

Chapter Two.

While the ultimate goal of feminism is the fullness of life for all of humanity and creation, it maintains its one critical feminist principle: the affirmation and promotion of the full humanity of women. For feminist theologians, anything which denies or diminishes this principle is presumed to be inauthentic with respect to God, others, and community. This feminist principle challenges our Christian dogma, particularly as it is revealed in an ecclesial praxis which embody a solidly anchored patriarchal theology. In this chapter I present some dimensions of a trinitarian theology of relationship for authentic ecclesial praxis.

Feminist Trinitarian Retrieval Work

As evolutionary and feminist theories remind us, we all belong to a story that continues to unfold and it is the purpose of every story to move us beyond our conventional horizons for viewing and defining reality. Story has been and continues to be pivotal to the human search for meaning; a search which is intrinsically related to our ways of knowing and understanding truth. Meaning-making is an ongoing process that continues throughout our individual and corporate lives. An encounter with holy mystery lies at the root of all religious doctrine, including our trinitarian doctrine which is a unified system of beliefs that was formulated within a particular space and time in history.[7] The Christian experience of faith was and continues to be the generating matrix for language, *as parole*, about God as triune.

The first formal doctrine of the Trinity dates back to a fifth century socio-

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[7] Jean Zizioulas, *Being As Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladamir's Press, 1985), 85-86; Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 273.

historical context in which Western and Eastern pastoral leaders attempted to stave off the controversies of the first centuries which either denied or diminished both the divine *and* human nature of Jesus Christ.[8] Drawing from and building upon the developing trinitarian theologies before the fifth century, the Chalcedonian doctrine of the Trinity was systematized according to the philosophical, anthropological, cultural, scientific, and religious categories of that context.

That ancient trinitarian formulation continues to shape our Christian life. For Christians, our vision of God, world, and church are inextricably interconnected and the doctrine of the triune God is "the lodestar that holds the other two in relation."[9] Therefore, our trinitarian theology and our God-language have profound existential consequences.[10] Consciously or unconsciously, the God-language of our Christian story moulds our social and political realities as well as our personal lives. In evolutionary theology, we encounter the holy mystery of God's triune existence through relationality. And our developing consciousness of the trinitarian connectedness opens up new horizons, calling the "human imagination to invent new concepts and fresh namings in our engagement with the evolving reality of the world."[11]

Calling to mind quantum theory's elucidation of open and closed systems, some doctrinal traditions and their rigid interpretations can be equated with closed systems, which have a tendency toward fossilization. There is, however, a "creative energy that is

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[8] Foz, *God As Communion*, 113.

[9] Fox, *God as Communion*, 7.

[10] Fox, *God as Communion*, 9.

[11] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 120.

released when living traditions [are] freed from debilitating accretions [and] are engaged with current realities."[12] In this chapter I explore elements of the trinitarian doctrine in a way that is faithful to the evolutionary process of change in which doctrine changes in order to maintain its purpose of revealing the truth while opening itself to developing, codifying and revealing the liberating God who is encountered in history.

A developing feminist consciousness makes us aware of the power of the symbols and language, both *parole* and *parler,* we use in our search for meaning. As with evolutionary theory, a critical retrieval of reformist feminist trinitiarian theology stresses relationality, interdependence, and connectedness.[13] This critical retrieval cannot occur without addressing the exclusive male imagery that has been used for the triune God for nearly two thousand years. Intentionally shaping our religious language, particularly our God-language, is an integral element of ecclesial and social praxis which renews and reconstructs "unjust and deficient religious systems."[14] This re-shaping of our God-language is a serious issue. It is not to be dismissed as a contemporary exercise in political correctness; what is involved is "nothing less than the full humanity of women and men and humanity's proper relationship to God."[15] The call to the fullness of life for humanity and all of creation is characterized by the evolutionary view of energies of differentiation, autopoiesis, and communion. The Christian experience of that call is expressed in our trinitarian doctrine, which symbolizes what it means to

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[12] Fox, *God as Communion,* 12.

[13] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith,* 84.

[14] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS,* 46.

[15] Fox, *God as Communion,* 18.

participate in the life of God through Jesus Christ in the Spirit.

In my critical retrieval of the trinitarian doctrine I have discovered anew the concepts of *perichoresis* and *koinonia*, both of which have particular meanings within a trinitarian theology, understood as a theology of relationship. A theology of relationship "explores the mysteries of love, relationship, personhood and communion, within the framework of God's self-revelation in the person of Christ and the activity of the Spirit."[16] I believe that the concepts of *perichoresis* and *koinonia* recapture, reconnect, reconstruct, and rediscover the power and richness of our Trinitarian theology, particularly as it relates to an evolutionary-feminist framework and an ecclesial praxis of "moving toward a more inclusive church."[17]

In this exploration of trinitarian theology, I am faithful both to a call to critical *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* as they contribute to the development of the theological framework for the church which is consonant with an ecclesial model of "moving toward a more inclusive church." Inspired by insights from Eastern Orthodox tradition and reformist feminist theology, I seek to retrieve a more balanced pneumatic-christic trinitarian theology for ministry which is reinstated at the heart of the ecclesial community and which incarnates the values of mutuality, reciprocity, equality, and unity-in-diversity.

Eastern and Western theologies differ around the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit in their respective trinitarian doctrines. For the East, the Holy Spirit

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[16] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 1.

[17] As noted in its mission statement, the Centre's ecclesial praxis is imbued with the values of self-knowledge, communion with God and others, love of church, co-responsibility, an ecumenical spirit, equality, partnership, collegiality, inclusivity, bilingualism, solidarity, and service. These are among the values that the Centre seeks to practice and promote among its members. See Appendix I.

proceeds from the Father; whereas in the Western *filioque* doctrine,[18] the Holy Spirit

proceeds from both Father and Son. This difference is significant for a trinitarian

theology of relationship in that the *filioque* upholds a hierarchical doctrine that gives

priority to the unity of substance in the Father-Son diad, in contrast to the distinctiveness

of Spirit. This priority has led to a christological hypertrophy in Western trinitarian

doctrine, in which the separateness and individuality of each divine person is

emphasized more than their interrelatedness and interdependence.[19] In the *filioque*

doctrine, God is protected from the "perceived threat of plurality."[20] Eastern theology

offers a corrective to Western thought, as it insists on the three persons of the Trinity as

being radically equal, yet different from each other. Rather than locating difference in

substance, Eastern theology locates difference in the ways each of the three persons

relates to each other. In contrast to the Western emphasis on the unity of the divine

essence and substance, Eastern trinitarian theology emphasizes that in the divine life,

there is an energetic relation of interdependence and mutuality among the three persons,

including the Spirit and the Son. The three persons are distinct in their relation to each

other. For the East, "person" is first and foremost relational, and, therefore, the unity of

God lives in the person, not in the substance of God.[21]

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[18] The *filioque* doctrine deals with the relation between the Son and the Holy Spirit. The source of the *filioque* is found in the Latin form of the Creed in AD 381, which states that the Spirit proceeds from both the Father *and* the Son. This has never been accepted in the Christian East, which maintains that Spirit proceeds from the Father, thereby maintaining the monarchic identity of the Father who begets both Son and Spirit.

[19] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 98.

[20] Gary D. Badcock, *Light of Truth & Truth of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing House, 1997), 79.

[21] Badcock, *Light of Truth*, 84.

A critical retrieval of the Chalcedonian[22] theological, anthropological and ecclesiological understanding of "person" raises the need for a corrective to the Western concept of person as centre or individual consciousness, particularly as that concept relates to the ontological categories assigned to both God and humanity. The starting point for this corrective is the fifth century Greek Cappadocian identification of hypostasis with *proposon* (personhood) rather than *ousia* (substance). It seems that the Greek philosophers of the time understood personhood as an open and dynamic reality that exists only in reference to others. In other words, personhood can be actualized only in communion. This Greek view of personhood became the framework for the systematization of the Chalcedonian trinitarian formula, in which the being of God is identified with person. In this system, it is God's personal existence that constitutes God's substance. Furthermore, because the ontological principle of God is person, there is no divine substance, no God, outside the Trinity.[23]

This Eastern understanding of person gives primacy to the concept of person as a relational being, breaking down the isolation and solitariness most often attributed to both human and divine, all the while respecting the utter otherness of the other. This relationality does not constrain the freedom nor diminish the uniqueness of the person. Rather, it is in self-transcendence, in the movement beyond the limits of our own selves

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[22] The Council of Chalcedon, AD 451, acknowledged in Christ the hypostatic union of two natures without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation. Hypostasis is understood as Communion, proposon as person, and ousia as substance. While the text of the Chalcedonian formula continues to be fundamental to the Christological development throughout the Latin West, and much of the East, there continues to be much controversy as to the interpretation of that formula, particularly with respect to the Greek terms of *hypostasis, ousia,* and *proposon.* Jaroslav Pelikan, "The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)," in *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine,* vol. 1, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), 262–264.

[23] Zizioulas, *Being as Communion,* 41.

toward the other, that we actualize ourselves as unique and unrepeatable persons, made in the image of God. This Eastern view of person as a corrective to the Western understanding of person, has significant implications for our image of God, our own self-understanding as human persons made in the image of God, as well as for our Christian life and practice.

In the exploration of *koinonia* and *perichoreses* as fundamental characteristics of our trinitarian doctrine, it is important to remember that any critical retrieval of trinitarian theology must be situated within the story of salvation, which holds together inquiries into the theology of God *and* the economy of salvation.[24] To limit this theological inquiry to the sphere of *intradivine* relations would leave it open to the charge of developing into an ideology[25] to support the praxis of relations of mutuality and diversity in "moving toward a more inclusive church." In other words, it is not enough to use the model of intradivine relations as a mirror for the configuration of human community and to critique the current social and ecclesial praxis. The insistence on the essential unity in the "immanent-economic or essence-energies schema"[26] of God's triune existence upholds the premise that: the mystery of God's eternal being is revealed in the mystery of salvation, therefore, all "statements of the nature of God must be rooted in the reality of salvation history."[27]

Because the one triune God is self-communicating, we are able to know the

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[24] Fox, *God as Communion*, 185.

[25] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 274. LaCugna cites this charge as being on par with the charge of patriarchy.

[26] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 229.

[27] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 4.

immanent existence of God; furthermore, because divine self-communication is neither *transhistorical* nor *transempirical*, the immanent God is in communion with humanity in the reality of salvation history.[28] God's being is not something that belongs to God alone, nor does it belong to God apart from creation. Trinitarian theology is an inquiry into "God's life with us and our life with each other."[29] There is but one life of the triune God, a life in which we have been graciously included as partners. In other words, we cannot separate God's being from God's being-for-us; nor can we separate God's being and God's being-for-us from our being-for-each-other.

I stand with other reformist feminist theologians who seek the full inclusion of women, as well as all those who are marginalized in our current ecclesial and social praxis. An insistence on the immanent-economic schema of Trinitarian theology holds together the *ad intra* and *ad extra* aspects of the symbol of God and maintains a creative tension between the divisive categories of ontology/function, essence/energies, and institution/charism.[30] These divisive categories frustrate attempts to move toward a more inclusive church, as they perpetuate exclusionary practices that embody an elitist theology of ordained ministry, which in Western praxis, has disconnected christology from pneumatology, and isolated ministry from the community. A critical re-balancing of the pneumatic-christic aspect of the Trinity goes hand in hand with a fresh understanding of *perichoresis* and *koinonia*, both of which are key elements in a trinitarian theology of relationship.

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[28] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US,* 229.

[29] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US,* 1.

[30] Fox, *God as Communion*, 75.

Perichoresis

Perichoresis provides a dynamic model of persons in communion—a model based on mutuality, interdependence, and intersubjectivity—as it locates unity in diversity, in a true communion of persons in relation with one another. A Greek word which means "being-in-one-another, permeation without confusion,"[31] *perichoresis* highlights the "dynamic and vital character of each divine person, as well as the coinherence and immanence of each divine person in the other two."[32] This doctrine claims that "each of the divine persons interpenetrates and dwells in the other two."[33] However, in keeping with the immanent-economic schema of trintarian doctrine, *perichoresis* is also about our life *in* God. The *perichoretic* model of mutuality and interdependence is not simply an idea of the inner relations of the triune God, but it is experienced as the self-communication of God's being, which is a self-communication about God's being-for-us, as well as our being-for-each-other. Our ecclesial praxis does not simply imitate or reflect God's immanent characteristics of mutuality of the *indwelling-ness*, but it is literally shaped and informed by the actual experience of the indwelling-ness of God in our midst.

In the doctrine of *perichoresis*, the pneumatic-christic balance is restored. Although the doctrine of *perichoresis* is fully revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, it is the person of the Spirit who is the source of the dynamism of the *perichoretic*

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[31] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 271.

[32] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 270.

[33] Badcock, *Light of Fire*, 200.

movement. Giving primacy to the Spirit as the starting point of our experience of God, particularly women's experience, Johnson argues that "fellowship, community, *koinonia* is the primordial design of existence, as all creatures are connected through the indwelling, renewing moving Creator Spirit."[34] As first articulated in the Chalcedonian formula, Jesus is the hypostasis—the communion of divine and human, the mutual coinherence of "two natures 'without separation, without mingling, without confusion.'"[35] Jesus is both who God is and what God is, and he is who we are to become.

In the mystery of the one communion of all persons, it is the Spirit of God in Christ that is the dynamic force of the economy. It is the Spirit that brings about the true communion of God and humanity—the union of divine and human—humanizing God and divinizing human beings.[36] The Holy Spirit incorporates humanity and all of creation[37] into the mystery of *perichoresis*, into the dynamism of the mutual indwelling of being itself. Through the indwelling of God, all creatures are mutually related and exist in communion.

It is the Spirit that is the source of individuation and community, of autonomy and relation. It is the Spirit that brings about the true communion of humanity in God.

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[34] Fox, *God as Communion*, 198 quoting Johnson, *Women, Earth and Spirit* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 44.

[35] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 296.

[36] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 296. LaCugna seems to favour the use of *divinizing*, or as the Eastern tradition names it, "theosis." As a person formed in the Western tradition, it is my understanding that the more in communion we are with God, self, and others, the more *human* we become. I do not believe that this is merely a matter of choice of words, but rather that this is deeply embedded in our theology and anthropology.

[37] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 134. For Johnson, God's energizing Spirit dwells in all things (Wisdom 12:1) and encompasses the world as a great matrix (Acts 17:28).

The Spirit gathers together in Christ those who would not otherwise gather. In John 17:20–26, Jesus prays for the believers that they may be indwelt by the Father and the Son and express their unity in love. It is the Spirit who makes possible the true union, making possible unity-amidst-diversity, without abolishing otherness or individuality. This achievement of communion is referred to as *koinonia,* one of the two elements in my continued exploration of Trinitarian theology.

While the doctrine of *perichoresis,* understood as mutual coinherence, maintains God's unique asymmetrical otherness, my research has uncovered a variety of ways of understanding and safeguarding that asymmetry, each having direct implications as to how we experience and express God's being, God's being-for-us, as well as our being-for-each-other. Using the lens of the evolutionary-feminist thought, I have chosen to contrast models of mutual coinherence found in mainline Roman Catholic Trinitarian theology, Eastern Orthodox Catholic Trinitarian theology, and reformist feminist Roman Catholic Trintarian theology. As with our God-language, each of these ways of understanding asymmetry, as part of the doctrine of *perichoresis,* is deeply embedded in our social and ecclesial praxis.

For Gerald O'Collins who speaks from the stance of mainline Roman Catholic Trinitarian theology, the mutual coinherence among the Father-Son-Spirit is asymmetrical because of the unity of divine nature and the intradivine order of origin.[38] Because the Son and the Spirit are not of the origin of the Father, they are ordered to one another in an asymmetrical way. O'Collins asserts God's omnipotence because of God's relationship to the created order that is uniquely asymmetrical. Creatures necessarily

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[38] Gerald O'Collins, S. J., *The Tripersonal God: Understanding and Interpreting the Trinity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 178.

depend on and are affected by God, but God does not depend on and is not affected by the world.[39] I believe that this particular interpretation of the doctrine of *perichoresis* perpetuates the cult of abstract fatherhood in which the supreme Father-individual is unaffected and exists in a relationship of apathy and domination over and external the world. Although I do not argue God's freedom from ontological necessity, I do not believe that God is unaffected in his relations with creation. This central image of divine and distant fatherhood maintains a social and ecclesial praxis in which women are complementary and subordinate to men.[40]

For John D. Zizioulas, who speaks from within Eastern Orthodox Catholic Trinitarian theology, the mutual coinherence among the Father-Son-Spirit is asymmetrical because hierarchy in the Trinity stems from unity of life and at the same time specificity of each person in relation to other persons. In contrast to the Western view of ontological specificity as constitutive of hierarchical ordering, the Eastern view of hierarchy is based on the specificity of relationship.[41] In the hierarchy of the Trinity, it is the Father, as person, in his particular relationship to the Son and Spirit, who gives the Trinity its unity and diversity. Because authentic ecclesial praxis must "provide the means for personal and free existence in communion,"[42] all ministries are considered authoritative only in the sense that they realize communion that finds its source and

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[39] O'Collins, *The Tripersonal God*, 182.

[40] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 267. This also reinforces the dualisms or clear distinctions traditionally associated with women or men; i.e. feeling/thinking, sympathy/apathy.

[41] Fox, *God as Communion*, 76, quoting and reference made to Zizioulas, "Pneumatological Dimension of the Church," *Communion International Catholic Review* 1 (1974): 151; Zizioulas, "Ordination and Communion," *Study Encounter* 6 (1970): 191.

[42] Fox, *God as Communion*, 76.

summit in God's triune self. Here, communion is defined as loving mutual and equal relations, where difference is valued and essential for relationality.[43] Although this way of understanding asymmetry provides a basis for unity and change in current ecclesial praxes, particularly as it upholds the dynamism and creativity of the Holy Spirit in relation to Christ,[44] it maintains the monarchical model of Father as the origin of all personhood.[45] This androcentric, monarchical theology continues to be embodied in the current ecclesial praxis in both the Eastern and Western churches, even where ordained ministry is open both women and men. In contrast, feminists would assess praxes which reveal the trinitarian theologies of either O'Collins or Zizioulas to be inauthentic as neither affirms nor promotes the full personhood of women.

Elizabeth Johnson, who speaks as a reformist feminist Roman Catholic theologian, presents a panentheistic model of mutual coinherence that faithfully preserves the radical distinction between God and the world. Holding together both the theology of God *and* the economy of salvation, Johnson's model of mutual coinherence promotes God's "asymmetrical otherness in relations of reciprocity and mutuality."[46] The inductive approach that she takes in her inquiry into the triune God is born from her careful attentiveness to the story of women's experience in the church as the starting point for her theological inquiry. Drawing on the riches of our Judeo-Christian tradition, Johnson begins with the interpreted experience of the Spirit, which she believes is more

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[43] Fox, *God as Communion*, 77.

[44] Fox, *God as Communion*, 77.

[45] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 266.

[46] The reformist feminist Roman Catholic position is typified by the works of Elizabeth Johnson. See Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 232.

closely allied to the human experience of salvation. For Johnson, it is clear: Starting with

the Spirit coheres with both the existential as well as the historical pattern from which

faith in the triune God arises. It is in the Spirit that we come to know God in Christ.[47]

Johnson rejects both the pantheistic and the classical theistic model of mutual

coinherence. Classical theism favours the radical independence between the infinite God

and the finite world, in that the merely transcendent God has no real relation to the

created realm. In pantheism, the infinite God merges with the finite world, thus denying

any independence and freedom in the created world. The pantheistic model of the

immanent God results in a lack of differentiation between God and the world, making no

true relation possible.

The panentheistic model of *perichoresis* embraces both the transcendence and

immanence of God. In a panentheistic doctrine of *perichoresis*, God is in the world and

the world is in God, yet each remains radically distinct and free.[48] The asymmetrical

otherness is lived as relations of mutuality in which differences remain and are

respected. Panentheism, together with the experience of the Spirit as the starting point

for our theological discourse, opens the possibility for female metaphors for God,

especially in the form of maternal and friendship imagery.[49] Panentheism also opens the

door to evolutionary faith and ecofeminist spirituality in which God is "the creative

force in the universe and a dynamic presence within every nook and cranny of

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[47] Fox, *God as Communion*, 133.

[48] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 231.

[49] Fox, *God as Communion*, 133.

creation."[50] The fundamental vision of mutual coinherence, in which divine relatedness to the world overcomes the isolation of a patriarchal God, is congruent with feminist values of mutuality and reciprocity.[51] This understanding of asymmetrical otherness deconstructs the dominant power relations of hierarchical patriarchy in our ecclesial and social praxis, and is congruent with moving toward a more inclusive church.

Koinonia

While it is impossible to speak of *perichoresis* without also speaking of *koinonia*, I believe that this important aspect of trinitarian theology calls for an exploration in its own right. As the doctrine of *perichoresis* has developed over the centuries, it has defined and given meaning to the lived experience of *koinonia* for the early Christians. This ancient concept of *koinonia* as a fundamental expression of church was reclaimed with the Second Vatican Council.[52] In faithfulness to the call to *aggionormento*, the concept of *koinonia* continues to be developed in keeping with the critical issues of our times; one of which is the preservation of our environment. A deeper understanding of *koinonia* moves us toward an even more inclusive extension of communion, not only to all human beings but also to "other living creatures, ecosystems, and the whole natural world itself."[53]

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[50] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 30.

[51] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 233.

[52] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 76, n22.

[53] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 139, quoting Johnson, *Friends of God and Prophets: A Feminist Theological Reading of the Communion of Saints* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 240.

Koinonia is a Greek word that is understood as "partnership."[54] Christians have traditionally translated *koinonia* as community or communion. The energy of this communion or *koinonia* is both the life *of* God and life *in* God. The ground of *koinonia* resides in the very being of God, which is, first and foremost, relational. The *perichoretic* existence of our Christian God is an dynamic and energetic existence that invites us to live in communion with each other and with God. This is evidenced in the biblical story of the Pentecost event in which the community of disciples was confirmed with its striking symbolism of wind and fire. From that experience, the disciples went forth to preach the gospel and, as a result of their preaching, new communities emerged throughout the known world.[55]

As with *perichoresis*, a recovery of our understanding of community as *koinonia* is a re-balancing of the christic-pneumatic pole of our trinitarian theology and developing ecclesiologies. The Western tendency toward individualism in ontology and to treat christology as an autonomous subject has separated ministry and ordination, leading to a clear division of ordained over lay ministry. A critical retrieval of *koinonia* as intrinsic to a trinitarian theology of relationship opens the way to rediscover that ordination and the public mandating of pastoral leaders are acts that are constitutive of community.[56] It is the work of the Spirit to achieve *koinonia* by creating and maintaining diversity-in-unity. This is the autopoietic energy which both differentiates and unites.

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[54] James D. Whitehead and Evelyn Whitehead, *The Promise of Partnership: A Model for Collaborative Ministry* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993), 7.

[55] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 87.

[56] Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 216. In keeping with the vision of moving toward a more inclusive Church, I have expanded on Zizioulas' contention that ordained ministers include publicly mandated pastoral leaders. This is consistent with my ecclesial vision presented in Chapter Four.

The Trinity's *koinonia* presents itself as the ground and goal of all relations of communion.[57] In *koinonia*, power is shared as the partners partake in the life of community as subjects. In *koinonia*, difference does not lead to subordinations, but rather expands and enriches intersubjective relations of mutuality and reciprocity. The concept of *koinonia* is extended into the next chapter in the exploration of developing ecclesiologies.

Conclusion

In this chapter I presented a trinitarian theology of relationship for authentic ecclesial praxis. This theological foundation takes into account insights from the new cosmology that relates to the energy of communion and intersubjectivity, as well as the developing consciousness of our deep interconnectedness in God with all of creation.

In this critical theological retrieval, I explored two elements of the trinitarian doctrine: *perichoresis* and *koinonia*. While these two concepts are interrelated, each individually brings a greater clarity as to how the trinitarian doctrine stands as a profound critique of inauthentic ecclesial praxis in which patriarchy, subordinationism and triumphalism are the norm. Inauthentic ecclesial praxis reveals a dualistic view of reality which reinforce a hierarchical ordering which perpetuates isolationist practices and subject-object relations.[58]

In this trinitarian foundation, I have attempted to move toward a trinitarian model

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[57] O'Collins, *Tripersonal God*, 179.

[58] In a dualistic view of reality, *ontology* is separated from and valued over *function*, *essence* from and over *energies*, *clergy* from and over *lay*, *spirit* from and over *body*, *masculine* from and over *feminine*, *transcendent* from and over *immanent*, *universal* from and over *particular*.

of interdependence in balancing the Western tendency to value independence over inclusion with the Eastern tendency to value inclusion over independence. As well, I have proposed a reformist feminist view as a corrective to the excessive weight given to the masculine gender and characteristics in the symbol of our trinitarian God. A doctrine of the trinity, marked by *perichoresis* and *koinonia*, upholds an ecclesial praxis of mutuality, partnership, collegiality, co-responsibility, communion and love, in which genuine difference among persons is a precondition to communion. As believers, we know that true communion is never fully realized, but is rather an eschatological hope. Our ecclesial praxis must embody that hope. And if, as alleged in Chapter Two, truth is encountered and revealed in praxis which is the dialogue between theory and practice, then dialogue is the path to discovering emerging truths.[59] A critical retrieval of the doctrine of the Trinity, which values mutuality and otherness, is one of the essential ingredients to dialogue that is imbued with the energy of trinitarian interconnectedness and open to finding a new path toward our shared life as Christians. It is in a spirit of dialogue and hope that I invite readers into Chapter Four.

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[59] Sandra Schneiders, *Finding the Treasure: Locating Catholic Religious Life in a New Ecclesial and Cultural Context* (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 117.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS II:

AN ECCLESIAL VISION OF

MOVING TOWARD A MORE INCLUSIVE CHURCH

In Chapter Three, I presented a theological perspective on an evolutionary-feminist

framework for my exploration of the relationship between language and change. That

theological perspective was based on particular aspects of a trinitarian theology of

relationship which are germane to the Eastern Orthodox tradition as well as to reformist

feminist theology. Because God-language is deeply interconnected with personal and

ecclesial identities, and because language, *parole*, serves as a socializing function, I

intentionally chose to retrieve two words from our Greek roots, *koinonia* and

perichoresis. While these words could be dismissed today as vestiges from ancient

jargon, they serve as a reminder of the call to critical *ressourcement* in rediscovering the

richness of our tradition. *Perichoresis* and *koinonia* are main elements in my

reconstruction of a theology for authentic ecclesial praxis in which relations of mutuality

and interdependence are the norm for women and men. Through their critical retrieval,

these words recover a fundamental call to abide in God's dynamic presence, to mutual

indwelling with our God, with others, and with all of creation.

In this chapter, I examine elements for a developing ecclesiology drawn from the

emerging theoretical and theological framework of the earlier chapters. Just as my focus on language and change has influenced my choice of this framework, this same focus has inspired the ecclesiological perspectives that form the basis for this chapter.

Ecclesiology is the study of theological and practical questions that address the organized Christian community. Those questions involve the nature, purpose, patterns of authority and participation, boundaries, and central values of the Christian community.[1] As with an exploration of the trinitarian doctrine, which cannot separate what we say about intradivine relations from what we say about God's mission in the world, ecclesiology must involve both the *ad intra* and *ad extra* dimensions of church. *Ad intra* refers to the inner life of the church and *ad intra* refers to the relations between the church and its environment or external context. Neither dimension is exclusive of the other. Both dimensions reflect the sacramental character of the church, particularly of the Roman Catholic Church. Although it is not my intention to ignore its *ad extra* dimensions or its sacramentality, my focus is on the organization of the *ad intra* dimension, particularly as it relates to an evolutionary-feminist view of ecclesial relations which is informed by a trinitarian theology of relationship.

Both trinitarian theology and ecclesiology are part of the living tradition of the church. The historical development of both attests to their being open and dynamic systems, responding to their environments while remaining faithful to their original vision and goals. Each model of church is an ordered system composed of a coherent body of social attitudes and teachings about the organization of authority, in the community of faith, and about its mission. Throughout the history of Christianity, each

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[1] Max L. Stackhouse, "Ecclesiology and Ethics," in *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, ed. James F. Childress and John Macquarrie (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986).

model has been deeply rooted and influenced by its socio-historical context.[2] This was made evident in my exploration of the Chalcedonian trinitarian formula in the previous chapter. The question of a community's faithfulness to the original vision and goals involves the issue of its authoritative tradition. This issue is critical for all ecclesiologies and I will show how the framework I am building is useful as a means for critiquing the church as an inclusive community.

Context and Methodology

In this chapter I explore two ecclesiologies, both of which have evolved in the context of the conciliar call to renewal of the church, a renewal that the conciliar documents refer to as "essentially consist[ing] [of] an increase of fidelity to her own calling."[3] This same conciliar document goes on to say that "undoubtedly this ['increase of fidelity to her own calling'] explains the dynamism of the movement toward unity."[4] The conciliar call to *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* reminds us that it is Christ who "summons the church, as she goes her pilgrim way, to that continual reformation of which she always has need," and it is the Spirit who is the agent of this continuous renewal.[5] It is this same Spirit who, by the power of the Gospel, enables the church to "keep the freshness

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[2] Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face: A New and Expanded Theology of Ministry* (New York: Crossroad, 1985) 2.

[3] Abbott, "Decree on Ecumenism" in *The Documents of Vatican II*, para. 6, 350. Although this passage is taken from the "Decree on Ecumenism," it is addressed to the Church in the fullness of its renewal process.

[4] Abbott, "Decree on Ecumenism" in *The Documents of Vatican II*, para. 6, 350.

[5] Abbott, "Decree on Ecumenism" in *The Documents of Vatican II*, para. 6, 350.

of youth"[6] and guides it in the way of all truth.

I intentionally use the evolutionary-feminist lens to interpret these passages from the conciliar documents, because they resonate with the concept of system that I outlined in Chapter Two. In particular, self-organizing systems change in ways that are coherent with their ultimate calling or mission. As change occurs and systems self-transcend in faithfulness to their calling, they become more complex and inclusive in their movement toward greater unity. In an evolutionary view of reality, it is an intentional and immanent God who calls and guides the church in the ways of truth, through the continual process of renewal and reconstruction. The call to engage in the process of change is neither optional nor trivial, but is to be embraced simply because ecclesial structures, like all of creation, are not static or fixed into eternity. Life engenders new life. And in that evolutionary process of generativity, the old must give way to new life as it is transformed and incorporated into new ways of being church. An evolutionary interpretation of these conciliar texts signals change as both imperative and urgent.

As a model of change, the methodology I have chosen for this chapter is a modified version of what Letty Russell has termed a "spiral methodology." A spiral methodology assumes that we "each view our theology and our understanding of how God is at work in our lives, through a particular lens of language, thought and action."[7] For Russell, we cannot do theology without a spiral of critical action and reflection consisting of four basic elements, which include experience that is named from a

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[6] Abbott, "The Dogmatic Constitution of the Church," in *The Documents of Vatican II*, 17.

[7] Russell, *Church in the Round*, 30.

specific context, critical social reflection, tradition, and action.[8] I have modified this methodology by presenting the first and last elements outside the confines of this chapter. I have already presented both my personal and the Centre's experience from a specific context. The fourth element, the concrete action to which the spiral methodology calls us, is presented in the last three chapters of this dissertation and especially in Chapter Seven which explains the qualitative research process, Chapter Eight which presents the findings and Chapter Nine which summarizes key elements of the findings as they relate to change-oriented action.

Spiral methodology makes connections between the context of the experience and the way experience is interpreted. This calls for particular attention to the social context out of which questions are asked and experience is interpreted. This also calls for attention to the social context of the original texts of our tradition. The social context for my theological reflection is found in my personal story as a woman in pastoral leadership and in the story of the Centre. For Russell, authentic spiral methodology is located in the context of what she calls the practice of "communities of faith and struggle."[9] Communities of faith and struggle are composed of persons who understand their calling as Christians in light of the "struggle for justice and full humanity for all women together with men."[10] My context for theological reflection is the Centre for Ministry Formation, which is intertwined with my own story as a woman in pastoral leadership.

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[8] Russell, *Church in the Round*, 29.

9 Russell, *Church in the Round*, 39.

[10] Russell, *Church in the Round*, 39. This intentional choice of context holds a significant role in Russell's own emerging ecclesiology of a "Church in the Round."

My context for theological reflection is the Centre for Ministry Formation, which as named as one of its core assumptions is an authentic faith community, a community of faith and struggle. In its praxis of ministry formation and pastoral leadership education, the Centre struggles to live out of its vision of moving toward a more inclusive church. And, it is the Centre's mission to equip pastoral leaders to participate in that same struggle in their respective faith communities. In living out its mission, the ministry formation community struggles for justice and the full inclusion of women together with men in pastoral leadership roles. In spiral methodology, the back and forth action between context and theory is also a back and forth action between margin and centre, so that those who are excluded, especially women, are drawn into the centre. In using this methodology, it is my goal to suggest alternative ways of being church in order to draw those who are excluded into a more inclusive church.

The Centre's mission is to form pastoral leaders who seek out and welcome diversity and inclusivity. The Centre's Mission Statement articulates its struggle in the significant changes named in its vision of ministry formation. Some of those changes include: (1) movement from an elitist view of ordained ministry to mutuality of ministries and solidarity in service; (2) movement from men preparing for orders to women and men preparing for various pastoral leadership roles; and (3) movement from a cleric–lay axis to a community–ministries axis.[11] The elements that I propose for a developing ecclesiology take into account these three significant changes.

The Centre's mission is to form ministers for a particular model of church in

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[11] See Mission Statement, Appendix I-2.

which its central values[12] are intrinsic to, but not exhaustive of, moving toward a more inclusive church. As identified in our members' handbook, the Centre "gathers together disciples of Jesus Christ and helps them to discern their call to share in the mission of the People of God." It is an ecclesiology of communion that "inspires a formation which values all the baptized and all ministries."[13]

Communion ecclesiology moves beyond the merely juridical and institutional understandings of the church to a retrieval of a vision of church as a "web of interwoven relationships."[14] The source and summit of this model of church is the Triune God. As in a trinitarian theology of relationship which holds together the immanent-economic schema of the Trinity, personal being and interconnectedness lie at the heart of communion ecclesiology as it holds together the relationships among the persons of the Trinity, the relationship between God and human beings, and the relationship among human beings. The latter refers to the relation among members of parishes, among parishes themselves as well as the dynamic interplay between the universal church and the local church in its relations among the bishops dispersed around the world.[15]

The communion model of church is a very broad and multi-dimensional ecclesial category which includes a variety ecclesial visions that either stress or hold in tension the institutional, the charismatic, the christological, the pneumatological, the mystical,

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[12] See Mission Statement, Appendix I-1.

[13] See Mission Statement, Appendix I-1.

[14] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 13.

[15] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 12-13. Communion ecclesiology also focuses on the relationship among the communion of saints; yet, the parameters of this dissertation do not provide for an introduction or exploration of this equally important aspect of church as communion.

the socio-historical, the human and the divine aspects of the church.[16] One of those ecclesial visions within communion ecclesiology is the model of "community of disciples." This model is a good fit for the Centre, as our members, seek to discern their responses, each to their particular call to discipleship. In this chapter I explore two "community of disciples" models of church that speak to the Centre's ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church. Of these two models, one is rooted deeply in a feminist analysis and the other embraces an evolutionary view of church.

In all models of church, the question of authority and power is an important ecclesiological issue. In this chapter, I address this issue in a separate section in which I explore the structures of power relations with respect to our images of God and worldviews. The section on power relations is followed by a section in which I explore the issue of authoritative tradition which in evolutionary thought, is the self-organizing principle which guides and shapes the nature, purpose, patterns of authority and participation, boundaries, and central values of the Christian community. My choice of presenting *apostolicity* as the basis for authoritative tradition is not arbitrary in light of the Roman Catholic context for this inquiry.

As with all communities of faith and struggle, the Centre for Ministry Formation is not an island unto itself. In an evolutionary view of communion, informed by the theory of holons, the Centre is a part/whole. According to this theory, as a part/whole, it is impossible to isolate any dimension of reality in order to explain its unique

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[16] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 18. In this multi-dimensional ecclesial vision, the contrast between the mystical and socio-historical is one of the biggest points of tension in Catholic ecclesiology today. Those who explicitly stress the Mystical Body of Christ image over the People of God image include Henri de Lubac, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Joseph Ratzinger and John Paul II. While the parameters and focus of this dissertation do not allow for exploring the full range of communion ecclesiologies, it is not my intention to dismiss this significant contrast or reduce communion ecclesiology to simply the community of disciples model of church. As noted below, the community of disciples model which I explore is intended to hold the various dimensions of church as communion in tension.

individuality. Therefore, it is necessary to look at the larger whole in which the Centre belongs to explain its uniqueness in terms of its relationships within the greater whole.

As a community of faith, the Centre is a whole community with its own unique identity, mission, vision, and autonomy. It is also a part in that it has a symbiotic relation with the greater university community, as well as with the universal Roman Catholic Church. The wider church necessarily shapes its identity, mission, vision, and even autonomy, as well as the meaning given to our lived experiences in community. The Centre is also shaped and influenced in its relationships, both within its community as well as with other communities and individuals who are marginal to the institution. The Centre's diverse experiences in welcoming women and men for vocational discernment are deeply influenced in the back and forth movement between current theory and practice.

One of the Centre's challenges is to move beyond the clerical elitism of "the Club"[17] mentality and offer a formation that is specific to the various ministries (lay and ordained) for which the candidates are presenting themselves. I borrowed the term of "the Club" from an article by Michael Papesh, a Roman Catholic ordained minister in the United States. In the article, he names the "powerlessness" of clergy to free themselves from the clerical structure, so that they may realize their commitment to moving away from the Club. Therefore, he looks to lay people and the church at large to "ponder deeply our theology of ministry and to make a radical critique of the cultural elements of the many disciplinary notes that surround it and, in our time, hinder its

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[17] Papesh, "Farewell to 'the Club,'" in *America*, 7–11.

effectiveness."[18]

As the Centre attempts to incorporate the significant changes in its ecclesial vision into its own praxis, it reveals our fundamental belief that the Club is no longer a model of ministry that serves a church whose self-understanding is about solidarity and witnessing to the reign of God. Yet, this Club is well supported by an ingeniously designed anthropological, philosophical, theological, and ecclesiological system; all of which are contradictions to moving from the clerical elitism of the Club toward a more inclusive church.

Saying goodbye to the Club is complex. It is not simply about improving ecclesial relations by goodwill or by legislating change. It is also not simply about offering a radically new paradigm of church in which those relations are modified. We must intentionally move toward a more inclusive church in a way that transforms relations and structures grounded in the critical correlation between our experience and developing theories of the universe, humankind, culture, and God. I believe that transformation is possible if we intentionally integrate a powerful feminist insight into our personal and collective consciousness. In my research, that insight has taken the form of a mantra: "Structural change and linguistic change go hand in hand."[19] As I dig deeper into my exploration of the relationship between language and change, I am convinced that the intentional use of language, both as *parole* and *parler*, can be a powerful force for the ongoing development of consciousness/awareness and deep structural change. As stated in the previous chapter, the intentional shaping of our

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[18] Papesh, "Farewell to 'the Club,'" in *America,* 11.

[19] Elizabeth A. Johnson, *SHE WHO IS,* 40.

religious language is an integral element in the renewal of our ecclesial and social praxis. Again I state this serious issue. It should not be dismissed as an exercise in political correctness.[20]

Structures of Power Relations

In our Christian vision of God, world and church are inextricably interconnected. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, throughout Christian history, our prevailing models of church are deeply rooted and shaped by their socio-historical contexts.[21] Each of those contexts embodies a particular image of God, which is integrally related to the predominant world view. An image of God as an autonomous, transcendent, interventionist sovereign, relating from above and outside of creation, shapes a model of church as ecclesial autocracy. Furthermore, this image of God is connected to and maintained by a world view which sees creation as a passive, one-time event, the basic structure of which is retained until the end of time.

We currently live in an ecclesial culture that has built-in supports to maintain a society comprising of two categories of person. In those categories, one group has the power and authority, and the other group is led by the first. An ecclesial autocracy is justified by subject–object relationships in which God's power and authority are passed from one active subject: God, the Father, to Jesus Christ, who in turn passes it on to the clergy (bishop, priest, deacon), who in turn pass it on to the laity, who in turn pass it on to the world. Within this network of relations, each element is a passive object in

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[20] Fox, *God As Communion*, 18.

[21] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 2.

relation to what is above or before it, and each element is an active subject to what is below or after it. In this paradigm, the laity are passive objects until the clergy empower them to be active in the world, and the world is a passive object waiting to be sanctified by the evangelizing presence of the church.[22] In order to modify ecclesial relationships, we must see the bigger picture of the current clergy–lay relationship. That bigger picture situates the current clergy–lay relationship as part of a complex authoritative hierarchy of relationships that constitute our religious mentality.

Evolutionary-feminist thought offers a different framework for an alternative vision of God, world, and church—a framework that affirms the abundance of God's creativity and radical inclusivity of God's salvific presence. This new vision presents us with concepts, images, and structures that were unknown to previous generations. This new vision is deeply interconnected with the image of an immanent and intentional God—a God who freely impacts the evolutionary process, calling all of creation into the co-creative act in a spirit of dynamism, collaboration, and interdependence.[23] In this new ecclesial paradigm, God is not mediated from top to bottom through Jesus Christ and the clergy to the laity and to the world. Rather, "God is at the center of a web of relationships with the power and presence of God expanding in all directions from within."[24] In this image of God, the church moves "from the uniformity of a clerico-pyramidal church to a church of communion"[25] as a web of relationships, a community

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[22] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 161–164.

[23] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 113.

[24] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 162.

[25] A. Parent, *A Church of the Baptized*, 133 (emphasis original), as cited in Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 162.

of disciples with a deep sense of communion as the one body of Christ.

The trinitarian theological foundation which I presented in Chapter Three, includes a critical retrieval of the Trinity as a dynamic model of persons in communion—a model based on mutuality, interdependence, and intersubjectivity that locates unity in diversity, in a true communion of persons in relation to one another. As noted in Chapter Two, evolutionary thought has broadened our understanding of energy and system. Energy is understood as an all-pervasive power, a fundamental driving force of nature, and "the common, underlying factor in our search for unity among all material things."[26] In perichoretic relations of koinonia, energy is a dynamic power[27] that is shared as the partners partake *of* and *in* the life of the community as subjects. And difference does not lead to subordinationism, but rather difference expands and enriches the intersubjective relationships. The same energy *in which* and *through which* evolution unfolds and thrives, is the lifeblood of the dynamism of the church's movement toward unity in faithfulness to its own calling.[28]

The evolutionary concept of a self-organizing system is a lens for understanding church as a dissipative structure in which the process of self-reference keeps it faithful to its calling. As a living system, the church will continue to unfold and emerge out of the presence of God within it. It may emerge in unanticipated ways; yet, we are called to freely trust the inherent capacity of the church as a living system to self-organize

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[26] Eric J. Chiasson, *Cosmic Evolution: The Rise of Complexity in Nature* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001), 133, cited in O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 45.

[27] The Greek word for power is energeia, understood as a dynamic, active, effective energy that is so powerful it "can subdue the whole universe." Phil. 3:21 (New Jerusalem Version).

[28] Abbott, "Decree on Ecumenism" *Documents of Vatican II*, para. 6, 350.

according to its own calling to participate in the vision of the reign of God. This vision as the self-organizing principle is manifested in its tradition and apostolicity. While our practice and theory of tradition and apostolicity have evolved in the last 2,000 years, tradition and apostolicity remain the self-organizing principle for Christian community. Feminist critiques of existing ecclesiologies "vary in their understanding of what constitutes authoritative tradition,"[29] each according to the praxes in their particular contexts. While for many feminists the Christian tradition does not have authority for them, many others struggle to make the connections with the various forms of authoritative tradition, while at the same time asking what would be life-affirming for them as women of faith.

Authoritative Tradition as a Self-Organizing Principle

The issue of authoritative tradition is critical in all ecclesiologies. It is the authoritative tradition that shapes the nature, purpose, patterns of authority and participation, boundaries, and central values of the Christian community. Apostolicity is one of the most-cited theories by which theologians authenticate current Christian practice. Dating back to the earliest of Christian communities, apostolicity has been considered a "distinguishing mark of the community as being discipleship of Jesus in teaching and lifestyle."[30]

In my exploration of authoritative tradition, I turn to the insights of Edward Schillebeeckx who clearly rejects the more traditional tendency to reduce apostolicity to

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[29] Russell, *Church in the Round*, 39.

[30] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 83.

what has been termed "apostolic succession," along with its exclusive emphasis on structures and interpersonal relationships. In its stead, he offers what he calls a more "richly variegated"[31] understanding of apostolicity consisting of four interdependent and reciprocal dimensions, none of which can, on its own, be a true mark of apostolicity. Although it would be difficult to classify Edward Schillebeeckx within an evolutionary or feminist framework, his theory and insights are oriented toward the full inclusion of women and men into what he calls the "community of God,"[32] and his interpretation of apostolicity is consistent with an evolutionary vision of church.

The first and fundamental dimension of apostolicity is the fact that the churches are founded and built-up on the experience of apostles and prophets. For the earliest Christian communities, apostolicity points first "to the gospel of Jesus Christ as it was mediated to us by the apostles and the prophets."[33] Moving beyond first-generation Christianity, the post-apostolic leaders were concerned with preserving apostolic heritage, and the ministry of these pastoral leaders was experienced as a "special ministerial charisma in the service of the community."[34]

The second dimension of apostolicity is the apostolic content of tradition that addresses the early church's concern for an "unbroken succession in teaching."[35] Here, the Gospel and the New Testament writings serve as a permanent foundation document.

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[31] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 116.

[32] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 2.

[33] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 117.

[34] Edward Schillebeeckx, *Ministry: Leadership in the Community of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 13.

[35] Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, 17.

For Schillebeeckx, the central feature of the Pastoral Epistles is the principle of apostolic tradition, not the principle of ministry. There must always be ministry in the church, for the sake of the continuity of the apostolic teaching itself, which keeps the community's identity on apostolic lines.

The third dimension of apostolicity is the apostolicity of the Christian communities of believers themselves. These communities have been called to life by the apostles and prophets on the criteria of the apostolic content of faith. For Schillebeeckx, an essential part of this dimension of apostolicity is not how the ministers are appointed but rather what he calls the "praxis of the kingdom of God."[36] This praxis consists of following Jesus in his message, in his teaching, and in his actions. The faith has been essentially handed down to them and "ministry is clearly incorporated into the totality of all kinds of services which are necessary for the community itself."[37]

The fourth and final dimension of apostolicity of the church and its ministries is "apostolic succession." Schillebeeckx finds no norms in the Pastoral Epistles for how ministry must be structured and differentiated; only that ministry is necessary for any church community as one of many factors that is at the service of the apostolicity of the community, in its faithfulness to the praxis of Jesus.[38] Ministry is necessary for any church community, yet it is only one of many factors at the service of the apostolicity of the community, in its faithfulness to the praxis of Jesus, consisting of his message, his

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[36] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 116.

[37] Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, 13.

[38] Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, 19.

teaching, and his actions.[39]

In the earliest Christian communities, the laying on of hands was not about the transference of ministerial authority, but rather as a sign of bestowing the charisma of the Holy Spirit in order "to help the minister to hand down and preserve in a living way the pledge entrusted to him and to make him able to proclaim the apostolic tradition intact."[40] Ministry is important and necessary as one of the many authorities to preserve and keep alive the Gospel of Jesus Christ.[41] It is clear that apostolic succession cannot be isolated from the actual process of Christian experience as a response of the church to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.[42] And, as the conciliar documents remind us, it is this same Spirit who guides the church in the way of all truth.[43] As I now turn to exploring two ecclesiologies as models for moving toward a more inclusive church, Schillebeeckx's interpretation of apostolicity will serve both as a critique and a self-organizing principle for the church's renewal and reformation.[44]

As noted, the Centre's mission is inspired by the model of church-as-communion. The overarching model of church-as-communion is understood, practiced, and held up as the ideal in many different ways. While every Centre member and formation team member would claim to be in favour of the model of church-as-

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[39] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 116.

[40] Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, 18.

[41] Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, 19.

[42] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 118.

[43] Abbott, "The Dogmatic Constitution of the Church," in *The Documents of Vatican II*, 17.

[44] Abbott, "Decree on Ecumenism," in *The Documents of Vatican II*, para. 6, 350.

communion, many embrace very different paradigms of authoritative tradition for this church. There are some who give priority to apostolicity as apostolic succession through the ordained minister and these same people defend a primarily transcendental-christic-institutional dimension of church, which offers clarity and a "technical" fix to the process of change. And at the other end of the spectrum, there are some who give priority to apostolicity as the praxis of the community of faith. These people have come to espouse the immanent-pneumatic-cosmological dimension of church, in which the christic-institutional dimension has lost its meaning for them. The Centre situates itself in the middle of these two poles, balancing the christic-pneumatic dimensions of one church, in which its vision of the reign of God is manifested in the self-organizing principle of our "richly variegated"[45] authoritative tradition.

Two Ecclesiologies for Moving Toward a More Inclusive Church

In the context of this inquiry, the evolutionary-feminist framework and trinitarian perspective for understanding relations of power and authoritative tradition, I present two community-of-disciples models of church, both of which are congruent with moving toward a more inclusive church. Both Roman Catholics, Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza proposes an ecclesial vision based on reformist feminist theology and Cletus Wessels presents a model of church that finds its source in evolutionary theology.

Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza: Discipleship of Equals

The discipleship model of church proposed by Fiorenza is what she calls the

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[45] Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, 116.

"discipleship of equals."[46] In this model of church, she retrieves two terms asssociated with the early Christian communities: *baseilia* and *ekklesia*, both of which elucidate the core of her ecclesial vision. The discipleship of equals upholds the vision of church in Galatians 3:28, which draws its theological power from the Christian tradition of *baseilia*. For Fiorenza, *baseilia* is the self-organizing principle. It is the "vision of God's alternative world, a vision of justice, human dignity, equality and salvation for all."[47] For Fiorenza, the discipleship of equals must be "*baseilia* discipleship,"[48] as it is the *baseilia* vision of the Gospels that "constitutes the mission and the reason for any ecclesial existence."[49] Like Jesus, the disciples of the *baseilia* are called to proclaim and make present the reign of God, the good news of God's alternative world of justice and love. As a reformist feminist, Fiorenza argues that this *baseilia* vision cannot be actualized and affirmed without a space in which women "attain full spiritual autonomy, power, self-determination and liberation."[50] In this model of church, baptism, not ordination is the constitutive element of membership in the faith community.[51] The discipleship of equals is not about women's access to and integration into patriarchal structures. As with other Catholic Christian feminist theologians, Fiorenza is not about the clericalization of

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[46] Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals: A Critical Feminist Ecclsia-logy of Liberation* (New York: Crossroad, 1993). Her book is named according to this model.

[47] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 10.

[48] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 12.

[49] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 12.

[50] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 12..

[51] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 222.

women, but rather about the *declericalization* of the church.[52] *Declericalization* upholds the community's need for leadership; however, it calls for renewed structures of ecclesial relations which are defined by mutuality, intersubjectivity and diversity.

Seeking an ecclesial model for *declericalization*, Fiorenza explores the structures of ecclesial relations in the primitive Christian communities. It is in her critical retrieval of the Christian story that she discovers and claims the proper name for the discipleship of equals model of church as *ekklesia*.[53] In the early Christian movement, *ekklesia* is characterized by the full decision-making, democratic assembly of free citizens. In *ekklesia*, Galatians 3:28 is not to be interpreted as purely charismatic, but must be seen as applying to the structure and organization of the Christian community.[54] Within the *ekklesia*, "ministry is a function of the whole people of God vis-à-vis the whole world."[55] The dualisms between clergy and laity, and between the inner-directed ministries, which has been traditionally the domain of the clergy, and outer-directed ministries, which have traditionally been the reserve of the laity, are overcome, and all ministries are the prerogative and the vocation of all the baptized.[56]

Fiorenza's vision of *ekklesia* is also found in the Pauline Greco-Roman understanding of community as *koinonia*. *Perichoresis* is the lived experience of

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[52] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 15.

[53] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 186. Within the Roman Catholic tradition, she calls this the participatory-inclusive model of Church.

[54] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 178.

[55] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 185.

[56] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 186.

koinonia, for the early Christians that provided the existential reference point for the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity.[57] Such consensual partnership is possible only when the partners are in unity with respect to their vision, purpose, and commitment, upon which the partnership was initially founded. For Fiorenza, *koinonia* provides a sacramental foundation for collegiality, co-responsibility, consensual as well as ecumenical partnership, and mission to the world.[58] The discipleship of equals as *ekklesia* and *koinonia*, is a reconceptualization of church and ministry, a psychological, theological, a structural transformation of the Constantinian church, and a democratization of ministry.[59]

Cletus Wessels: Holarchical Church

Like Fiorenza, Wessels proposes a radically new ecclesial paradigm, in which he also reconceptualizes both the relations and the structure of church and ministry. As noted in Chapter Two, concepts that were once reserved to the sphere of biological life forms are extended to the larger evolutionary picture, including a broader understanding of the dynamism of human and organizational development. This shift engages our contemporary imagination with respect to all of creation as well as our image of God. Anchoring his ecclesial vision in concepts from evolutionary thought. Wessels' new paradigm is what he calls a "holarchical" church,[60] which manifests itself as a

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[57] Fox, *God As Communion*, 37.

[58] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 273.

[59] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 32.

[60] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 131.

community of disciples.

One of the main perspectives for this ecclesial vision is the evolutionary theory of holons—a theory that describes relationships that are fundamental to the universe. According to Wessels, holons display four fundamental categories: self-preservation, self-adaptation, self-transcendence, and self-dissolution.[61] These four categories hold together the potential for both vertical and horizontal ordering. Each holon has the intrinsic potential for autonomous agency, as a whole, *as well as* for communion, as a part of a greater whole. Holons also have the potential for transformation through self-transcendence to a higher order of complexity *as well as* for the reality of self-dissolution or degeneration, all of which are integral parts of nature and society.[62]

Just as holons are hierarchical and horizontal, Wessels' community of disciples model of church is both hierarchical and horizontal. Yet, given the pathological hierarchies, both in society and religion, Wessels proposes the term "holarchical church" for his new ecclesial vision. In this holarchical church, all are subjects and all are disciples. Clerics cease to be clerics and lay people cease to be lay people. There is no need for one master controller because "the church as a self-organizing system unfolds and emerges out of the presence of God within it."[63]

This community of disciples embodies the *koinonian* vision of ecclesial relations, characterized as mutual, reciprocal, and egalitarian yet differentiated. For Wessels, one of the main characteristics of the community of disciples is that it is a community of

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[61] Ken Wilber, *Sex, Ecology, Spirituality: The Spirit of Evolution* (Boston: Shambhala, 1995), viii, as cited in Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 57.

[62] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 59.

[63] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 163.

hearers, listeners, and learners—a community marked by *perichoretic* relations of diversity, mutuality, subjectivity, interdependence, and communion. While his concept of discipleship "undercuts the illusion that some in the church are lords and masters,"[64] Wessels recognizes the need for pastoral leaders who are called, competent, and affirmed by the community. It is not clear for him however, if affirmation should or should not be through ordination. Although the community is the inner source of ministry and leadership, Wessels believes that without some form of pastoral institutionalization of its ministry, the community risks losing its apostolicity. This calls for a deep connection between the community and its leaders. Leadership in the self-organizing church "is not about controlling the organization with negative energy but about freeing it through positive energy to discover the internal movement and guidance of the Creator Spirit."[65]

Wessels' understanding of apostolicity is consistent with the four integral dimensions suggested by Schillebeeckx, in which the vision of the reign of God, the apostolic vision, is the foundation for apostolicity and the basis for apostolic succession is the community of faith as demonstrated by a succession of leaders. The primary qualification for leadership is the apostolic faith of the candidate and the determination of this qualification is part of the role of the community because it is the community that is apostolic.[66] The vision of the reign of God as the self-organizing principle is manifested in its tradition and apostolicity.

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[64] Avery Dulles, *A Church to Believe In: Discipleship and the Dynamics of Freedom* (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 12, cited in Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 83.

[65] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 168.

[66] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 171.

In this model of church, the only true freedom is the freedom "that comes from within, when the oppressed choose to be free."[67] According to Wessels, wherever there is oppression in the church, freedom will come when the laity choose to cease being laity and the clergy, who can also be the object of oppression, choose to cease being clergy. He believes that "to live out such a new paradigm will require a deep and strong faith in the presence and power of God."[68]

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter is to propose elements for a developing ecclesiology for moving toward a more inclusive church, which takes into account the significant changes in movement: from an elitist view of ordained ministry to a mutuality of ministries and solidarity in service; from men preparing for orders to women and men preparing for various pastoral leadership roles; and, from a cleric–lay axis to a community–ministries axis.[69] The elements I propose are not exhaustive and have been chosen based on my focus on the relationship between language and change, particularly as they relate to the significant changes named above.

I have presented two models of church, both of which support the Centre's significant changes. The evolutionary, feminist and theological lenses which each theologian espouses have shaped their respective choices for a radically different language, structure, and ecclesial relations of power. While the notion of holarchical church may be a stretch of imagination for some, there are some evolutionary

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[67] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 163.

[68] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 163.

[69] Mission Statement, page 1 of 2, Appendix I.

theologians who would argue that "holarchy", as universal in nature, reflects a divinely intended principle of order in creation, which is applicable to society and the Church."[70] Furthermore, there is no doubt that "structural change and linguistic change go hand in hand."[71] As evolutionary and feminist thought has shown, language itself is called to change in that new languages can be created by working on the ones in which we live.[72] Change in our language could precipitate cognitive dissonance, signalling conflict between ideas, beliefs or actions. Both of these models are faithful to that intrinsic relationship between language and structural change.

Both models fit well into the theoretical and theological framework for this dissertation. Some may dismiss them as utopian. In some ways, they are. Yet, all visions are inherently utopian or eschatological. Both these community of disciples models of church are calling all Christians to a level of maturity in which coreponsibility and co-discipleship are the defining marks of Christian life and ecclesial relations. I am lured by Wessels' prescription for change; that clerics cease to be clerics and lay people cease to be lay people. This magnitude of change does not happen on its own, nor can it be legislated. We would be naive to think that it could actually happen without resistance and deep pain. Not only do we have a long history of cleric–lay relations, and deeply ingrained cleric and lay identities, we have an ingeniously designed theological system and ecclesial practice in which stability and order continue to be of primary concern.

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[70] Terence Nichols, *That All May Be One: Hierarchy and Participation in the Church* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press), 1997, 17, quoted in Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 143.

[71] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 40.

[72] Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self*, 66.

Neither coercion nor censure of exclusive behaviour serve long-term transformation, attitudes, and ministerial identity. Moving toward a more inclusive church must provide opportunities for deep structural change, both personally and collectively. These new ecclesial relations call for deep structural change. Deep structural change is about changing the structures or frames of reference out of which we make meaning. Without this kind of change, neither the laity nor the clerics are free to choose to change their behaviours or attitudes. Any possibility of deep structural change calls for opportunities for self-awareness and transformational learning. I believe that the immunity-to-change language technology can be a mechanism for deep structural change.

As with evolutionary thought, a critical retrieval of reformist feminist trinitiarian theology stresses relationality, interdependence, and connectedness.[73] In moving toward a more inclusive church, the church is called to become more fluid, flexible, and open to change in both its *ad intra* and *ad extra* structures of dialogue and decision-making. A more inclusive church moves beyond the narrowness of polarized theological categories, toward an ideal vision of unity, which embraces ecclesial and theological diversity.[74] A renewed understanding of the triune symbol can inspire a renewed ecclesial praxis—marked by *perichoresis* and *koinonia*—that will promote open and honest dialogue in which genuine difference is a precondition to communion. This retrieval is a necessary part of the movement to break down the rigid boundaries of our current structures.

In intentionally moving toward a more inclusive church, it is the responsibility of the whole church to publicly and positively affirm women's ministries and spiritual

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[73] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 84.

[74] Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology*, 20.

powers wherever they are encountered.[75] If the church is to claim authentic praxis, which reflects an authentic faith community, it must affirm and promote the full humanity of women. In moving toward a more inclusive church, there must be space for listening and remembering women's experience in order to reverse the pastoral and theological poverty of the church. This space must allow for both women and men to share their stories and be affirmed in order that they may be liberated and empowered to freely choose to claim their voices and rightful roles as consensual and mutual partners in the church's mission. Furthermore, in moving toward a more inclusive church, women's experience and subjectivity must be placed at the centre of intellectual inquiry so that it may transform the authoritative tradition that holds sway over the practice, structure, and theory of the community.[76]

In moving toward a more inclusive church, discipleship is the defining mark of the baptismal call to participate in Christ's mission of transformation and humanization of the world. As a community of disciples, each disciple is called to be listeners, learners, and seekers of God's presence in the life of the world. All are subjects, called to proclaim and make present the reign of God and to denounce that which is unjust and oppressive, both inside and outside the church.

In moving toward a more inclusive church, all disciples, including those called to pastoral leadership by their communities, embrace the vitality and dynamism of life. In response to environmental disturbances that signal the need for change, all are called to trust in their community's inherent capacity to transcend toward greater complexity and

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[75] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 146.

[76] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 128.

freely engage in the paschal mystery of life, death and resurrection. Apostolicity and tradition, as faithfulness to the vision of the reign of God, are woven into the fabric of the life of the community as the unifying force and self-organizing principle. This self-organizing principle keeps the community faithful to its own calling, especially during times of change.

The praxis of moving toward a more inclusive church reveals a more balanced pneumatic-christic trinitarian theology as discipleship is nurtured and challenged within the community, in which unity-in-diversity and interdependence are concrete signs of the Spirit's presence amongst God's people. Trinitarian discourse and worship is expanded from the narrow confines of exclusive father-son namings to include feminine and cosmological metaphors, and leading believers to God as "Holy Mystery who is finally above all namings."[77]

In moving toward a more inclusive church, all forms of pastoral leadership and leadership formation are affirmed and recognized in the midst of the community they serve. Ministry and pastoral leadership are a function of the community, the whole people of God. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are constitutive for any church ministry, and those gifts are already present and manifest in the ministries that women and men perform in the church.[78] Leadership is called forth from the community, according to God's grace, charism, and the discerned needs of the community. In moving toward a more inclusive church, one of the foundational qualifications for leadership is the apostolic faith of the candidate and the determination of this qualification is part of the

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[77] Fox, *God As Communion*, 133.

[78] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 35.

role of the apostolic community.[79] And, as the community discerns through a consensual decision-making process whether the institutionalization of ministry will and should safeguard apostolicity,[80] it contemplates the sacred order in the holy web embedded deeply within creation. And during this time, there is an intentional moratorium on language that perpetuates clerical elitism in favour of a language of charism and gift for the leadership of the church.

In moving toward a more inclusive church, we seek a new language to express the vision of a non-sexist, inclusive church, lured by image of a holy web with God as the centre, in God's asymmetrical otherness, holding together both God's immanence and transcendence. And, as a pastoral leader seeking to espouse change in the theory and practice of the Church, I ask myself to what "critical hope"[81] are we called? Based on the experiences of many who have gone before us, we know all too well that the process of renewal never comes without its own pain, and yet that process cannot be stopped. We are reminded that the process of change today has to be lived with faith and hope for the sake of the church and the world it is called to serve.[82]

There is much to suggest that the creative Spirit is disturbing our rigid theories, breaking down the inflexible boundaries. If moving toward a more inclusive church is truly apostolic, it will be guided by the vision of the reign of God as manifested in its

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[79] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 171.

[80] As interpreted by Schillebeeckx above.

[81] Mary Heather MacKinnon, Moni McIntrye and Mary Ellen Sheehan, editors, *Light Burdens, Heavy Blessings: Challenges of Church and Culture in the Post Vatican II Era: Essays in Honor of Margaret R. Brennan* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 2000), xvii.

[82] MacKinnon, *Light Burdens, Heavy Blessings*, xii.

ecclesial praxis of inclusivity, reconciliation, healing, and liberation.[83] If moving toward a more inclusive church is truly the impulse of the Holy Spirit, it will be open to all and foster relationships that are mutual, reciprocal, and egalitarian yet differentiated. Ministry and leadership will emerge within the self-organizing system by the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit. What kind of pastoral leadership and what kind of pastoral leadership formation are called for in this new paradigm? I turn to this question in the next chapter.

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[83] Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 163.

CHAPTER FIVE

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP EDUCATION:

LEARNING TO EMBRACE THE DYNAMISM OF LIFE

In Chapter Four, I explored various facets of an ecclesial vision for moving toward a more inclusive church. Building on the evolutionary and feminist framework and the critical retrieval of a trinitarian theology of relationship, I presented elements of an ecclesial vision which are found in two "community of disciples" models of church; one which is based on a reformist feminist ecclesiology and the other based on an evolutionary view of order and change. Both these models propose a new way of being church, particularly with respect to its ecclesial relations and authoritative tradition as self-reference in its continuous renewal and reconstruction in faithfulness to its own calling. While the proposed ecclesiologies might call for a leap of imagination, they are actually inviting us to move into a different way of knowing reality and to trust all of creation's inherent capacity for transformation and self-transcendence into a higher order of complexity and inclusivity. In the various elements which I proposed from these two ecclesiologies for an ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church, I indicated that ecclesial relations must be characterized by an evolutionary-feminist view of a trinitarian theology of relationship in which *perichoretic* relations of diversity, mutuality, subjectivity, interdependence, and communion are the norm.

In this chapter, I look at the kind of leadership education which is necessary for the integral formation for pastoral leaders in moving toward a more inclusive church. While pastoral leadership in a community of disciples is different from other forms of leadership, there are important insights in current business and education leadership theories that have much to contribute to pastoral leadership education. In this chapter, I refer to selected bodies of literature drawn from contemporary North American business, organizational and educational leadership theory, as well as from pastoral ministry. The studies I have chosen to reflect on for this inquiry are representative of the evolutionary-feminist framework, a trinitarian theology of relationship, an ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church and my overall focus on language and change.

As the title of this chapter suggests, the agenda for pastoral leadership education that I propose is "learning to embrace the dynamism of life." This title assumes that life itself is dynamic and continuously changing and that assumption is the basis of evolutionary thought. A general definition of dynamism reveals that it is a theory that "regards matter and mind as involving immanent force."[1] In this chapter, I claim that pastoral leadership education must provide the opportunity to intellectually understand the theoretical foundations of this "immanent force" but even, more importantly, that candidates for pastoral leadership learn to embrace that dynamism particularly as it relates to fullness of life in Christ. There are a number of ways to understand what is meant by "embrace,"[2] all of which are pertinent to this inquiry into pastoral leadership

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[1] *Webster's*, s.v. "dynamism."

[2] There are many ways of understanding "embrace." Here are some of the ways in which I refer to "embrace": to put one's arms lovingly around, to accept gladly, to choose, to clasp, to seize, to adopt, to espouse, to hold, to receive, to include, to incorporate, to integrate, to encompass, to take up, to trust, to welcome, to take in with the eye, or understanding. *Webster's*, s.v. "embrace."

education.

Leadership education in general calls for a basic understanding of psychology, anthropology, sociology, and organizational behaviour. Additionally, pastoral leadership education, as a particular form of leadership education, calls for a comprehensive biblical and theological formation, in which trinitarian theology is an inquiry into "God's life with us and our life with each other."[3] That theological inquiry must stress the essential unity in the immanent-economic schema of God's triune existence. That schema upholds the belief that there is but one life of the triune God, a life into which we have been graciously included as partners. A theological grasp of our human condition in relationship with God also requires a multitude of personal qualities that are intrinsic to one's self-knowledge and spiritual life.[4] Any integral formation process takes place in, and for, a particular socio-historical context. That context is broader than the physical location of the ministry formation program. It includes the broader context for leadership development, in general, as well as the vision and mission of the community in which the pastoral leadership formation actually takes place.

Integral formation for all pastoral leaders includes intellectual, human, pastoral, and spiritual aspects of a vocational discernment and ministry formation process.[5] Mindful of the inherent danger of compartmentalizing the various aspects of an integral

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[3] LaCugna, *GOD FOR US*, 1

[4] Charles M. Wood, "Theological Education and Education for Church Leadership," in Jeff Astley, Lesie J. Francis and Colin Crowder, editors, *Theological Perspectives on Christian Formation: A Reader on Theology and Christian Education*, Jeff Astley, et al. (Wiltshire, England: Cromwell Press, 1996), 309.

[5] Pastoral leaders include both ordained and non-ordained pastoral leaders. Reference is made to the integral formation for Roman Catholic priesthood as found in John Paul II, *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of his Holiness John Paul II on the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day* (Sherbrooke, Quebec: Éditions Paulines, 1992), 167.

pastoral leadership formation process, I have chosen to use those same aspects as a structure for this chapter as I examine elements of an integrated pastoral leadership education curriculum. The section on intellectual formation has been divided into two parts: the first on organizational development and the second on adaptive leadership theory. Given the parameters which I have had to place on this project, I have chosen to concentrate on insights I gained into how human beings and their organizations change in response to stimuli over time, one of those stimuli being language, the spoken word.

The immediate context for this inquiry is the Centre for Ministry Formation, which offers integral formation for both ordained and lay pastoral ministers. Building on the previous chapter which addressed issues of ecclesial relations and authoritative tradition as they relate to our ecclesial praxis, in this chapter I focus on elements of pastoral leadership education that is designed to equip pastoral leaders to serve in a new ecclesial paradigm of Christian communities as self-referencing systems. As noted as one of the core assumptions in the first chapter, for this purpose of this dissertation, I do not make a distinction between ministry formation and pastoral leadership education.

Context of Leadership Education in General

Leadership education finds its home within the human need to make meaning of our experience and find purpose to our lives. As noted in Chapter Two, our need to make meaning of our experiences, of our lives and of the world in which we live, is a basic human need. This search for meaning is intrinsically related to our ways of knowing and understanding truth; it is an ongoing process that continues throughout our individual and corporate lives. In other words, this need to make meaning is not a one-time event, and

like all of creation, it is an evolutionary activity which is ranked as "the motion of life itself."[6]

We generally make meaning of experiences by integrating new experiences into what we already know and we normally do this in order to avoid the chaos of the unknown. Making meaning can also be a learning process. It is this learning process that is fundamental to leadership education. The conditions in which making meaning is a learning process are both external and internal to the learners themselves, as well as to the learning environment in which the learner is engaged. The ability to learn is a complex combination of motivational factors, personality factors, and learning tactics.[7] An attentiveness to the interplay of these factors is critical to any leadership education process. Research and experience have shown that some people simply do not learn from experience, even when the supportive mechanisms are in place.[8]

Leadership education is, first and foremost, adult education. While it may seem that the term "adult education" has become a catch-all for any form of learning that includes adults, there are some fundamental principles to adult education that are pertinent to this exploration of pastoral leadership education. The fundamental principles are found in the concepts as autonomy, context, freedom, self-empowerment, and transformation, all of which are woven into this exploration of adult education. Jack Mezirow, a well-known educational theorist and practitioner in the field of adult

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[6] Robert Kegan, *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 209.

[7] Cynthia D. McCauley, Russ S. Moxley and Ellen Van Velsor, editors, *The Center for Creative Leadership: Handbook of Leadership Development* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998), 243.

[8] McCauley et al, eds., *Center for Creative Leadership,* 245.

education and transformative learning, states that the primary objective of education is to foster "liberating conditions for making more autonomous and informed choices and developing a sense of self-empowerment."[9] In this chapter, I look at various facets of this objective as it applies to transformational learning, organizational behaviour, as well as various skills, attitudes, and spiritual formation of pastoral leaders as agents of transformation for moving toward a more inclusive church.[10] The identity of the pastoral leader as an agent of transformation is rooted in our Christian identity as agents of change, as active participants in Christ's mission and vision of the reign of God.

The process of self-empowerment is a process of acquiring greater control of one's life as a liberated learner. As with all learning opportunities, the journey toward self-empowerment is limited by social, historical, and cultural conditions of the learners and the learning context. Because adult education is contextual learning, learners have opportunities to become critically aware of their own tacit assumptions and expectations, as well as those of others. In contextual learning, learners also have opportunities to assess the relevance of those expectations and assumptions as they interpret or give meaning to their experiences.

Adult education must include what Robert Kegan calls "in-form-ative" and "trans-form-ative" learning. In-form-ative learning fits into the *form* of the learners' existing habits of mind, points of view, or frames of reference. In-form-ative learning is

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[9] Jack Mezirow, "Learning to Think Like An Adult" in Jack Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 26.

[10] Loughlan Sofield, S.T. and Donald H. Kuhn, *The Collaborative Leader: Listening to the Wisdom of God's People* (Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1995), 13. Writing from and for a Christian pastoral leadership, Sofield and Kuhn state that leadership is necessarily transformative in that it is oriented toward participating in the unfolding realization of God's kingdom. The reign of God and transformation are intrinsic to Christian faith.

aimed at changing *what* we know by bringing new content into the form of our existing way(s) of knowing. In-form-ative learning seeks to increase our fund of knowledge, our repertoire of skills, and "extends our already established cognitive capacities into new terrain."[11] It is through our habits of mind and frames of reference that we make meaning of our outer and inner experiences.

Transformative learning is aimed at changes in *how* we know. Compared to informational learning, which seeks an increase in a fund of knowledge or a change in behaviour, transformational learning is always, to some extent, an epistemological change, in that the form or the existing frame of reference is at risk of change. One of the primary goals of transformative learning is to enable learners to engage in challenging experiences that call for the changing of old habits.[12]

Both informational and transformational learning are expansive and valuable, one within a pre-existing frame of mind and the other reconstructing the frame itself. Transformational learning enhances the learners' capacity for informational learning in that the learners develop a capacity for critical reflection on the perspectives and biases of the facts as they are presented. There are times when heavier weighting is placed on one or the other form of learning.[13] If pastoral leadership education as transformational, learning to "embrace" the dynamism of life is about looking at and critiquing our current frames of reference in order to critically incorporate or integrate new opinions and ideas.

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[11] Robert Kegan, "What 'Form' Transforms? A Constructive-Developmental Approach to Transformative Learning" in Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation*, 49.

[12] McCauley et al, eds., *Centre for Creative Leadership*, 12.

[13] Kegan, "What "Form" Transforms?" in Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation*, 49.

The two kinds of language, *parole* and *parler*, which are the focus of my interest

in the relationship between language and change, are in some way similar to the two

kinds of learning, informational and transformational learning. As already stated, both

kinds of learning are needed in that transformational learning enhances the capacity for

informational learning. In this dissertation, I have presented many *paroles* found in

theoretical and theological concepts, images and structures of church. At first glance,

candidates for ministry could readily dismiss these new *paroles* mainly because they do

not fit into their current frames of reference. The language of *parler* in the form of the

immunity-to-change language technology could provide opportunities to reframe their

understanding of the new *paroles*. I explore this further in the next chapter.

Transformational learning is often an intensely threatening emotional

experience.[14] Because of the diversity of the learner population, adult educators are

required to carefully discern the nature of the learners' particular needs for

transformational learning by better understanding their current epistemologies as well as

the "epistemological complexity of the present learning challenges"[15] with which the

learners must live.[16] Therefore, the transformational educator is called to be attentive to

the learners' capacities and needs for support in order to *safely* risk change in a manner

that undergirds their convictions, values, and familiar ways of making meaning. While

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[14] Mezirow, "Learning to Think Like An Adult" in Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation*, 7.

[15] Kegan, "What "Form" Transforms?" in Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation*, 48.

[16] For instance, the learners' current frames of reference or habits of mind are the product of previous formation, which is culturally and contextually conditioned Epistemological changes will necessarily affect the learners in a multitude of ways, including their way of fitting into their previous communities of formation.

this is an important issue in general, it is even more significant for women.

While the scope of this dissertation does not include a gender analysis of the various theories of transformational learning, it can be stated that, in general, feminist educators conduct learning activities that encourage connection and relationship, and that take into account affective, as well as rational and cognitive modes of learning, in the learning process itself.[17] My exploration of an integral formation process takes into account that need to integrate these three modes of learning—the affective, the rational, and the cognitive modes of learning—into the process of transformational learning.

Context of Pastoral Leadership Education

Among the many ecclesiologies developed since the Second Vatican Council, the community of disciples model of church is a model which is congruent with our retrieval of baptism as the foundation to our call to discipleship.[18] As presented in the previous chapter, a community of disciples ecclesial model can also be shaped by our developing evolutionary and feminist consciousness, and a trinitarian theology of relationship. The particular context within which I explore pastoral leadership education is the Centre for Ministry Formation, which identifies itself as a community that "gathers together disciples of Jesus Christ and helps them discern their call to share in the mission of the

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[17] Elizabeth J. Tisdell, "Feminist Pedagogies" in Hayes and Flannery, *Women as Learners*, 156. It is important to note here that these elements should be present in any learning activities in order to enable learners to become authors of their own lives. However, what makes them feminist is that the primary concern is the education of women—an education that increases their self-esteem, knowledge, capacity for voice, and status in society.

[18] Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals*, 222.

People of God."[19] As a community of disciples, the Centre's praxis embodies and reveals its ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church.

Disciples are, first and foremost learners; each one learns *from* others and *with* others. This relationship of co-discipleship is based on the gospel ideal of partnership, co-discipleship, and relations of mutuality.[20] Like transformational learning, the experience of co-discipleship can be threatening[21] in that the learners open themselves to possibly changing their ways of knowing, as they come discover *how* it is they have learned to negotiate and act on their own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings, rather than those that have been uncritically assimilated from others. This community of disciples is an educational community,[22] a community of adult learners in which meaning-making is the common goal of all the disciples.

Our Christian heritage has mainly identified communities as hierarchical families with the pastoral leaders as parents and their followers as children.[23] In claiming an identity of co-discipleship, the community must move from a "parent–child" model to an identity as partners. This partnership calls for embracing open and collaborative relations among the different ministries, genders, denominations, and faith traditions, as well as with the world.[24] The Centre's praxis as a community of disciples calls for

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[19] Mission Statement. See Appendix I. This identity of the formation community (seminary) as a community of disciples is also found in John Paul II, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 163.

[20] Whitehead and Whitehead, *The Promise of Partnership*, 12.

[21] Robert Kinast, "Co-discipleship: Ministry that is Shared" in *Origins* 17 (1987–1988), 585.

[22] John Paul II, *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, 164.

[23] Whitehead and Whitehead, *The Promise of Partnership*, 4.

[24] Whitehead and Whitehead, *The Promise of Partnership*, 12.

developing relations of interdependence which go hand in hand with the call to autonomy, to embrace diversity, difference, and shared meaning-making, as well as to develop the skills of critical theological reflection. As discussed below in this chapter, an integral formation of pastoral leaders must include opportunities to develop these skills, attitudes, and ways of being. Those learning opportunities include an attentiveness to the intentional choice of language both as *parole* and *parler*, in the shaping of attitudes, identity, and practice.

Intellectual Formation

Intellectual formation includes both informational and transformational learning. Leadership education, in general, calls for a solid understanding of theories of organizational behaviour as well as leadership development. Pastoral leadership education is no exception in that all ecclesiastical institutions have their own particular organizational structure and behaviour that have an impact on the role and identity of the pastoral leader. Pastoral leadership education must include opportunities to learn and reflect on diverse and often competing developing models for pastoral leadership and ecclesiologies, each in their own socio-cultural context.[25] Intellectual formation also needs to provide learners with the theological foundation from which to critically reflect on the emerging theories of organizational behaviour and leadership development. In this section, I limit my exploration of intellectual formation to two types: one which offers a broad evolutionary view of organizational behaviour and the consequent leadership development necessary for incorporating this view in our ways of knowing

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[25] Gerald Arbuckle, S.M., *Revisioning Church: Dissent for Leadership* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1993), 1 and 6.

and pastoral practice. The second type of intellectual formation focuses on a specific type of leadership development, adaptive leadership. The change to which a feminist-evolutionary worldview is calling us requires adaptive leadership for deep structural change, not quick fix solutions.

Organizational Behaviour and Leadership Development

Many of the most recent organizational theories draw upon the insights of evolutionary theory. These insights have had a profound impact on our epistemologies. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, an active engagement with evolutionary thought can, in itself, be transformative because our frames of reference, our ways of knowing, can be radically changed. It is my opinion that the study of the connection between evolutionary thought and organizational theory should be foundational to formation curriculum for an integral pastoral leadership education. As noted in Chapter Two, the impact that evolutionary thought, and especially quantum theory, have already had on our understanding of human and organizational behaviour has immense implications for theology, ecclesiology and pastoral leadership development. I believe that intentionally integrating these new insights into pastoral leadership education is essential to our current socio-cultural context. Without it, we risk educating managers to be maintainers of structure rather than agents of the renewal and reconstruction to which the Second Vatican Council calls us.

Along with evolutionary thought, the intellectual formation for pastoral leadership education must include feminist studies. Given our socio-historical context and the developing feminist consciousness that permeates all disciplines and ways of

life, this must be a non-negotiable part of the overall curriculum. Feminist studies, feminist hermeneutics for interpreting reality, must not be an optional add-on to any serious pastoral leadership education. The call to become more inclusive is not reserved to gender or to the female domain. As previously stated, there must be space for listening and remembering women's experience in order to reverse the pastoral and theological poverty of the whole church. Feminist theology aims to raise our consciousness of the masculine bias in Christian theology and anthropology and to discover and reconstructing alternative historical traditions that are supportive of the full personhood of women and their full inclusion in leadership roles. These objectives cannot be dismissed as a concern for only some women, nor can it be construed as an exercise in political correctness. The feminist curriculum is about both informational and transformational learning. It is about critiquing and reforming our existing frames of reference that shape our theological understandings of God, church, ministry, and the human person.

In feminist-evolutionary thought, "relationship is the key determiner of everything"[26] and interconnectedness is the fundamental ingredient of all creation. According to recent research in leadership development, the emerging models of leadership call for relations of mutuality and interdependence, not only amongst those within a particular system but also among the systems themselves. In organizational and leadership development, there is a greater emphasis on partnership, empowerment, teams, networks, and the role of context, vision, values, and culture. There is a greater appreciation for holding together our uniqueness and wholeness along with our deepest

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[26] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science,* 11.

longings for meaning and community.[27] All this has a profound impact on pastoral leadership education in our current context.

Leadership education shaped by evolutionary-feminist thought, calls leaders to embrace the dynamism of life, as they move from a mechanistic world view to a more holistic, dynamic model of interconnected living systems. Not only must pastoral leadership education provide opportunities to reframe their understanding of change, it must also change their relationship to change.[28] While order and stability have traditionally been associated with truth, evolutionary consciousness has now revealed that there is no life without change, and we must engage in the order of chaos to live in this interconnected world.[29] For pastoral leaders to embrace and trust the creative process of life—the immanent force of life—they must have a solid understanding of systems theory, particularly as it applies to change around a self-organizing principle. As presented in the previous chapter on ecclesiology, the Christian self-organizing principle is the vision of the reign of God—a vision revealed in the richly variegated authoritative tradition, the authentic apostolic praxis of the community of disciples.

In order to embrace the dynamism of life as a pastoral leader, one must have some understanding of the life cycles of cultural and organizational systems. Although this learning would be approached from a sociological and anthropological viewpoint, it would be shaped by the insights and concepts found in evolutionary-feminist thought. Concepts such as consciousness, the three energies of differentiation, autopoiesis, and

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[27] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science,* 14.

[28] This I explore further in Chapter Six.

[29] Donna J. Markham, *Spiritlinking Leadership: Working Through Resistance to Organizational Change* (New York, N.Y.: Paulist Press, 1999), 65.

communion would serve as a backdrop for the various process theories of organizational and cultural change. An understanding of systems theory, with a specific focus on the characteristics of open and closed systems, would enable pastoral leaders to develop their capacity to be generative and claim their roles as agents of transformation, attentively and intentionally working with, not against, the process of change.

Our evolutionary consciousness has moved us from an understanding of reality that is shaped by an external cause-and-effect intervention to an awareness of the immanent force of change from within, a force which is deeply interconnected to all of reality. This awareness will caution leaders about reducing the complexity of change to short-term interventionist or technical solutions. This learning is key for pastoral leadership in general, specifically as it relates to the need for transforming attitudes and structures, on both a personal and collective level. As transformative learning, pastoral leadership education must provide opportunities for learners to become aware of their own call to attitudinal and structural change. In the next chapter, I provide an in-depth exploration of the immunity-to-change language technology, designed as a tool for deep structural change.

In a pastoral leadership education curriculum which focuses on learning to embrace the dynamism of life, theories of organizational behaviour must intentionally be shaped by a trinitarian theology of relationship, a theology itself inspired by evolutionary-feminist thought. This lens would move leadership for organizational development into the sphere of vision-based leadership and community-building—a sphere in which individualism, separatism, and competition are replaced by collaboration, mutuality, and inclusivity. Future pastoral leaders must be exposed to the

risks and challenges of surfacing the contradictions between the community's vision and behaviours, and intentionally working through resistance to change—their own as well as the resistance of others.[30] Pastoral leaders must learn both the concepts and practical elements of how to build and foster networks of relationships through which new ideas and new ways of responding to the call to participate in the mission of Christ are heard, discerned, and assumed by the community. This form of pastoral leadership education calls for an openness to live the continuing process of self-awareness.

Adaptive Leadership Theory

The main leadership theory that I have discovered to be congruent with my focus on the relationship between language and change is adaptive leadership theory.[31] Adaptive leadership theory finds its source in an evolutionary view of change in which an organism's behaviour reflects an adaptation to circumstances.[32] Adaptation is not about accepting the status quo or resigning oneself to change. Rather, it is about developing the organizational and cultural capacity to meet problems successfully according to their values and purposes. When there are conflicts over values and purposes, the clarification and integration of competing values becomes the adaptive work which has the potential to change the person, the context, as well as the bigger life field.[33] Adaptive leadership is a form of vision-based leadership which takes on the

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[30] Markham, *Spiritlinking Leadership*, 98.

[31] Ronald Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge: The Bellnap Press of Harvard University Press. Twelfth Printing, 2001).

[32] Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 3.

[33] For a clearer understanding of the change in the bigger life field, see the third premise of

challenge of transforming people for the sake of transforming the context and the bigger life field.[34]

As with the distinction made between informational learning and transformational learning, adaptive leadership theory makes the distinction between the technical problems and adaptive problems. Both problems exist; there are many routine problems that call for the managerial style of technical solutions—solutions within the current repertoire of "how-to" fix a problem. However, adaptive problems cannot be solved within this range of answers. Adaptive challenges require innovation and learning—a transformational learning in which persons and organizations, individually and collectively, become conscious of their internal contradictions in their systems of values, beliefs, and habits.[35] Attempts to solve adaptive problems begin with the question "why?" in that they are embedded in complex systems of meaning.

Educating pastoral leaders in adaptive leadership theory addresses the challenge by ecofeminists to go beyond the "technological fixes " in order to renew and develop structures in which equal dignity for both men and women, and the respective dignity for all of creation are the norm.[36] Staying with the technical fixes thwarts the possibility of any deep or long-term change which is necessary to build these new structures. Technical fixes, like informational learning, simply rearrange the furniture in the same

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constructive-development and object-relations theories in Chapter Six. My decision to put adaptive leadership theory in this chapter rather than the next chapter which would have enabled me to establish the premises for this theory was based on my attempt to include this theory as one of the elements of a comprehensive leadership education curriculum.

[34] Another way of understanding this form of adaptive leadership is that it is at the service of higher forms of consciousness. See Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 33.

[35] Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 8.

36 Wessels, *The Holy Web*, 81.

room. It is still the same room. Adaptive leadership theory provides us with the concepts and tools to go beyond those technical fixes and change the form of "the bedroom of our established habit of mind."[37]

Ronald Heifetz, the author/originator of adaptive leadership theory, tells us that leadership is a special sort of educating in which the leader identifies and shapes the teaching moments so that values are clarified and behaviours become more consonant with those values.[38] The leader/educator raises problems, questions, interpretations, and perspectives often without answers, gauging when to push through and when to hold steady. Therefore, adaptive learning situations demand that people discover, invent, and take responsibility.[39]

At this time, I highlight two principles found in adaptive leadership that are integrally related to the immunity-to-change language technology. The first principle uses the metaphor of dancing, in which there is a difference in perspective when you are dancing on the floor, compared to observing the dance by "getting on the balcony." In getting on the balcony, the leader is able to notice the bigger picture, the larger patterns that are virtually unnoticeable when you are on the dance floor.[40] The second principle of "holding environment" is described as a space in which persons can tackle tough, sometimes divisive questions. The leader is responsible for creating and maintaining the

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[37] Kegan and Lahey, Facilitators Guide to the Immunity-To-Change ("4-column exercise") Minds@Work, LLC, 2001, 1.7.

[38] Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 230.

[39] Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 244-245. This call to leaders to become educators is congruent with Kegan and Lahey's call to leaders to take on their role as leaders of language communities.

[40] Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 252.

holding environment, recognizing that the pains of change call for trust, compassion, and respect.[41] That responsibility also includes gauging when to pace up the adaptive work, when to ratchet up the pressure, and when to hold steady.[42]

In adaptive leadership theory, authority relationships are understood in terms of service. That service orientation is both practical and prescriptive; practical in that it seeks out ways to apply theory and research to daily problems, and prescriptive in that complaints and problems which usually expend energy, must be analyzed as indicators of adaptive challenges or internal contradictions in the larger system. In my opinion, this adaptive leadership theory, combined with the immunity-to-change language technology, is a powerful tool for equipping pastoral leaders as agents of transformation. The immunity-to-change language technology is explored in the next chapter.

Human Formation: Developing Self-Knowledge

There is a well-known saying that "What you don't know can't hurt you." This maxim serves to show what pastoral leadership education is *not*. In fact, what we don't know can not only keep us from realizing our full potential, but also can keep others around us from becoming all they are called to be. A critical reflection on own personal story, as presented in Chapter One, reveals this fundamental truth. Leaders who lack self-knowledge can keep others, both individually and collectively, from fully realizing their mission. Therefore, pastoral leadership education must provide opportunities for learners to integrate their own life stories as they come to a greater self-awareness and to

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[41] Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 107.

[42] Heifetez, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 245.

know their own gifts and limits. When we don't know our own strengths and weaknesses, or *why* we behave or judge in a particular way, it is difficult for us to accompany others in a way that is freeing and mission-oriented.

Sharing and critically reflecting upon our life stories in community enables us to understand *why* we are the way we are. In the back and forth movement of between experience and reflection, learners come to look *at* their traits, learned preferences, experiences, situational factors, cultural and social factors which have shaped their respective profiles of strengths and weaknesses. Because leadership education is transformational learning, it must include opportunities to critically examine how socialization affects our perceptions and feelings about self.[43] This is true for all, for men who present themselves as candidates for ordained ministry, as well as for women in general. Pastoral leadership education must provide opportunities to be in touch with the hidden power of social, cultural, institutional, and gender conditioning, and how it has had an impact on our own integral development.[44] There must be opportunities for both women and men to share their stories and be affirmed in order that they may be liberated and empowered to freely choose to claim their voices and rightful roles as consensual and mutual subjects—mutual partners—in the church's mission. The more aware we are of our own frames of reference, obstacles for growth, fears, assumptions and pre-judgments, the more responsive and free we become to opportunities for growth, learning and engaging in new ways of knowing.

Without self-knowledge, even if we try to be agents of change for others, we are

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[43] Joann Wolski Conn, "Dancing in the Dark: Women's Spirituality and Ministry," in Robert J. Wickes, editor, *Handbook of Spirituality for Ministry* (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 85.

[44] McCauley et al, eds., *Center for Creative Leadership*, 18.

unconsciously dependent and controlled by that which we do not know.[45] Self-knowledge is about surfacing and confronting the fears that come with change. Like their frames of reference, pastoral leaders are called to get in touch with the unspoken fears that keep them from embracing the ambiguities that are part and parcel of the dynamism of the life. Making those fears overt is the beginning of unmasking the feelings that are intensified in times of ambiguity and loss of clarity.

Self-knowledge is not self-preoccupation nor is it limited to introspection. The quest for self-knowledge is Christian when we consciously commit ourselves to our fundamental identity as disciples of Jesus within the community of disciples—a community that gives itself over to the "liberating, reconciling work of Christ."[46] Leadership education must provide opportunities for the learners to know themselves through reflection upon the ordinary experiences of work and prayer. While that reflection includes personal reflection, it must give priority to the interpersonal and reciprocal way to self-knowledge, interpersonal with God and others. It is only in the life of the community, in process of living with others, that we come to know our true selves by gradually facing our false and operative notions of who we are.[47] Self-knowledge enables us to love more deeply and value vulnerability as a human quality, and renders us capable of generating empathy for others. With greater self-knowledge, we learn to admit and even cherish our mistakes as bonds with all those who make the same foolish

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[45] Kegan, "What 'Form' Transforms?" in Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation*, 52-53.

[46] Wolski Conn, "Dancing in the Dark" in Wickes, *Handbook of Spirituality for Ministry*, 85.

[47] Wolski Conn, "Dancing in the Dark" in Wickes, *Handbook of Spirituality for Ministry*, 85.

mistakes.[48]

Pastoral Formation: Developing Pastoral Skills for Embracing the Dynamism of Life

The development of pastoral skills is a constitutive dimension of attitudinal and identity development. Effective and healthy pastoral leadership calls for the development of the discipline of truly listening.[49] Developing the skill of listening is inherent to our capacity to engage in the life of the community. Listening, relationship, truth, and obedience are intrinsically related in that relationships are established and nurtured in a community that practices obedience to truth. Obedience, which has traditionally been at the heart of any pastoral leadership formation process, is understood as deep listening, the "ability to pay close attention,"[50] rather than a call to be submissive as members of a hierarchical community. The call to obedience is the call to listen deeply, to discern, and act according to the truth which is heard, shared, and reflected upon in a community that authentically discerns and seeks to live with integrity, in word and action.[51] Pastoral leadership education must include opportunities to develop an awareness and an appreciation for the community as a locus of the immanent force of truth.

Leaders who claim to be agents of transformation are not *lone rangers*, nor do

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[48] This quest for self-knowledge surpasses the categories of human formation, in that it also deals with spiritual formation and identity-making.

[49] Whitehead and Whitehead, *The Promise of Partnership*, 195.

[50] Sofield and Kuhn, *The Collaborative Leader*, 54.

[51] Parker J.Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1993), 89.

they pay idle lip service to a consultative process. Today, there is no place in pastoral leadership for individuals who are locked into attitudes of egotistical self-importance and narcissism.[52] Leaders who claim to be agents of transformation trust in the inherent capacity of the community to discern and order itself according to its truth. In a living organization made up of co-disciples, relations of power and authority take on a different perspective. Recognizing that truth is not the sole proprietary of a privileged few; all are called to be attentive to where the truth is spoken among all of God's people, among all of God's Creation. Responsibility for word and action is assumed by the community as a whole. Listening is the responsibility of all members of the community. It is only in the development of healthy relationships with one another that the learners can take risks with what they might say, to be open to reveal their vulnerabilities, and to identify their own needs. Healthy relationships allow differences to be heard and explored with patience in order that all may be transformed by what is shared and lived together.[53] The ministry formation community itself is the space for developing pastoral skills and for giving each other feedback on how we are doing.

Pastoral leadership education finds itself within a world experiencing new forms of leadership and organization. In the formation community itself, educators hold an evaluative role, in which both educators and candidates for ministry engage in relations of mutuality characterized by what Elizabeth Johnson has referred to as "asymmetrical otherness"[54] In reflecting on the story of the Centre for Ministry Formation, we discover

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[52] Markham, *Spiritlinking Leadership*, 117.

[53] Sofield and Kuhn, *The Collaborative Leader*, 104.

[54] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 232

that the Seminary Rule of the third age invited candidates for ministry to become coresponsible for their overall formation and evaluation. This was a move from a stance of dependence on outer authority to becoming more empowered independent as subjects of their own formation process. Building on this Rule, and attentive to the overall goals and mission of the formation community, the educators and candidates are responsible for establishing the basis for open communication within the community itself. As noted in the previous chapter, moving toward a more inclusive church calls for consensual forms of decision-making. While this does not assume a move to one-person, one-vote democracy, it does move us toward developing and nurturing an environment for mutual dialogue and decision-making within the formation community. Such an environment calls for listening to complaints, frustrations, and perceived failings in order to enable the students to move beyond the critical stage as they experience themselves as being heard. Being heard is the first step toward changes in behaviour and attitude, enabling the students to become more thoughtful in their remarks and cognizant of their own commitments, motivating them to work toward a solution, and offering them opportunities to do that together.

In many realms of human organization, the leader is no longer considered the expert, but rather the team leader. The roles are changing: leaders are being called upon to coach, facilitate, and support others. Teamwork is now deemed as valuable, desirable, and even necessary in order to achieve an organization's increasingly complex tasks. More than ever, we recognize that the team approach will be the hallmark of the great organizations of the twenty-first century.[55] This should be no different for pastoral

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[55] Sofield and Kuhn, *The Collaborative Leader*, 97.

leadership. Religious organizations are also being called to increasingly complex tasks, and effective pastoral leaders must now focus on the development of collaborative teams and communities. This signals a significant change in the means and goals of pastoral leadership education. Fostering skills for team leadership should include the following: developing relations of mutuality, reciprocity, and interdependence; cultivating attitudes for co-leadership, co-responsibility, and co-discipleship; establishing and nurturing healthy relationships among the team members; providing opportunities for visioning and goal-setting; holding together autonomy and the common good of the group; and, developing well-grounded mechanisms for feedback and evaluation.

Pastoral leadership is necessarily prophetic leadership. The prophetic leaders listen to the dissonant chord that signals change in church and the world. Many pastoral leaders get caught up in the busyness of the daily events, not hearing the signal of the future. If pastoral leadership education is to contribute to the mission of the church in realizing the reign of God, then prophetic leadership education is not a luxury. As well, pastoral leadership education must provide opportunities to learn to recognize the prophet among us, to reflect on that experience, and then to seek ways for the voice to be heeded.

The ability to be creative and the ability to be open go hand in hand. Researchers in the field of leadership development tell us that a key component of success in leadership development is the attitude of the individual going into the event. Openness to experience is now considered to be one of the several stable factors in personality.[56] People who score high on openness tend to have positive attitudes toward unfamiliar

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[56] McCauley et al, eds., *Center for Creative Leadership, 249.*

learning experiences in general, a greater willingness to engage in them, and are more willing to try out new ideas with a sense of adventure. Leadership education—as learning to embrace the dynamism of life—calls for opportunities to develop the capacity to remain open to the newness of life. Persons who are open to experience tend to see life as a series of ongoing learning experiences and seek out the new opportunities that this openness brings.

Developing the ability to think creatively is a key component of leadership skill development, enabling leaders to contribute novel insights that can open up new opportunities or alternatives for the organization. Leaders who think "outside of the box" can get beyond the assumptions and frameworks that limit how they perceive a situation or problem. Creativity involves seeing new possibilities, finding connections among seemingly disparate ideas, and re-framing the way people think about an issue. Implementing innovations often includes risk taking and leaving behind the familiar for uncharted territory.[57]

The ability to learn is, in itself, a skill to be developed.[58] Developing this ability is deeply connected to the identity of the formation community as a community of disciples, a community of learners. Recognizing that our current skills or abilities are either inadequate or not being fully utilized is a first and often major step to learning. Recognition is sometimes triggered by a mistake or failure, a personal crisis, an evaluation, or feedback. Assessment and feedback as reliable information are critical if the learner is to realize that change is necessary.

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[57] McCauley et al, eds., *Center for Creative Leadership, 20.*

[58] McCauley et al, eds., *Center for Creative Leadership, 20.*

A person's ability to learn is dependent on a number of factors and conditions such as personality, self-esteem, previous formation, preference for certain styles of learning opportunities over others, and motivation. Motivation, in itself, is complex and related to the timing of the development experience in relation to other life events. Relying on comfortable approaches to new situations almost always limits effectiveness and learning. Developing the capacity to learn is also about developing new learning tactics that enhance one's flexibility in learning from experience. Leadership development necessarily includes fostering the skills for feedback and evaluation, in order to further the process of self-discovery. Feedback and evaluation can be both formal and informal. Leadership development programs recognize that in the everyday life of busy organizations, people often find themselves "feedback starved" in that the largely informal feedback often remains unattended.[59] Giving and receiving feedback can be very threatening activities for some people. Formal systems of feedback and evaluation help to reduce the interpersonal threat of face-to-face feedback and the neutral character of the instruments serve as a shield of objectivity.

Feedback systems that offer both challenge and support contribute to developing the learners' capacity to learn from experience. People who do not, by personality or motivation, seem ready to learn can benefit from a feedback program tailored to provide just enough support to motivate them to dig deeper, set goals for improvement, and build interest in further development. Time remains a great challenge in most pastoral leadership education programs in that they often run parallel to the academic calendar. In times of high stress, precipitated by heavy academic workloads, family crises, or

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[59] McCauley et al, eds., *Center for Creative Leadership*, 35..

intense personal trauma, most people are unable to process new information about self or performance. Educators and learners are called to listen and discern as to the most effective timing of planned developmental opportunities.[60]

Spiritual Formation: Shaping of Identity and Attitudes

The primary objective of spiritual formation is to "cultivate attentiveness to the Spirit so that the learners may be guided by the Spirit of Christ."[61] There is an "inseparable connection between spiritual and human development because self-transcendence is inherent in both of these aspects of formation."[62] The learners' spirituality must be rooted and nourished in relationship with God, as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit. All relationships are an expression and deepening of the spirit of this communion to which all Christians are called by virtue of our baptism. Pastoral leaders are called to carefully discern the presence and action of the Spirit of Christ and to be attentive to the signs of God working visibly among God's people in relationships that grow and change. And as evolutionary thought reveals, particular in the theory of holons, this continuous call to self-transcendence in Christ is integral to the process of transformation into higher and deeper orders of complexity and inclusivity. This is the call of all of creation, the call to freely participate in the energetic process of differentiation, autopoiesis and communion.

Like all aspects of an integral formation, spiritual formation takes place within a

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[60] McCauley et al. eds., *Center for Creative Leadership, 258.*

[61] The Centre for Ministry Formation, "Spiritual Formation," in *Member's Handbook*, 2004-2005 (unpublished).

[62] Wolski Conn, "Dancing in the Dark" in Wickes, *Handbook of Spirituality for Ministry,* 88.

community of disciples. The foundation for spiritual formation is the learners' faith and life experience. Like human formation, spiritual formation is about developing self-knowledge and shaping one's identity as disciple. As noted in the section above on human formation, that identity is discovered, formed, and shaped in interpersonal relationships with God, with others, and with all of creation.

Pastoral leadership education must find its source in Christ's call to engage in relationships with others as witnesses and artisans of compassion and justice. This is a call to cultivate attitudes and practices of mutuality, collaboration, and inclusivity in working with others in service to a fullness and abundance of life.[63] Because integral pastoral leadership education is interdisciplinary, insights from a variety of disciplines, including feminist-evolutionary thought, should be integrated into the spiritual formation process. This integration would provide opportunities to develop a greater attentiveness and deeper reverence for the grace-filled ordinary events of life. In learning to embrace the dynamism of life, the pastoral leader would develop a deep reverence for the immanent energy and force at the centre of life itself. Here the pastoral leader participates in Christ's mission of transformation of the world—enabling others to freely engage and embrace the dynamism of life that it is authentically theirs.

In light of the overall orientation of my research, I propose two major elements of spiritual formation: *generativity* and *conflict*. Generativity and spiritual maturation go hand in hand. Generativity is the capacity to produce. To claim generativity as a spiritual value is to put it at the heart of our personal identity. To be generative is to be other-oriented, empathetic, and to have a mission orientation toward life itself. Generativity is

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[63] John 10:10 "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." (NRSV)

directly related to our understanding and embracing of life as dynamic and future-oriented. Generative pastoral leaders are mature, relational, and accountable leaders, who model the way for communities to become more generative as they build relations and create greater commitment to the community itself.[64]

An integral pastoral leadership formation must provide opportunities for learners to experience the giving and receiving of compassion, care, concern, and love in their relationships with others. The formation community itself should be the locus to develop the capacity for intimacy, to risk and initiate new behaviours, and to come in touch with their own gifts, acknowledging God as the source of those gifts. It is the responsibility of both educators and learners to work toward developing and ensuring the overall health of the formation community itself in order to provide greater opportunities to become more generative.

Conflict has traditionally had a bad reputation, especially within church organizations which mistake no conflict as a sign of health. An integral pastoral leadership education calls for a re-framing of "our religious heritage which has often connected controversy with sin, conflict with disobedience, and dissent with disloyalty."[65] As agents of transformation, pastoral leaders are called to develop the capacity to value and engage in controversy, conflict, and dissent as part of our personal and collective spiritual maturation. A person, or a community, that has no conflict, actually has no life. [66] Denying conflict can seriously jeopardize the mission and vision

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[64] Sofield and Kuhn, *The Collaborative Leader*, 168–181.

[65] Whitehead and Whitehead, *The Promise of Partnership*, 178.

[66] Whitehead and Whitehead, *The Promise of Partnership*, 181.

of a person and a community. In denying conflict, differences are masked, relationships are moved to a superficial level, apathy sets in, and the slippery slope to burn-out and depression has begun. Adaptive and effective pastoral leaders who have themselves embraced conflict as inherent in life, empower groups for transformation, providing opportunities to actually take the fear out of conflict and "open up blocked lines of communication."[67]

Embracing the dynamism of life in moving toward a more inclusive church is, in itself, a political act of inclusion. The politics of inclusion are not faint-hearted efforts at making everybody happy enough. Inclusion may mean challenging people, hard and steadily, to face new perspectives on familiar problems, to let go of old ideas and ways of life long-held sacred. Thus, inclusion does not mean that each party will get its way. Even the most well-crafted efforts at inclusion can rarely prevent the experience of loss by some. As a result, one cannot shield oneself from the outrage of those parties who must face loss and are unwilling to change.[68] In the politics of inclusion, conflict questions the status quo, reveals values, and generates energy and creativity. Learning to embrace conflict as intrinsic to the dynamism of life calls for an education process that combines both vision and practice. We must "first develop a vision that appreciates conflict's meaning and recognizes its potential."[69] We must then provide opportunities for learners to develop the strategies and the practical skills to make this vision real. Claiming a renewed vision for conflict calls for a maturation of the virtues of patience,

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[67] Markham, *Spiritlinking Leadership*, 77.

[68] Heifeitz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 239.

[69] Whitehead and Whitehead, *The Promise of Partnership*, 187.

courage, and hope. In learning to embrace the dynamism of life, learners develop an even greater sense of hope and trust in the Source and Giver of Life. Hope frees pastoral leaders from the tyranny of unrealistic expectations as to outcomes and timelines.[70] Hope enables pastoral leaders to welcome the vitality of conflict inherent in the dynamism of life.

The Centre's community of formation calls its members to be co-responsible in the formation process, and all members are called to commit themselves to the Centre's vision. Ideally, there is unity with respect to the vision, the purpose, and the commitment. However, it would be naive for me to believe that the ongoing transformation to which we are called will be without challenge and conflict. As already noted above, the management of peace, stability, and change does not ensure the vitality nor the viability of a living community. The Centre is not about managing the peace nor the stability; it is about enabling its members to live the changes as responses to their ongoing call to conversion. The defining values of the Centre for Ministry Formation are named: equality, partnership, collegiality, and inclusivity. These values are not exclusive to the formation community itself. As a community of faith and struggle, the Centre seeks to incarnate these defining values, and its ecclesial vision, in its communal formation process with the goal that they also become part of the fabric of the individual members who move into their respective faith communities upon completion of their formation process with us. As we journey with our Centre members, we are attentive to the members' language and behaviours, which give us signs as what degree they have integrated these values. Opportunities for personal and communal reflection, feedback,

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[70] Henri Nouwen, *Ministry & Spirituality: Creative Ministry, The Wounded Healer, Reaching Out* (New York: Continuum. Dayspring Edition, 1996), 67.

and evaluation are built into the ministry formation process in order to overtly name the expectations with respect to our vision.

Conclusion

Learning to embrace the dynamism of life calls for an integral formation process—a pastoral leadership education process that is holistic, informational, and transformational. Transformational education does not compartmentalize the various aspects of an integral formation process. Rather, it holds together the various aspects of a leadership education formation process—the intellectual, pastoral, human, and spiritual—in a way that one enriches and informs the others. For instance, an intellectual formation curriculum that includes feminist-evolutionary thought, organizational behaviour and adaptive leadership theory must shape the candidate's spiritual, pastoral, and human formation. A spiritual formation in which generativity and conflict are key elements of spirituality for pastoral leaders must shape the other aspects of an integral formation. Transformational learning must provide opportunities for learners to become aware of and critically examine their assumptions, prejudgments, and fears that keep them from freely engaging in the process of change. Responsible and relevant pastoral leadership education must enable learners to discover and reconstruct their own frames of reference through opportunities for greater self-awareness in dialogue with insights from evolutionary-feminist thought and a trinitiarian theology of relationship. As noted above, many of those insights, which are incorporated into various elements of organizational behaviour and leadership development, are pertinent to current and future pastoral leadership.

There are many challenges to providing a curriculum for an integral pastoral leadership education today. We are undergoing radical changes in our culture, and in our ecclesial communities. I believe that an integral pastoral leadership education that is designed to enable leaders to embrace the dynamism of life, is one of the ways in which the Centre could integrate its ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church into its overall ministry formation. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, learning to embrace the dynamism of life presupposes that life itself is dynamic and continuously changing. Embrace can be understood in a multitude of ways; some of which are: to choose, to incorporate, to hold and receive, to encompass, to welcome, to trust, to take in with the eye or to see, and to understand.[71] Learning to embrace the dynamism of life calls for altering our ways of seeing reality and our ways of relating to change itself. This is a call for deep structural change. In the next chapter, I explore the immunity-to-change language technology as a tool for deep structural change.

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[71] *Webster's,* s.v. "embrace."

CHAPTER SIX

IMMUNITY-TO-CHANGE LANGUAGE TECHNOLOGY

Linguistic change and structural change go hand in hand.

—Elizabeth A. Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*

In Chapter Five, I presented elements of a pastoral leadership education approach which aims at learning to embrace the dynamism of life. The goals of that pastoral leadership education find their source in a developing ecclesial vision, rooted in the post-conciliar model of church as communion, and revealed in the Centre's ministry formation praxis as "moving toward a more inclusive church." The theoretical foundations for moving toward a more inclusive church are drawn from evolutionary-feminist thought which has itself informed a theological perspective which is grounded in a trinitarian theology of relationship. The ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church calls for a particular pastoral leadership education, which is both informational and transformational, and in which candidates for ministry learn to integrate the concepts of evolutionary-feminist thought into their own meaning-making frames of reference. This type of learning aims at epistemological change, change in our ways of knowing.

This chapter singles out a particular aspect of the integral pastoral leadership education process proposed in the previous chapter. In my focus and research on the

relationship between language and change, I have come to appreciate the deeply formative nature of language, both as *parole* and *parler,* and how it can be a tool for socialization into a particular discipline, domain or community. The language spoken in the Centre is no exception. As I continue to uphold the need to learn the language, the *parole,* we use in a new ecclesial culture, it has become much clearer to me that pastoral leadership education must be, first and foremost about deep structural change. I have also discovered that certain language forms (*parler)* can enhance our capacity for change and be used as a tool for innovation and transformational learning. The immunity-to-change is one such language form. In this chapter, I explore the theoretical and conceptual foundations to the ITC language technology as a tool for deep structural change. What is actually meant by deep structural change will become clearer as I present the concepts and theories, all of which draw upon insights from feminist-evolutionary thought and trinitarian theology of relationship.

It is the Centre's mission to form pastoral leaders to be agents of change that are faithful to the conciliar call to *ressourcement* and aggiornamento. As the Centre gathers a diverse group of disciples for vocational discernment and ministry formation, we rise to the challenges of being a church continuing to develop from the experience and teachings of the Second Vatican Council. As noted in its Centre's mission statement, those challenges represent significant shifts of perspective and emphasis in our formation process, which in turn signify changes in our ecclesial praxis.[1] Those shifts affect both the *ad intra* and *ad extra* relations of the Centre, among the various Centre members, as well as with the formation personnel, and between the Centre and the other

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[1] Mission Statement, Appendix I-2.

Christian communities, the wider church, as well as the world at large. The Centre is at the service of those shifts in perspective, recognizing that the shifts, like the reign of God, are already here but not yet fully realized.

Since the early stages in my leadership role as director of the Centre, I carry a deep interest in the formative nature of language within the community of formation, particularly language as it relates to a greater consciousness and integral development.[2] I have been eager to explore how language, intentionally chosen and spoken within the formation community, would itself become the means of moving the candidates for ministry into a mode of pastoral leadership that would continue to serve the change process. My ongoing research convinces me that *one* of the keys to transformation is the intentional spoken word, the common everyday language, which has the power to enable deep structural change, both individually and communally. Deep structural change is not about quick-fix solutions. It is about changing our mental structures which are our ways of knowing and perceiving truth. I believe that the ITC language technology has the potential to enable us to engage in and support the change to which the Centre, in faithfulness to its vision, is genuinely committed.

While understanding that education for deep structural change calls for making a clear distinction between informational learning and transformational learning, all adult education must include both approaches to learning.[3] As explained in the previous chapter, both informational and transformational learning are expansive and valuable; one exists within a frame of reference and the other reconstructs the frame itself. We

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[2] Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1971), 82.

[3] Robert Kegan, "What 'Form' Transforms?" in Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation,* 49.

make meaning of our experiences through our frames of reference. Transformational learning aims to provide challenging experiences in which our existing frames of reference are at risk of change. The frame is the mental structure through which we make meaning; it is our way of knowing. This is the structure to which deep structural change refers.

Transformational learning has both individual and social dimensions. It demands that we be aware of how we have come to the knowledge and values that shape our frames of reference. In transformational learning, learners can become critical of their own tacit assumptions and expectations, as well as those of others. They also have the opportunity to assess the relevance of those expectations and assumptions in interpreting or giving meaning to their experiences. Because transformational learning can be an intensely threatening emotional experience, the learning environment must be attentive to the learners' capacities and needs for support in order to safely risk change in, as previously mentioned, a manner that undergirds their convictions, values, and familiar ways of making meaning.[4]

In this chapter, I present elements of two psychological theories, constructive-development theory and object-relations theory, which explain the relationship between the evolutionary activity of meaning-making and change as part of human development. These two theories are the basis to the ITC language technology as a tool for enabling change and the elements which I have chosen to present support the idea that this particular language form is an effective tool for deep structural change in pastoral leadership education. I begin my exploration of those theories by first grounding them in

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[4] Jack Mezirow, "Learning to Think Like an Adult: Core Concepts of Transformation Theory" in Mezirow, *Learning as Transformation*, 7.

three main premises which demonstrate how the activity of meaning-making is the very

motion of life itself. After I have presented the various elements of constructive-

development theory and object-relations theory, I then examine each of the four

language forms which together make up the ITC language technology.[5]

Three Premises

In this section, I present three of the premises on which constructive-development theory

and object-relations theory stand. The first premise maintains that meaning-making is an

evolutionary activity in which *all* of life shares. Meaning-making is the very "motion of

life itself"[6] and for human beings that motion is the evolution of meaning systems which

organize our thinking, feeling and behaviours. No human being is excluded from the

activity of meaning making; it is on-going throughout our individual and corporate lives.

Whether or not we are conscious of the meaning systems which actually shape our

experience, the process of meaning-making is itself value-laden. Those values are

influenced by a number of factors in our own history, including the events and

relationships in our families of origin, our culture, as well as our unique personalities.

For Kegan and Lahey, our "meanings are not so much something we *have* as something

we *are*."[7] Building on a Piagetian developmental theory of the human person, Kegan and

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[5] Although Kegan and Lahey introduce seven languages in their book, *How The Way We Talk Can Change The Way We Work*, the first four language forms are designed as the immunity-to-change language technology which aims at transforming customary mental arrangements. The last three languages are designed to transform, a custom interpersonal, social or organizational arrangement into a novel form. An exploration of the last three languages awaits further research opportunity.

[6] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 209.

[7] Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, "Adult Leadership" in and Adult Development: A Constructivist View" in Barbara Kellerman, *Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1984), 202. *Italics added for emphasis.*

Lahey situate the process of meaning making in a constructivist approach to human development in which an individual's very construction of reality is determined by his or her mental structures. In the evolutionary motion of meaning-making, we continuously move through the process of disembedding and re-embedding ourselves in more complex structures of meaning. Just as the process of meaning-making is never simply an intellectual or emotional exercise, mental structures involve thinking (cognitive), feeling (affective), and social-relating.[8] Both constructive-development and object-relations theories rest on this premise and it is on this basis that I explore the relationship between language (*parler*) and deep structural change as the evolution of our structures of meaning-making systems.

Based on the evolutionary precept that life is motion, the second premise states that a human being is both form and process.[9] It is in process that all living organisms evolve through time according to principles of stability and change. Within every form there exists a creative process shaping, selecting, and actually patterning reality.[10] The creative process is the process by which form organizes meaning and persons construct reality. Just as our Western theology and anthropology has separated the categories of ontology and function, essence and energy, individual and relational, our Western grammar has tended to separate form and process, as if the distinction was absolute. This highlights once again the formative nature of language as the *parole*.

The third premise is interconnected with the first two, and at first glance, just as

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[8] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 32.

[9] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 8.

[10] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 204.

hard to grasp as the evolutionary theory of holons. The third premise states that all persons have a built-in dialectical relation between form (individual) and process (relating). Both form and process are not static poles but are subprocesses which tend toward each other. Just as persons have built-in dialectic relations between form (individual) and process (relational), they also have built-in tensions between the need to protect and the need to change. Both these processes are intrinsically united within each person. Therefore, in the development process, the dialectical relation between form and process is both *within* the person and *between* the person and his/her environment.

Like all living organisms, development is a process of differentiation and integration and in that movement, the person moves toward autonomy and away from heteronomy or control by external forces. Because the development process is an autonomous event that takes place both *within* the person and *between* the person and the environment, it inevitably includes change in the "progressively individuated self *and* the bigger life field," as the frame of meaning-making is integrated into a new frame.[11] Because persons are inherently individual **and** social, the dialectic relation between personal and social is intrinsic to the evolutionary process of life. This is also the basic premise of the Eastern view of person found in the trinitarian perspective in Chapter Three.

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[11] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 43. For me, this is an important insight with respect to attentiveness to the development process of each candidate for ministry. As each individual candidate changes, so must the way in which the formation community responds and supports him/her. This premise also helps to elucidate adaptive leadership theory and its claim to change the larger life-field, as explained in the previous chapter. And this premise also confirms the role of the Centre in contributing to the overall transformation of the ecclesial culture outside of the Centre.

Constructive-Development Theory and Object-Relations Theory

Constructive-development theory and object-relations theory are about deep structural change. Both theories are systems for understanding how we transform our epistemologies through the constructive and developmental processes of mental structures. As noted above, these mental structures are the organizing principles of our meaning-making activity.[12] In comparison to age-related adult development theories, which have tended to link responses to the changing conditions of life to age, the constructivist approach to adult development attends to the "developments in an individual's very *construction* of reality, how he or she makes meaning."[13] While it is generally understood that older people's meaning-schemes tend to be more complicated, differentiated, and encompassing than those of younger people, "they are not a *function of age*."[14] Based on an understanding that vital systems evolve through qualitatively different eras according to regular principles of stability and change, constructive-development theory incorporates the premise that person is both form and process. The concept of construction applies to the activity that underlies and generates the form; the concept of development applies to the "origins and processes by which the form came to be and by which it will pass into a new form."[15]

Object-relations theory studies the evolving processes and stages of

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[12] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 29.

[13] Kegan and Lahey, "Adult Leadership" in Kellerman, *Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 202.

[14] Kegan and Lahey, "Adult Leadership" in Kellerman, *Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 202.

[15] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 13.

development, with each stage being a different way of making meaning and guiding behaviour. Each stage is marked by a system of knowing that shapes our experience and, to a great extent, gives rise to our behaviour. In this theory, subject and object have a particular meaning. "Subject" refers to those elements of our knowing or organization *with* which we are identified, or *in* which we are embedded. "Object" refers to the elements of our knowing or organizing meaning, which are distinct enough from us so that we can reflect upon them and for which we can take some responsibility. Subject is ultimate or absolute, whereas object is relative.

In both object-relation theory and constructive-development theory, the concept of mental structure is central. I identify six features of this particular concept as they relate to my interest in deep structural change.[16] First, the language of mental structures refers to the integrity of the whole person, in that they are the principles of organization for one's thinking, feeling, and social relating. Second, mental structures are not about the *content* of one's thinking or feeling but rather are the meaning systems—the actual form for how one knows and how one constructs reality.[17]

Third, the principle of mental organization is a principle of knowing, an epistemologic. As a principle of knowing, it has an inner logic around which meaning , and reality are organized. The root or deep structure of that inner logic is the subject–object relation. The mental organization establishes a balance between subject and object as persons evolve through the ongoing processes of differentiation and integration. As a person moves into the subsequent mental organizations, they develop a

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[16] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 32 to 33.

[17] For this reason, Kegan argues that the concept of mental structure is cross-cultural and gender neutral.

higher[18] capacity for differentiation, for *disembedding* themselves as subject from reality and increasing the subject's relation to the world. Fourth, the different principles of mental organization are developmentally related to one another. Each successive mental structure becomes qualitatively more complex as it incorporates the prior principles of organization.[19] Development is a process of outgrowing one system of meaning, or mental structure, by integrating it into a new mental structure. Therefore, what was whole evolves to become part of a whole new structure.

Fifth, because growth is an essential feature of life, what we take for subject and what we take for object can change. From birth to death, persons can[20] develop more complex mental structures. And sixth, the concept of *ultimacy* is an issue in every mental structure. In other words, our way of making meaning is not merely an *adequate* way of constructing the world, but it is our *most adequate* construction.[21]

In construction-development theory, there are five increasingly complex epistemologies, or "orders of consciousness."[22] I limit this inquiry to the third, fourth,

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[18] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 33. This struggle with the language of "higher" was first noted in Chapter Two. While Kegan uses the term "higher" knowing, he qualifies higher as being more complex and inclusive. It seems that as we come to a greater appreciation of all creation, we are much more sensitive to the call, to a deeper integration, to a "higher" life form, which could be perceived as propelling us above the created order. As noted in Chapter Four, Cletus Wessels also struggles with this language as he acknowledges both a hierarchical *and* horizontal ordering of holons in evolutionary theory. Yet, he also knows that hierarchy i .elf has been experienced as dysfunctional. Furthermore, in an evolutionary view of reality, the universe is now understood as a multidimensional, unified whole, in which even the four dimensions of length, breadth, depth, and time are being surpassed.

[19] Kegan, *In Over our Heads*, 33.

[20] Both the psycho and social do have an impact on the potential of this *can*; for example, on the intellectual, psychological, and affective capacities of the individual, the social environment of formation, etc.

[21] Kegan, *Evolving Self,* 207.

[22] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads,* 314–315, Figure 9.1.

and fifth orders of consciousness, which are mainly associated with adult development. As with evolving mental structures, the third order of consciousness incorporates and transforms the preceding first and second orders of consciousness that are normally associated with child and adolescent development.

The third order of consciousness is associated with the "Interpersonal System"[23] in which persons can see beyond a single point of view and relate to others as something more than facilitators or thwarters of one's goals. In this logic, persons are capable of good citizenship, that is, of subordinating their self-interests to the shared interests of the group or community to which they belong. Third order thinkers have the capacity for "making their thinking abstract, their feelings a matter of inner state and self-reflexive emotion, and their social relating capable of loyalty and devotion to a community of people or ideas larger than the self."[24] Although in this third order system of meaning thinkers have a capacity for empathy and sharing at an internal level, they are dependent upon and, therefore, unable to distinguish themselves from their relationships. Moreover, they are incapable of seeing themselves as authors of their own inner psychological life. Although this level of consciousness is usually attained in adolescence, it seems that the majority of the adult population still operates at that same level complexity.[25]

As a person moves into the fourth order of consciousness, the interpersonal system becomes part of a bigger system, which is referred to as the "Institutional

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[23] Kegan and Lahey, "Adult Leadership" in Kellerman, *Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 203.

[24] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 32.

[25] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 105.

System."[26] In this movement, the person brings the power of determination into the self and establishes the self as a kind of psychic "institution," an organization, which the self is responsible for running and regulating. In this mental structure, the person becomes more self-authoring and develops an independent identity, not in isolation but in a relational way.[27] One of the limits of this system is its tendency toward self-perpetuation. Having achieved self-government, it risks the excesses of control. Lacking the capacity for self-correction, fourth order systems cannot disembed themselves from the organization itself in order to reflect on its fundamental mission and purpose. In this system, the person's capacity to maintain a coherent identity is founded on an internally consistent but self-sealing logic, insuring that no matter how much information is taken in or how a conflict is resolved, the system's operating principle is preserved.

The fifth order of consciousness involves transforming of the whole fourth order system into part of a new whole. In this "Post-Institutional System,"[28] the self is no longer the organization, but rather has organizations as figures upon a moving ground that are more committed to culturing a process than preserving a product. In the fifth order system of meaning, the prevailing principle of organization is not ultimate, and a predetermined orientation to conflict and information is transcended. Through the evolving systems of meaning, the fifth order of consciousness is characterized by interdependence in which mutuality presupposes otherness not as distinctness prior to

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[26] Kegan and Lahey, "Adult Leadership" in Kellerman, *Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 204.

[27] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 219.

[28] Kegan and Lahey, "Adult Leadership" in Kellerman, *Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 204.

relationship but as otherness-in-relationship to the other. The fifth order's increasingly complex, interdependent system has incorporated and transformed the third order's interpersonal system's penchant for dependence and fusion with the fourth order's institutional system's claim of independence and prior distinctness of form before relationship. In the fifth order's "post- or inter-institutional system," the self-as-form is object and the process-as-form-creation becomes the subject.[29]

An integral pastoral leadership education calls for self-knowledge, that candidates for ministry be aware of their issues, of the way their personal history filters their "reading of experience so that [they] do not hold others responsible for the way [they] feel in response to their actions or choices."[30] This presumes that the self is both the experiencer and the maker of a reportable, internal psychological life. "The demand for the 'construction of the self' as author, maker, critiquer, *re*maker of its experience, the self as a system of complex, regulative of its parts" is a demand for fourth order consciousness.[31] The demand that we be in control of our issues rather than have our issues be in control of us is a demand for fourth order consciousness. Pastoral leadership for an ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church calls for a movement from independence to a stance of interdependence. In other words, the call to interdependence is a call to stand from our own selves as systems, from our own internal authorities, so that we can recognize the incompleteness of our own theories and in so

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[29] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 319. I refer back to the premise of this chapter in which I note that person is understood as both form and process and that the meaning-making activity is the creative process of meaning-making to which persons are called.

[30] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 132.

[31] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 133.

doing, we embrace multiple forms or contradictory systems simultaneously within the same self.[32] I now turn to the ITC language technology, designed to enable persons to disembed themselves from their systems of meaning; to objectify that which they hold as ultimate or absolute, in order that they may reflect on it, inquire into its roots, and begin to question its validity.

The Immunity-To-Change Language Technology

In their many years of research and practice as developmental educators, Kegan and Lahey have observed patterns in human behaviour which show that even the best-intentioned people keep themselves from doing what it is they are *genuinely* committed to doing.[33] An analysis of their observations led them to see that "if we want deeper understanding of the prospect of change, we must pay closer attention to our own powerful inclinations *not* to change."[34] Their findings indicate that people's most sincere commitments to change are unconsciously undermined by our competing commitments which keep the status quo. Borrowing concepts from biology and evolutionary thought, Kegan and Lahey refer to our resistance to change as a built-in "immune system." The concept of immune system enables us to see that part of us is moving in one direction and another part is using just as much energy moving in another direction in order to maintain equilibrium.[35] Rather than attribute this built-in simultaneous commitment to

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[32] Kegan, "What 'Form' Transforms?" in Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation*, 68–69.

[33] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 5.

[34] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 1.

[35] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 1.

change and nonchange to simply a behavioural problem or character flaw, Kegan and Lahey contend that it is actually natural for *all* humans, both individually and collectively, to be pulled in multiple directions by competing commitments in order to preserve themselves from the threat of bringing into question their very systems of meaning.[36] In response to this natural human phenomenon, Kegan and Lahey designed the ITC language technology as a tool for identifying and transforming the forces which keep us from change. If we can unlock our built-in immune system, we release new energies that have the potential to lead to "new ways of seeing and being."[37]

Developed as a process for transforming our mental structures, this language form is aptly referred to as language *technology* according to the literal Greek origin of "*techne*, which suggests the artful or skillful activity of making or building."[38] As a tool for building or constructing meaning, the ITC language technology has the potential for altering our relationship to change. When I first picked up a copy of *How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work*, my attention was riveted in that it spoke directly to me in my leadership role of an organization seeking to actualize our vision—a vision that was about change itself. I had already sought out opportunities to intentionally shape the existing language forms within my particular work environment, the formation community. I heeded Kegan and Lahey's call to identify my work environment as a "language community" and to claim my own responsibility for leading is the language

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[36] Dennis Sparks, "Inner Conflicts, Inner Strengths: Interview with Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey," in *Journal of Staff Development*, (Summer 2002), vol. 23, no. 3, 69. Recognition that this is a natural human tendency can render a person less vulnerable and reduce the sense of shame or regard for oneself as hypocritical.

[37] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 1.

[38] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 3.

community in the direction of deep structural change.[39]

Like all work environments, the Centre is a space in which certain languages are either encouraged or discouraged. Yet, Kegan and Lahey led me to understand that the languages to which they referred were not about the content (*parole*) of what we say, but rather about the "form in which our saying goes"[40] (*parler*). They propose that in all work environments, language forms are powerful because they not only regulate how we think, feel, and make meaning of our experiences, but they also "constrain how we see and how we act in it."[41] There are certain language forms and processes that concentrate more individual and social energy than others, thereby increasing the possibilities of our ongoing development. The ITC language technology introduces novel language forms in the sense that they are all qualitatively different language forms. These internal and interpersonal language forms and processes are the tools which Kegan and Lahey offer for transforming the "customary mental or social arrangements into a form that increases the possibility of transformational learning."[42]

As noted above, the ITC language technology draws upon scientific precepts and evolutionary thought in its use of concepts such as entropy, negentropy, immune system, and dynamic equilibrium. As already indicated in the evolutionary-feminist framework,

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[39] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 7 and 8.

[40] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 7 and 31. Here Kegan and Lahey make the distinction between content (*parole*) and form (*parler*). It is about *how* we speak to each other, as well as to ourselves. It is also important to note that attention is paid to the internal language of *parler* and *parole*. We can choose to intentionally attend to the internal language or we can choose to ignore it. To ignore it is to miss the valuable information necessary for any possibility of transformation in order to meet the demands of the leadership formation curriculum.

[41] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 7.

[42] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 7.

entropy is the dissipation of energy; it is the process by which dynamic systems gradually wear down or fall apart. Negentropy, or the concentration of energy, is the process by which dynamic systems reorganize at a new level of capacity or complexity. Immune system refers to the internal forces that render persons or organizations change-resistant. The ITC language technology is a process aimed at unearthing competing commitments, which are the psychological dynamics of self-protection that create the dynamic equilibrium, namely immunity to change.[43] While this process can make persons vulnerable, particularly because immunity to change has been traditionally perceived as resistance or hypocrisy on the part of those who profess commitments to change, it is recognized that all persons are, in themselves, a "bundle of contradictions"[44] despite their most sincere commitments to change.

In order to enable deep structural change, Kegan and Lahey devised the "four-column exercise" as the diagnostic phase of the ITC language technology. This exercise is designed for persons, individually and collectively, as a means to develop a greater consciousness of their competing commitments, and to identify their big assumptions, which give rise to those same competing commitments and anchor the whole immunity-to-change system.[45] The big assumptions are systems of meaning that consciously or unconsciously impact on our choices and behaviours. The follow-up phase is designed as a space to enable persons to engage in the messy work of disembedding themselves from those principles of organization, to objectify that which they hold as ultimate or

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[43] Dennis Sparks "Inner Conflicts" in *Staff Development*, 69.

[44] Kegan and Lahey, *How The Way We Talk*, 64.

[45] Dennis Sparks, "Inner Conflicts" in *Staff Development*, 67 and 69.

absolute, in order that they may reflect on it and begin to question its validity. The elements of possible follow-up in the Centre are addressed in the Chapter Nine.

There are three main ideas in the ITC language technology, all of which underline the conceptual basis for this language form. The first is a psychological idea that genuinely negentropic development is the movement from subject to object. It is the "movement of our meaning-making from a place where we are its captive to a place where we can look at it, re-examine it and possibly change it."[46] The second is a leadership idea that it is impossible for us to "effect any significant change until we are [come to] recognize the dynamic immune system by which *we* continuously manufacture *nonchange*."[47] And third, the "educational idea is that some problems can teach us a great deal." If we can bear to stay in relation to some problems and not attempt to solve them too quickly, then "we can use them to solve us."[48] These three ideas are built into the four languages described below.

The Four-Column Exercise

The four-column exercise is designed as a process for uncovering our competing commitments and big assumptions. This process is guided by a series of intentionally formulated questions that lead to key responses which are recorded in a four-column grid. The objective of this exercise is to give us a picture of our immune systems to change in order to make sense of our built-in dynamic in which commitment to change

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[46] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 76.

[47] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 76.

[48] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 76.

and commitment to nonchange co-exist. In order to facilitate an understanding of this four-column exercise, I have provided a sample of the "four-column exercise" in Appendix II. In that sample, I provide an example from my own use of the four-column exercise which reveals a contradiction between my commitment to the value of partnership and my commitment to maintaining control.

The First Language

> *From a Language of Complaint to a Language of Commitment*
>
> *I am committed to the value of or the importance of ...*
>
> —Kegan and Lahey

Kegan and Lahey begin the process of change by focusing on the common human tendency to complain about what is not working. Although the "Language of Complaint" is a very common form of language in many communities, on its own, the language of complaint can be de-energizing and has very little potential for transformation. This first language is based on the understanding that complaints carry within them an untapped potential. In complaints, we find the seeds of our deepest concerns and if we attend to our complaints, they direct us to a genuine commitment. Leaders are called to foster a "language context,"[49] which is both a place and a disposition that honours critical evaluations as opportunities to identify not only that which is missing but, even more importantly, to bring the vitalizing energy of positive commitment into the workplace.[50] These language contexts should encourage people to

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[49] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 20.

[50] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 28.

pursue the transformative potential of their complaints, by moving from the unproductive world of complaint to the productive world of identifying and giving voice to their personal commitments at work. This is done by looking at our complaints and asking: "What commitments or convictions are implied in my complaint?"[51] The response is the first language, the "Language of Commitment" which is designed to create a forward movement. It can be considered a doorway into our deeper commitments; a doorway into a "room of wider possibility."[52]

Another way of using this first language form is to move right into the language of commitment by asking participants "what are the values to which you are truly committed but not fully realizing?" This alternative approach to the first language can be more fitting in particular contexts. This is the case for the context of my research design, in which I sought to assess the effectiveness of this language form for integrating the Centre's vision into its integral ministry formation process. As noted in the next chapter on research methodology, the participants were invited to choose a central value of the Centre's vision to which they are truly committed but not fully realizing. The list of values from which they chose is found in the Centre's Mission Statement, and is connected with the significant changes in ministry formation for pastoral leadership for moving toward a more inclusive church. Those significant changes are also found in the Centre's Mission Statement. As noted in Appendix II, I have entered into this column that I am committed to partnership. Partnership is one of the core values of the Centre's ecclesial vision.

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[51] Kegan and Lahey, *Facilitators Guide*, 3.14

[52] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 31.

The Second Language

From the Language of Blame to the Language of Personal Responsibility

What I am doing or not doing that keeps my commitment from being fully realized ...

—Kegan and Lahey

In the second column, Kegan and Lahey invite us to look at what it is we are actually doing that is *keeping* us from realizing our first-column commitments. The key question for this column would be: "What are you doing or not doing that undermines or keeps you from fully realizing your [column-one] commitment?"[53] The emphasis in this column is on the activity, not on a disposition, trait or attitude. The "Language of Personal Responsibility" provides a learning opportunity in that it allows us to "learn from the behaviours that we identify and to learn from the story we tell on ourselves" about these behaviours.[54] As noted in Appendix II, I note that "I often make unilateral decisions."

This second language form can engender "mutual vulnerability,"[55] as persons are invited to accept responsibility for their behaviours, all the while calling the "other" to also accept some responsibility.[56] Recognizing that the language of personal responsibility is a relatively rare form of sustained speech in any work environment, a

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[53] Kegan and Lahey, *Facilitators Handbook*, 4.12. Or a similar wording which also affirms that people are already doing some things to actually realize that first-column commitment, and some things which are keeping them from realizing it.

[54] Kegan and Lahey, *How The Way We Talk*, 44.

[55] Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 44.

[56] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 37–38.

supportive and safe environment will be needed in order for persons to not only tell stories about themselves but also get distance from those stories in order to become aware of what they are actually doing. Furthermore, the maxim "it takes two to tango" reveals the interdependent and co-responsible nature of all relationships. This recognizes the complexity and interdependence of all relationships both *within* the individual, as well as the dialectic relation *between* the person and his/her environment.

Most attempts at effecting change end with the second column in that once the contradicting behaviours are named, all efforts are made to eradicate or rectify those behaviours. This, however, is not a long-term solution since we have not arrived at the source of those behaviours. New dysfunctional or ineffective behaviours are likely to emerge, even if we make some progress in reducing the second-column behaviours. It is important to note that this language form is neither about "taking the blame nor debugging the system."[57]

This language form is based on the conviction that behaviours do not change without addressing the forces that are at work in us that keep us from realizing our first-column commitments. These forces hold us in the dynamic equilibrium of nonchange. It is with this language that we come in touch with the notions of adaptive change in staying with and reflecting on the problems that "solve us."[58] As with adaptive leadership theory, problem behaviours that are uncovered through this second language do not call for a quick fix. They are oftentimes problems requiring us to stretch and change our ways of thinking. Deep structural change is not possible unless we stay with

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[57] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 43.

[58] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 44.

our behaviours that contradict or undermine our genuine first-column commitments in order to take them deeper into our consciousness. Leaders who take an interest in fostering a language of personal responsibility are more likely to engage in more productive conversations with others, as well as themselves. Moving into the next language form activates the fuller potential of self-responsibility.

Third Language

From the Language of New Year's Resolutions to the Language of Competing

Commitments

I may also be committed to ...

—Kegan and Lahey

In this third-column language, we move from "Language of New Year's Resolutions" in which change is most often short-lived to a "Language of Competing Commitments" in which we recognize that we may hold commitments that give rise to the behaviour in column two. This third-column exercise is divided in two. In the first half, we look at the behaviours in column two and ask: "If you were to consider changing these behaviours [to better realize the commitment in column one] can you identify anything even vaguely like fear, discomfort, [or] a sense of loss?"[59] This language involves a counter-intuitive move and can create cognitive dissonance[60] when we ask ourselves what fear or loss we have if we imagine ourselves doing the opposite of what it is we are actually

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59 Kegan and Lahey, *Facilitators' Guide*, 5.13.

[60] Cognitive dissonance is the psychological conflict from holding two or more incompatible beliefs simultaneously. It can be triggered by hearing words that don't fit our normal ways of understanding or viewing reality.

doing. This third column language can be experienced a difficult, particularly in the use of double negatives, if the second column behaviours are stated in negatives.[61] This language is designed as a means for seeing the incompatibility between our professed theories,[62] or belief system and what it is we are actually doing. This experience of cognitive dissonance often signals a call for change. As noted in Appendix II, I note in the first half of this column, "If I do not make unilateral decisions, then I fear I will not be able to make any decisions and actually lose control."

In the second half of this third column, we ask: "What are you actually afraid of, if [these behaviours] change? What is the commitment to avoid this fear?" In this language form, if what we come up with 'creeps [us] out' that is considered to be a good sign!" We're actually on track to creating a mental map of our immune system. What we put in this third column should indicate our commitment to self-preservation.[63] In this language form, fear is actually the gateway discovering the *bigger* powers that keep us from realizing our commitment. However, the intent of this column is actually not about naming the fears we *have*; it is about discovering that we may be actively committed to *keeping* those things that we are afraid of from happening. As noted in Appendix II, I note that I am also committed to not losing control and ensuring that decisions are made according to my standards.

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[61] For instance, the second column could state: "I am not asking other people's opinions when I need to make a decision." In this case we would ask the question: If you were to consider *not* not asking other people's opinions when you need to make a decision, can you identify a fear, discomfort or a sense of loss?" This double negative can create cognitive dissonance by triggering

[62] In Chapter One, I told my personal story in which I named my growing awareness of my own "operative theories" in order to become clearer about my own context. This language form is designed as a means to come to that greater awareness of the incongruence between our professed and our operative theories. See fn 5 in Chapter One.

[63] Kegan and Lahey, *Facilitators' Guide*, 5.13.

The Language of Competing Commitments actually names a particular form of self-protection to which we are committed. As we look at the mental map we are creating, we notice that the languages of the first and third columns actually contradict each other. Naming our competing commitments reveals our active, energy-expending way of living that keeps us from fully realizing the first-column commitments. This third language form reveals the force of dynamic equilibrium that powerfully works to maintain an equilibrium between our commitments to both change and nonchange; hence, the status quo.[64]

From an educational and psychological point of view, the problem is not the competing commitment itself. In fact, the language form is built upon the premise that competing commitments are normal, human motives. The problem is that we are not *aware* of the competing commitment. Any possibility of deep structural change calls for self-awareness. As noted in the previous chapter on pastoral leadership education, self-knowledge is about surfacing and confronting the fears that keep us from embracing the ambiguities that are part and parcel of the dynamism of life. In making our competing commitments into objects of our awareness, we are called to recognize the inner contradictions as a valuable source of challenge.

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[64] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 49.

Fourth Language

From the Language of Big Assumptions that Hold Us

to the Language of Assumptions We Hold

I assume that if ...

—Kegan and Lahey

The first three columns provide an opportunity to construct a map, or a mental machine, to portray our immune system preventing change. The third language, the Language of Competing Commitments is the material by which we surface the assumptions-we-take-for-truth. The fourth language is the last of the four intentional ITC language forms. This one is designed to transform the language of competing commitments into our "Language of Big Assumptions." It is understood that the big assumptions exist in both the individual and collective psyche.

Like the third column language, the language of big assumptions is a counter-intuitive language form that also signals change. In this fourth column, we first look at our third column entry and inverse the sentence. For instance, as indicated in my third column, I am committed to not losing control; therefore, my fourth column entry begins with "If I *do* lose control...." And the second half is our "honest completion of If-Then Assumptive Stem."[65] In this column, we name the most dire consequences to not realizing our competing commitments named in the third column. These dire consequences point to the big assumption which actually sets the terms for what we can and cannot do within our world. Following through my example in Appendix II, I have indicated in this column "If I do lose control, I will be judged as incompetent in my role as Director of the Centre. In the second half of this language form, "If I am judged to be

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65 Kegan and Lahey, *Facilitators' Guide,* 6.13.

incompetent, this could have dire consequences not only for me in my role, but also for me as a woman in a pastoral leadership role and even for other women in leadership roles in formation for ministry in the Roman Catholic Church."

The concept of big assumption is closely related to the concept of ultimacy, which is an issue in every mental structure. Our way of making meaning is not merely an *adequate* way of constructing the world, but it is our *most adequate* construction.[66] And so, big assumptions are the most adequate "meaning-regulative principles by which we shape the world in which we live."[67] Big assumptions are ingeniously theories that are actually embedded in the competing commitments that keep persons from the change(s) they sincerely intend. Looking at our big assumptions is about uncoupling our "reality" from "our way of shaping reality."[68] In this language, we begin to look *at* rather than look *through* the frame or form by which we make meaning of reality. Although there is some element of truth in the Language of Big Assumptions, that truth is not ultimate or absolute in all circumstances.

The fourth language is designed to move us into a relationship with those big assumptions as we disembed ourselves from them. As we attend to our big assumptions, we become conscious of how they can lead us to systematically attend to certain data and to ignore other data.[69] Naming those big assumptions usually takes us into "highly

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[66] Kegan, *Evolving Self*, 207.

[67] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 68.

[68] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We*, 74.

[69] Kegan and Lahey, "The Real Reason People Won't Change" in *Harvard Business Review*, November 2001, Reprint 20110E, 90.

consequential territory,"[70] as we begin the process of exploring whether or not they are actually true in all situations. In this growing consciousness, we see more deeply into ourselves and into the world in which we live.

The naming of the big assumptions brings to closure the diagnostic phase of the ITC language technology. The follow-up work is in itself another phase with its own set of requirements to enable persons to continue to be in relation to their big assumptions, as they engage in the messy work of observing their big assumptions in action, seeking out their roots, and testing their validity. This follow-up work is a crucial component of the ITC language technology. Without it, the diagnostic phase risks being an interesting exercise in which we get a glimpse of possibilities, but then revert back to our same behaviours and submerging our new self-awareness below our consciousness. The follow-up work is the space for developing a greater consciousness. An evolutionary view of consciousness as autopoietic energy reveals that the meaning which we have constructed is the centering force from which we make sense of the world. As we come to test the validity of our big assumptions, we risk de-centering our structures of meaning and experiencng disequilibrium. This highlights the importance of follow-up work which is both supportive and challenging as to move toward a greater clarity as to our values and vision, as well as a deeper trust in the process of change.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been twofold. First, I presented the concepts and theories that undergird the ITC language technology as a tool for deep structural change in

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[70] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 74.

pastoral leadership education for an ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church. Second, I examined the design and goals of each of the four language forms in the ITC language technology. I presented these concepts, theories and goals through the lenses of feminist-evolutionary thought, the trinitarian theology of relationship, an ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church, as well as elements of an integral pastoral leadership education, which includes organizational development and adaptive leadership theory. The ITC language technology is a novel language form, a language of *parler*, which is designed as a process for deep structural change.

Deep structural change is change in our mental structures, each with its own inner logic around which meaning and reality are organized. The root or deep structure of that inner logic is the subject–object relation. Because of "the force and beauty of the hidden immune system"[71] that keeps us from change, the ITC language technology is designed to disturb the balance of the subject–object relation in ways of knowing. This is done by first becoming conscious of, then digging up the root of, that inner logic in order to disembed the subject from the reality as it is known. It is only in making our reality *object* that we can reflect on it, question it, and even test it, so it no longer has a hold on us. This is necessary to prevent us from making easily reversible changes that bring us back to the *status quo*. Deep structural change is not about quick-fix solutions; it is about changing our relation to the structures by which we make meaning, and in doing so we change our relationship to change itself.

Deep structural change is the "facilitation of increasingly complex mental

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[71] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 1.

structures."[72] Just as the developing complexities of orders of consciousness in constructive-development theory are related to one another, each successive language form in the ITC language technology is more complex and encompasses the prior language forms. As with mental structures, the language forms within the ITC language technology are designed to be "transformative, qualitative, and incorporative"[73] in their relationship to one another. In order to benefit from the full force of the mental machine, each language form must be respected in its own integrity, and each must be incorporated into the other.

The ITC language technology is built upon a theory of relations. Object-relation theory demonstrates that you can only be in relation with that which is object. This name given to this theory is in itself an example of the limits of language. The language of "object-relations" contradicts the evolutionary view of our movement from subject-object to intersubjectivity. However, the call to develop one's relation to the other, as found in object-relation theory is actually supportive of intersubjectivity. Intersubjective relations of mutuality and interdependence presuppose that one cannot be in relation with that to which you are fused or embedded. In the evolutionary thought, difference and heterogeneity are integral to *perichoretic* relations of mutuality and communion.

"Linguistic change and structural change go hand in hand."[74] And, as evolutionary thought highlights: Growth is part of life. "Psychologists tell us that the greatest single source of growth and development is the experience of difference,

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[72] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 287.

[73] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 33.

[74] Johnson, *SHE WHO IS*, 40.

discrepancy, and anomaly."[75] The ITC language technology is designed to create such an experience, particularly in its counter-intuitive usage of language as dissonant voice, a prophetic voice that signals a call for change.

It is generally understood that no one is permanently locked into a particular mental structure; however, this raises the question of the capacity to change as a universal principle. This question becomes especially pertinent in my context in which persons present themselves as candidates for ministry within a context embodied by a particular ecclesial vision that calls for increasingly complex mental structures. While I appreciate the capacity of the ITC language technology to support a leadership formation process that facilitates these increasingly complex mental structures, I note that its capacity to do so in my context of pastoral leadership education will relate to several factors, both internal and external to each candidate for ministry, as well as to the formation community. Some of those factors include timing in the academic year, clarity and quality of the presentation itself, individual readiness, and the degree to which the formation community identifies itself as a community with a common vision prior to the presentation of the ITC language technology, as well as how to provide an effective follow-up phase to the process. These questions remain at the fore of my inquiry, as I now turn to the qualitative research design

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[75] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 210.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In Chapter Six, I presented the theoretical and conceptual foundations to the four languages of the immunity-to-change (ITC) language technology. This language form has been designed as a means for helping us change in order to more fully realize our genuine commitments. The change at which the ITC language technology aims is not simply a technical adjusting to change in behaviours or actions. Its objective is to change our ways of knowing, our meaning-making systems through which we view reality. Our meaning-making systems are our mental structures which include the social (ways of relating), intellectual (cognitive), psychological (emotional) qualities of our being human.

The main goal of my particular interest in the ITC language is to assess its effectiveness as a tool for integrating the Centre's ecclesial vision into our ministry formation process. That vision is articulated by the values which the Centre seeks to embody in its praxis and is connected with the significant changes in ministry formation for pastoral leadership for moving toward a more inclusive church. Both the values and significant changes are also found in the Centre's Mission Statement.

An analysis of the praxis of the Centre[1] revealed that while the Centre's ecclesial vision of change in moving toward a more inclusive church is both the source and goal

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[1] This analysis was done as part of the first year of the Supervised Field Experience (Diagnostic Analysis) in the Doctor of Ministry Program.

of our praxis, it is not intentionally integrated into the candidates' learning process. Without the intentional integration of the Centre's vision, it risks remaining outside of the candidates' consciousness. Yet, it is this vision which determines the measuring stick for assessing readiness for pastoral leadership.[2] In the Centre's ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church, each candidate for ministry is expected to demonstrate the behaviours and attitudes of an interdependent disciple of Jesus Christ. I believe that by intentionally integrating the Centre's vision into candidates' learning process through the ITC language technology, they will be given opportunities to reflect on their own behaviours which contradict the values and significant changes in the Centre's vision.[3]

In order to assess the effectiveness of the ITC language technology as a means for integrating the Centre's vision into its ministry formation, I developed and put into action a qualitative research process in which the participants engaged in this language form in a group setting. In this chapter, I present my research methodology for this process by, first, providing a general overview of the elements of qualitative research, some of which are contrasted to the goals and methods of quantitative research, while others relate to the Doctor of Ministry research process. My qualitative research draws heavily on feminist action research methodology,[4] which, by its very nature, is

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[2] This measuring stick for assessment is presented as one of the core assumptions (#5) which ground this research. See Chapter One in the section "The story of the Centre for Ministry Formation at Saint Paul University." The behaviours and attitudes of an interdependent disciple have become the measuring stick for assessing healthy relationships and pastoral practice. These behaviours are explained in greater detail in Chapter Five.

[3] This hypothesis is based on the assumption that each of the candidates is truly committed to the values and significant changes in the Centre's ecclesial vision. I return to this assumption in the concluding chapter to this dissertation.

[4] The blending of knowledge and action has its roots in the first generation of Chicago sociology

contextual, reflexive, open, and oriented to change. This methodology is consonant with the evolutionary-feminist and theological frameworks forming the basis for this dissertation. Second, I describe the recruitment and final configuration of the sample of participants as well as, third, I describe the overall purpose and various phases of the research design. Fourth, I explain the steps I have taken to collect and record the data. Fifth, I summarize the steps I have taken to have this research design approved by the McMaster Research Ethics Board, as well as the measures I have taken to ensure that the research process honoured confidentiality and privacy. And finally, sixth, I explain the procedures I have taken for analyzing the data I have collected.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research finds its home within the human need for story, which has been and continues to be pivotal to the human search for meaning in our lives. As noted in Chapter Two, every story has the potential to expand our ways of knowing to a more holistic view of discovering the truth. Feminist research asserts that story, as it is shared from a subjective position, provides a sound epistemological base when it is treated critically, using a process of reflection and re-thinking, including attention to politically-situated perspectives, power, and language.[5] This understanding of story and theorizing is consistent with the general goals of qualitative research, which aims to develop explanations of social phenomena.

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and in the work of female sociologists at the turn of the century, for which the acquisition of knowledge was not an adequate end in itself. I concur with the view of contemporary feminist action research that "research must be tied to specific implementation practices." Shalumit Reinharz, *Feminist Methods in Social Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 178.

[5] Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self,* 6.

In contrast to the emphasis on neutrality and objectivity most often associated

with quantitative research, qualitative research design begins with story and asks

questions relative to "why, how and in what way?"[6] Attentive to complex phenomena

and processes, qualitative research is concerned with opinions, experience, and people's

feelings; its main interests are *why* people behave the way they do and *how* people are

formed and affected by the events that go on around them. Data is gained through a

holistic perspective of the person in his or her particular context, and is usually collected

through direct encounter with individuals and groups through interviews and/or

observation.[7]

Both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies have been traditionally

identified with their own respective modes of reasoning. Whereas quantitative research

is mainly associated with the hypothetico-deductive model of reasoning and the

verification of theory through observation and data analysis, qualitative research is

usually allied with the inductive model of reasoning and focuses on the generation of

theory through observation, analysis, and synthesis. The inductive approach to theory

generation is commonly known as "grounded theory," a theory which continues to be

foundational to qualitative research today.[8] While the deductive logic of inference has

been faulted for forcing empirical data into predetermined categories of theory, the

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6 This is contrasted to quantitative research which begins with the theory or hypothesis, and asks questions relative to "how much, how many, how often and to what extent?"

7 Beverly Hancock, Trent Focus for Research and Development of Primary Care: An Introduction to Qualitative Research. Produced by Trent Focus Group, 1998 (updated 2002). http://www.trentfocus.org.uk/Resources/Qualitative%20Research.pdf accessed August 4, 2004.)

8 Mats Alvesson and Kaj Skoldberg, *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research* (Sage Publications, 2000), 15–17. Grounded theory is most closely associated with the work of Glaser and Strauss. See B.G. Glaser and A.L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine, 1967).

inductive approach to grounded theory has been faulted for either not being overt about its pre-existing interpretative epistemologies, or for naively reinventing the wheel in "discovering" and giving new names to theories which already exist.[9]

Consistent with the theoretical framework of this dissertation, I have chosen to use abduction as an alternative to deduction and induction as modes of reasoning. Abduction means "the ability to see patterns, to reveal deep structures." [10] The abductive mode of reasoning builds on the best elements of deductive and inductive inference, since it holds together theory verification, theory generation, and theory modification. Qualitative research based on abductive inference makes explicit its strategies in dealing with unforeseen empirical phenomena and anomalous data that could lead to a modification and revision of central concepts, or to the discovery of "new combinations of old ideas."[11] In an abductive research process, the researcher's theoretical knowledge and preconceptions serve as heuristic tools for the elaboration, modification, or a combination of pre-existing concepts. In other words, the researcher who uses the abductive mode of reasoning assumes the stance of an interpreter, extracting meaning from a given set of circumstances and adjusting the inquiry as new information unfolds.[12] Rather than being covert about pre-existing theories or posing as an ultimate

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[9] Alvesson and Skoldberg, *Reflexive Methodology*, 19.

[10] N.R. Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery: An Inquiry into the Conceptual Foundations of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958) as referred to in Alvesson and Skoldberg, 17. Hanson uses the less common term "retroduction" instead of "abduction." Alvesson and Skoldberg, 17.

[11] Udo Kelle, "Theories as Heuristic Tools in Qualitative Research" in I. Maso, ed. P.A. Atkinson, S. Delamont & J.C. Verhoeven, editors, *Openness in Research: The Tension Between Self and Others* (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1995), 42.

[12] Martin Ryder, Qualitative Research with Corollary Links to Semiotics. University of Denver in Colorado, School of Education. Downloaded on August 4, 2004 from

authority,[13] the researcher/interpreter invites the readers into a dialogue about a number

of alternatives in order to advance inquiry and shed further light on the problem or

phenomenon being studied. Abduction is, in itself, concerned with changes in our

complex systems of presuppositions and ways of knowing.[14] Systems of knowledge

must pass through the threat of chaos, as they organize in a way that is internally

coherent and fit the external requirements of the environment. Change in our ways of

knowing is future-oriented in that it leads to change in the frames of reference by which

action is interpreted and codified.

In a Doctor of Ministry program, it is assumed that the researchers are persons of

faith who are pro-active in critically utilizing research tools that are appropriate to their

particular contexts of ministry.[15] Qualitative research, which draws heavily from

feminist action research, is, first and foremost, contextual and an overt awareness and

articulation of that context renders the research reflexive. Reflexive qualitative research

recognizes that all research is driven by interpreters. Therefore, an attentiveness to the

question of congruence (or goodness-of-fit) between the research question and the

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http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~mryder/semiotics_97.html

[13] While this charge against inductive research may seem unreasonable, it is presented as an extreme in an effort to place abductive research as a way of holding together deductive and inductive research.

[14] S. Miles Lewis, editor "Abduction" an excerpt from Gregory Bateson, Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unit (New York: Dutton, 1979), E.L.F. Infested Spaces: Journal of Possible Paradigms Issues 3, Summer 1995. http://www.elfis.net/elfol3/abdgb.html. Accessed August 4, 2004.

[15] William R. Myers, Research in Ministry: A Primer for the Doctor of Ministry Program (Chicago: Exploration Press, 1993), x–xi.

research methodology in the choice of a Doctor of Ministry research design,[16] is

expanded to include the question of context as it embodies particular sets of values and

assumptions. The researcher and the participants are all interpreters of particular theories

that carry their own set of values, assumptions, and pre-understandings of the object of

study,[17] all of which influence the choices for methodology, selection of data,

interpretation, and reporting of findings. Those values and assumptions emerge from the

location from which we speak and engage in this research process. Each participant in

the research process is also an interpreter, as all carry their own values and assumptions

as they each speak from their own location.

As detailed in Chapter One, I speak as a Roman Catholic lay woman, in a

significant leadership role in a Roman Catholic university, responsible for the formation

of candidates for lay and ordained ministry, mainly in the Roman Catholic tradition. My

assumptions and pre-understandings are shaped and articulated from my location. Those

assumptions and pre-understandings pertain to the relevance and the potential usefulness

of the ITC language technology to enable candidates for ministry to be agents of change

in their respective milieus.

Reflexive research methodology calls for an "awareness of the political-

ideological character of research."[18] As social research, Doctor of Ministry research

observes and analyzes social phenomena embedded in a political and ethical context.

What is explored and how it is explored either supports or challenges existing social

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[16] Myers, *Research in Ministry*, xii.

[17] Alvesson and Skoldberg, *Reflexive Methodology*, 8.

[18] Alvesson and Skoldberg, *Reflexive Methodology*, 8.

conditions. Such is the case for my research design and process. The object and method of my exploration are designed to show the relationship between language and change, particularly as it serves to integrate the Centre's vision of moving toward a more inclusive church. As presented in the preceding chapters, the interpretations and theoretical assumptions on which this research design is based are not neutral. Rather, they are both part of and help to construct the political and ideological conditions favouring moving toward a more inclusive church.

Feminism is a perspective, not a particular research method; it is a critique of patriarchy and a patriarchal world view. Feminists use a multiplicity of research methods, all provided by the disciplines in which the research finds its home. The feminist perspective to those methods gives priority to the feminist critical principle of the affirmation and promotion of the full humanity of women. While this critical principle focuses on the needs of women, it recognizes that those needs cannot be met without changes in the lives of both men and women.

Many forms of feminist research intentionally seek out complexity and diversity, opening themselves to blurring boundaries among academic disciplines. Such is the case of this research process, which is, in itself, multidisciplinary, bringing together theories and concepts from the natural and social sciences. In some forms of feminist research, boundaries are blurred between researcher and participants. My research design is consistent with a developing consciousness of the movement from subject–object relations to a new intersubjectivity,[19] honouring the deep interconnectedness of all creation and the evolutionary movement toward intersubjectivity. Such is the case in my

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[19] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 13.

research process in which I intentionally blurred the distinctions between formal and personal relations, as I intentionally invited persons with whom I knew I could relate. It was my intention to "learn from" not "learn about" the participants as they engaged in the research process.[20] This is elaborated on, below, in the section on sample and design of research. I engage in this research process within a specific context in which my experience cannot be truthfully dissociated from the object of my research. Also, as noted above, this deep connection calls for self-reflexivity as to the nature and impact of the relation between my experience and this research.

My research design is primarily situated in the category of feminist action research. Feminist action research and the abductive mode of reasoning are consistent with my focus on the relationship between language and change as well as the theoretical framework in which this inquiry unfolds. As one of many forms of feminist research, feminist action research is feminist change-oriented research in which knowledge and theory are inherently linked to action—action that explicitly repudiates the status quo and is oriented to a continuous process of "social and individual change."[21]

My research is based on feminist action research projects that, by their very nature, "attempt directly to change people's behaviour while gathering data in traditional or innovative ways, [usually as] they intervene and study in a continuous series of

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[20] Reinharz, *Feminist Methods*, 264.

[21] Reinharz, *Feminist Methods*, 175, referring to Patti Lather, "Feminist Methods in Empowering Research Methodologies" in *Women's Studies International Forum* 11 (1988), 568-581.

feedback loops."[22] As explained below, in the section dealing with the approval process.

of the McMaster Research Ethics Board, this attempt to include feedback loops was

integrated into my original research proposal. In that research design, the current

candidates for ministry at the Centre were to be directly involved in the research process,

which had a series of opportunities for feedback. The final design, approved by the

McMaster Research Ethics Board, provided opportunities for participants, who

themselves are educators and pastoral leaders, to change their self-awareness and

behaviours.

Feminist action research is, in itself, an opportunity for transformational learning

for both researcher and participant. In transformational learning, "our 'limited vision' is

freed by loosening theoretical frameworks and methods," thereby allowing those

frameworks to be transformed and expanded to repudiate patriarchal systems and

become open-ended.[23] Consistent with my research goals, the overall objective of

feminist action research is "not the product but the *process*, not a new identity or

institutional arrangements but the *movement* beyond a given identity or institution."[24]

Furthermore, research that embodies consciousness-raising in its process is research that

empowers oppressed people.[25] The overall objective of the research process is to assess

the ITC language technology as a tool for integrating the Centre for Ministry

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[22] Reinharz, *Feminist Methods*, 181.

[23] Reinharz, *Feminist Methods*, 178.

[24] Reinharz, *Feminist Methods*, 178, quoted Roslyn Wallach Bologh, "Gender, Repression and Liberation: An Alternative Feminist Theory, Method and Politics," paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Washington, D.C., 1985. *Italics added for emphasis.*

[25] Reinharz, *Feminist Methods*, 179 referring to Ann Bristow and Jody Esper, "A Feminist Research Ethic" in Nebraska Sociological Feminist Collective (eds.), *A Feminist Ethic for Social Science Research* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Melen Press, 1988), 80–81.

Formation's vision into its ministry formation process. In order to determine its usefulness, each participant engages in the consciousness-raising exercise, which leads them to a greater awareness of the assumptions and fears that keep them from fully realizing their commitment to a more inclusive church. The diagnostic phase, as it was presented in this research design, is presented below.

Sample

Qualitative sampling is concerned with seeking information from a specific group or subgroup, and that information or data is used to either develop or modify existing theories and concepts to understand the particulars of the social world being examined. It was my original goal to have eight participants, all of whom would have some experience and understanding of the vision and mission of the Centre for Ministry Formation.

I first extended—through either email or telephone conversation—fifteen invitations[26] to a population representative of the diversity of the various partners[27] of the Centre and our Centre members. Amongst those fifteen persons to whom I extended invitations, there were seven men and nine women. Of the seven men, five are ordained ministers in the Roman Catholic Church, one is an active Anglican lay person, and one is a Roman Catholic lay theologian. Of the nine women, one is an Anglican spiritual director and pastoral caregiver, one is a Roman Catholic lay theologian, five are Roman Catholic lay ministers engaged in adult education, one is a Roman Catholic pastoral

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[26] See Appendix III for a sample of the invitation that was extended.

[27] For a description of the partners, see Mission Statement, Appendix I-1. The sample population of that partnership is reduced

counsellor and educator, and one is a Roman Catholic religious in leadership for her community.

Nine persons, three men and six women, initially accepted my invitation. Seven of these nine, two men and five women, presented themselves to participate in the first phase of the research design. Of these two men, one is a Roman Catholic priest and the other is an active Anglican lay person. Of the five women, one is a Roman Catholic theologian; one a Roman Catholic pastoral counsellor and educator, one an Anglican lay spiritual director and pastoral caregiver, and two are Roman Catholic lay adult educators. Although limited in size, that sample is representative of the diversity of ministers and partners of the Centre. The two persons, who did not present themselves at the first phase, expressed an interest in participating in the research in other ways; unfortunately, it was impossible to include them in the second or third phase because of the research design.

Five of the seven from the first phase presented themselves to the second phase—the focus group interview. Six of the original seven participants submitted the final written questionnaire, which is the final phase of the research design. That design is explained in the section below.

Design

Before explaining the various phases of my research design, I first situate my research in the context of my overall Doctor of Ministry Program, my particular area of ministry and qualitative research.[28] As with my choice of theoretical framework for this

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[28] See Appendix IV for the context presented as background to diagnostic phase.

dissertation in general, my focus on language and change has influenced my research design. Language, as in the spoken word, carries within it the power to shape, construct, deconstruct, transform, and enable one to discover one's own identity as well as that of the other, and one's sense of the world and church. This is the premise of developmental psychology and sociology, as well as of theology, particularly with the latter's emphasis on the power of the Word (as both *parole* and *parler*) *to* change hearts of stone to hearts of flesh. This is also the premise of Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey,[29] whose novel language is the object of my research.

Change is intrinsic to all life forms, including humans, individually and collectively. An integral ministry formation process must include opportunities for candidates to engage in challenging experiences that call for the changing of old habits. The mission of my specific context of ministry, the Centre for Ministry Formation (Saint Paul University, Ottawa), is to prepare ministers—both lay and ordained—for a church in transition toward becoming a more inclusive church, committed to a greater respect for diversity and inclusivity. This transition calls for freely and intentionally changing behaviours and attitudes that perpetuate clericalism, sexism, and classicism. All Centre members begin the Centre's ministry formation process with a commitment to the vision of church, which is in transition to becoming a more inclusive church. Yet, as Kegan and Lahey tell us, even the best-intentioned people will keep themselves from doing what they are genuinely committed to. In their many years of research and practice as development educators, they have discovered that most persons have built-in immune systems—systems of countervailing motions—that maintains the status quo. Their ITC

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[29] Kegan and Lahey, *How The Way We Talk.*

language technology is based on Kegan's constructive-development theory, and in particular, object-relation theory, in which persons move from a stance of subject-to-object with relation to what really keeps them from making the changes they say they intend to make.

The research design was comprised of three main phases, the first of which was a three-hour presentation on the diagnostic phase[30] of the ITC language technology. The second phase of the research design was a focus group interview session in which all participants were invited to review their experience of the diagnostic phase, share any experiences they might have had in a follow-up phase (should they have chosen to do some follow-up work), and engage in open-ended discussion with respect to their own developing self-awareness through this exercise, as well as their opinions as to the effectiveness of this language form as a tool for integrating the Centre's vision into the ministry formation process. The third and final phase was a written questionnaire, which they were asked to return by January 7th, 2005. Details of each of these phases are provided below, as well as in their respective appendices, also indicated below.

In the diagnostic phase, participants were welcomed and given the background to my research interests and design in the context of the Centre for Ministry Formation. It was clearly stated that this research was being conducted as a study for my Doctor of Ministry program at McMaster Divinity College.[31] I then invited participants to engage in the four-column, pen-and-paper exercise designed to help them become aware of what

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[30] This diagnostic phase is explained in the preceding chapter on the ITC language technology, as well as on pages 17 to 20 in Appendix III.

[31] See Appendix IV for my notes for the presentation of the context for my research design as a preamble to presenting the diagnostic phase.

keeps them from making the changes to which they are truly committed. In my

presentation, I followed the process that I had learned in an intensive Train-the-Trainer

Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with both Kegan and Lahey, in April 2003. Also,

as a licensed user of their training manual, it was the basis for my presentation of the

diagnostic phase. The pen-and-paper exercise was designed to provide a process that

includes some input, personal reflection, and sharing in diads as well as large group

sharing. In keeping with the suggested process, I invited volunteers to work through

their four-column exercises using the one I put on an overhead projector. This was done

so that all participants would have an opportunity to see, very concretely, how the

language form is intentional in moving us toward a greater self-awareness. This also

provides opportunities for anyone in the group to ask questions and make adjustments to

their own four columns. I assured the volunteers that they could stop their sharing in the

large group whenever they chose. The two participants who began to share in the larger

group continued until the end. Also, two more people asked if they could share in the

larger group, in an effort to clarify their four-column designs.

Each of the four columns denotes a particular language form designed to help us

make the changes to which we are truly committed. The first is used to name our

commitments and then become aware of how each of us is ingeniously designed to keep

us from making the changes needed to fully realizing our true commitments. As noted

on page 18 of Appendix III, and in keeping with the goals of this research design,[32]

participants began the four-column exercise with naming a value to which they were

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[32] The goals are: 1) to assess the impact of the four-column exercise on the self-awareness of the participant and 2) to assess the effectiveness of this language form as a tool for integrating the Centre's vision into its ministry formation process.

truly committed as part of the significant changes that are part of the Centre's vision, *but not fully realizing*. This first Language of Commitment is designed to create a forward movement, not only toward our attempts to make the change to which we are truly committed, but also toward our deeper commitments that keep us from fully realizing that commitment.

In the second language, designed to move us from the "Language of Blame" to the "Language of Responsibility," the participants were invited to look at what they are actually doing that keeps them from fully realizing their first-column commitments. The language of personal responsibility is designed to provide an opportunity to learn from the behaviours we identify and to learn from the story we tell of ourselves. It is in this language that we come in touch with the understanding that this language form is not about quick fixes or solving problems, but rather is about *looking at problems that solve us*.

The third language form is designed to move us from a "Language of New Year's Resolutions" to a "Language of Competing Commitments." From an educational and psychological point of view, the problem is not with the competing commitment—a normal, human motive. *The problem* is that we are *not aware* of the competing commitment. Any possibility of deep structural change calls for self-awareness. By making our competing commitments into objects of our awareness, we begin to recognize the inner contradictions as a valuable source of challenge and growth. The first three columns provide the opportunity to construct a map, or mental machine, to portray our immune system that prevents change.

The fourth language, in which we move from the "Language of Big Assumptions that Hold Us" to the "Language of Assumptions We Hold," is another intentional language form which enables us to transform the "Language of Competing Commitments" into what Kegan and Lahey refer to as our "Big Assumptions." The big assumption is closely related to the concept of ultimacy, which is normally the most adequate way we have of constructing our worlds. In this fourth language, we are invited into a relationship with those big assumptions in a manner that allows us to look at, and begin to question, the way we shape reality.

The presentation ended with a suggested process for follow-up to this initial phase, presenting it as a tool for integrating the vision of the Centre into its ministry formation process. This suggestion for follow-up is found in Appendix V. Although the full process was not explained to the participants, they were given a brief outline of what a follow-up might be if this ITC language technology was integrated in the Centre's ongoing ministry formation process. All participants were given a copy of the questions that would be asked during the next phase of the research design.[33] Also, all participants received a copy of an article written by Kegan and Lahey[34] as background information to help them assess the usefulness of the ITC language technology for the Centre's ministry process. As well, I emailed the participants a few days following the first phase, to give them written information to help them through the follow-up phase.[35]

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[33] See Appendix III-22. This same questionnaire was used as the basis for the agenda at the focus group interview session.

[34] Kegan and Lahey, "The Real Reason" in *Harvard Business Review*, 85–93.

[35] See Appendix V.

The second phase was a one and one-half hour focus group interview session,[36] in which participants reflected on the impact that this exercise had on their own levels of awareness of what keeps them from making the changes to which they are truly committed. This session included opportunities for participants to share their opinions on the ITC language's usefulness for the Centre's ministry formation process, and to suggest ways to implement this exercise for the Centre in the future. All participants were given a copy of the final questionnaire.

For the third and final phase, all participants were asked to complete a written questionnaire. The content of this questionnaire did not differ greatly from the questions asked during the focus group interview. It was designed to give participants the opportunity to share their experiences and opinions, in writing, and to gather the insights shared during the focus group interview. The full research design called for a maximum of eight hours of participation, including the time for the initial invitation and information-sharing with participants, used in determining interest and availability.

The purpose of this research design is to assess the usefulness of the ITC language technology as a tool for integrating the Centre for Ministry Formation's vision into its ministry formation process. That usefulness is determined by the following outcomes: (1) self-reporting by participants as to impact of the ITC language technology on participants' awareness of what keeps them from fully realizing their own commitments; and (2) participants' opinion of the usefulness of the ITC language technology as a tool for integrating the Centre's vision into its ministry formation process. These opinions could also include some suggestions for modification to the

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[36] See Appendix III-22 for agenda for session.

design of the various activities for engaging in ITC language technology process. These outcomes were determined through self-reporting and conversations in the individual interviews and focus group sessions, as well as through researcher observation.

Collecting and Recording the Data

The data received from this research design was collected and recorded in a variety of ways. I kept an activity log of both the first and second phases. I recorded my observations during the presentation of the diagnostic phase as well as the focus group interview session. The data in this log included details as to actual participant attendance in the three phases of the research design, as well as any unplanned occurrences and their relevancy to the process. The activity log for the first phase included my observations of how the overall presentation was received by the participants, as well as questions that emerged for me during the presentation. The data recorded for the second phase also included the patterns and themes I noticed emerging in the dialogue amongst the participants and myself.

The outcomes on which the usefulness of the ITC language technology is based have been determined through self-reporting by the participants in the conversations of the focus group interview session as well as in the written questionnaire. The data from the conversations and pen-and-paper exercise of the first phase was collected through note-taking. The data collected from the conversations in the focus group interview session was collected through note-taking and tape-recording. Two days following the

focus group interview, I transcribed the tape on paper, verbatim. The final and written questionnaires were sent to me by email.[37]

Approval Process with McMaster Research Ethics Board

The approval process with the McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB) was an arduous learning experience for me. My original design, which was to invite participants who are currently engaged in ministry formation with the Centre for Ministry Formation, raised a myriad of concerns with respect to the power differential between myself, as director of the Centre, and the prospective participants. MREB did not approve the first design because we could not come to a solution that eliminated the concern about *voluntariness* and yet still allowed me to meet my research purpose.[38] Much to my dismay at that time, I did not receive MREB's approval to pilot the ITC language technology directly with our candidates for ministry. Added to my original distress, was the loss of an opportunity to implement a follow-up process with peers in which the participants would intentionally support one another in their own relationship with change.

My second research design included active partners of the Centre, some of whom were my colleagues at Saint Paul University. This, and my original design, were categorized as multi-centre studies and, therefore, invoked the criteria under the Tri-Council Policy Statement, which called for the approval of the ethics boards of both McMaster University and Saint Paul University. The time required for the approval

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[37] See Appendix III-22, 23 and 24 for questionnaires and a fuller explanation of the activity log.

[38] Daphne Mauer, Ph.D., Chair, McMaster Research Ethics Board and Professor of Psychology. Email to Lorraine Ste-Marie, dated September 22, 2004, 8:45 p.m., Subject Ethics protocol 2004–115.

processes of both boards was an important consideration in my decision to propose a third research design.

The MREB approved my third research design, which clearly stated that I was doing this research in the context of my graduate work at McMaster, that the participants would have no connection with Saint Paul University as students or faculty, and that the research was to be conducted "off-site."[39] Although I originally perceived this modified research design as a desperate compromise to attain my research goals, I have come to appreciate the prudence and discernment necessary in research on human subjects.

The research protocol has acknowledged the potential for minimal psychological and sociological risk. The ITC language technology is a tool for transformational learning, which can be an emotional experience for some people. For example, the participants' current frames of reference are the product of previous formation, culturally and contextually conditioned. Those frames of reference can potentially be transformed with this language technology. Furthermore, epistemological changes can affect the participants in a multitude of ways, including their way of fitting into their previous communities of formation. In order to minimize that risk, participants were free to share according to their own comfort level, in all aspects of the research process, without any consequences.

The research process has honoured voluntary participation, confidentiality, and privacy in the following ways. All participants were invited to participate on a free and voluntary basis and were told that they were free to withdraw at any time. Although confidentiality was stressed throughout the research process, as with any group format,

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[39] Laurel Evans, email to Lorraine Ste-Marie, dated October 7, 2004, 9:14 a.m. Subject: Ethics Review at St. Paul's.

there is always the risk of breach of confidentiality. Information obtained from the participants was kept confidential to the full extent of the law and I treated all information provided to me as subject to researcher-participant privilege. Written records were secured in a locked cabinet in my office at Saint Paul University and in my home office. No persons have been referred to by name and every effort was made to safeguard anonymity in the publishing of this final research. Once the final research is published, the gathered data will be shredded and the audio tape will be erased.

This research process also had some potential benefits for the participants. Participating in the various phases of the design could begin to free participants from what keeps them from making the changes and realizing the goals to which they are truly committed. Depending on the findings, the participants could also have the satisfaction of potentially enhancing the quality of the Centre's current ministry formation through the inclusion of this tool in the future.

Data Analysis

As noted above, I have constructed a qualitative research design that is feminist, change-oriented, and uses abduction as its mode of reasoning. Qualitative research calls for attentiveness to complex phenomena and processes, and is concerned with experience, opinions, and feelings of people. Furthermore, feminist research affirms story as the starting point for discovering truth in the process of reflection and re-thinking. In that process, attention is given to politically-situated perspectives, power, and language.[40] In an abductive research process, the researcher's theoretical knowledge and preconceptions serve as heuristic tools for the elaboration or modification of pre-existing

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[40] Griffiths, *Feminism and the Self,* 6.

concepts, holding together theory verification, theory generation, and theory modification.

These are the concrete steps I have taken in my data analysis. I first simply read all the written responses to the final questionnaires, one after the other, in order to get a sense of the overall experience and opinion of the research process. I then re-read each of them a second time with four highlighters in my hand, so that I could begin to distill theory verification, theory modification, and theory generation from the data. Here are the main questions that guided my initial analysis.

1. What confirms for me that the ITC language technology has been a helpful tool for participants to become aware of what keeps them from change? I used the green highlighter to mark the data that either confirmed or did not confirm the participants' greater awareness of what keeps them from making the changes to which they are truly committed

2. What is the opinion of participants with respect to the usefulness of this tool for CFM? I used the orange highlighter to mark the information that either confirmed or did not confirm the ITC language technology as an effective tool for integrating the vision of the Centre into the ministry formation process.

3. What would participants suggest as changes to ITC language technology as they experienced it? I used a pink highlighter to mark any suggestions, which each of the participants made to modify the diagnostic phase of ITC language technology as they experienced it, and the follow-up phase as they experienced it in varying degrees and as they imagined its possibilities, which could lead to theory modification.

4. What surprises have I encountered as I sift through these notes and what does this mean with respect to the current theory? I used the yellow highlighter to indicate what I, at first glance, perceived as new ideas that could lead to generating new theory or concepts, particularly with respect to the relationship between language and change in light of my goal of integrating the Centre's vision into the ministry formation process. As I highlighted the data, I also made notes directly on the written responses, circling and underlining words which either confirmed some of my own understanding of the relationship between the ITC language technology and change, or caught me by surprise, in that I had not actually thought about some of what was being reported. I then began to transcribe the data from the written questionnaires, fitting it into the four categories of: Theory Verification (Self-Reporting as to Greater Awareness of Resistances to Change), Theory Verification (Opinion as to Usefulness of the ITC Language Technology in the Centre), Theory Modification, and Theory Generation.

As I began to enter the individual responses into those four categories, I was aware of the recurring patterns or themes in the responses. I, therefore, copied many of the entries I made under the four categories in order to classify them as recurring themes. I then went back to the transcribed notes I had taken in the second phase of the research design—the focus group interview session. As I re-read those notes, I used the same method of highlighting the first four categories for Theory Verification (Self-Reporting as to Greater Awareness of Resistances to Change), Theory Verification (Opinion as to Usefulness of the ITC Language Technology in the Centre), Theory Modification, and Theory Generation. As with the written responses, I also grouped the data according to recurring themes and patterns. I repeated the same process as I read

and re-read the data I had collected in my activity log from both the first and second phase of the research design.

As I read through the data, as I recorded and analyzed it, I kept in mind that my way of interpreting the data and the participants' ways of interpreting the data are not necessarily congruent. In other words, the context and social location from which we speak, hear, and interpret information are laden with our own values and assumptions, all of which are different. As a researcher choosing to use the abductive mode of reasoning, I was aware that my own pre-existing theoretical and conceptual knowledge must serve simply as a heuristic method for the verification, elaboration, modification, or combination of pre-existing concepts, and not as the ultimate container in which to fit the data. In other words, I needed to keep checking myself that *what I already knew* did not keep me from seeing *what I did not know*. As I discerned how I would receive and arrange the data, I was attentive to being open to whatever the participants generously shared as well as to any unplanned occurrences. In making the intentional effort to resist the tendency to simply confirm my own theories, hunches, and insights, I was indeed surprised, confirmed, and challenged by what some of the participants had to offer. For instance, as the emerging themes became a little clearer, I was surprised to discover that they actually evoked the same five concepts that form the feminist-evolutionary framework for this paper. I asked myself if I was simply trying to fit them into a neat compartment. I stayed with this question for a few days, rearranged some of the data, journalled my reflections, and even did some drawing with colours around these themes. Yet, they kept coming to me as the more appropriate form of analysis.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented my research methodology for the qualitative research design in which participants engaged in the ITC language technology in a group setting. The goal of the research process was to assess 1) the impact of the "four-column exercise" on the self-awareness of the participants and, 2) the effectiveness of the ITC language technology as a tool for integrating the Centre's ecclesial vision into its ministry formation process. I began by situating my qualitative research in feminist action research methodology which is in harmony with the core concepts of story, consciousness and praxis in the evolutionary-feminist framework of this dissertation. I also provided details of the sample of participants, the purpose and various phases of the research design, as well as the steps taken to collect and record the data. The approval process of the McMaster Research Ethics Board was designed to ensure that freedom, confidentiality, and privacy of all the participants have been honoured. The data was analyzed using an abductive mode of reasoning for categorizing the findings according to theory verification, modification and generation, as well as for determining recurring themes and patterns. I present the findings in the next chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FINDINGS

In this chapter I present the findings of my qualitative research design. In the previous chapter I explained the research design that consisted of three main phases, namely, the diagnostic phase of the immunity-to-change (ITC) language technology, a focus group interview session, and the final written questionnaire. In each of those phases, I collected data in a number of ways. I kept an activity log, in which I recorded my observations during the presentation of the diagnostic phase, as well as the focus group interview session as an actual participant in the three phases of the research design. The activity log, for the first phase, included my observations of how the overall presentation was received by the participants, as well as questions that emerged for me during the presentation. In the second phase, I collected data by first recording the focus group interview session. I then transcribed that recording in a verbatim report. The data recorded in the activity log for the second phase included the patterns and themes that I noticed emerging in the dialogue amongst the participants and myself. In the third phase, I collected the written responses from the final questionnaire that each participant[1] was asked to complete.

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[1] I use the term "respondents" interchangeably with "participants" when referring to the feedback on the written questionnaire. I use only the term participants when referring to these same persons in the first and second phase of the research process design, as well as the diagnostic phase and the focus group interview session.

In this chapter, I present the findings from the data analysis that I conducted which included the reading and re-reading of all of the data I had gathered. The categories initially guiding this analysis consisted of Theory Verification, Theory Modification, and Theory Generation. In presenting my findings, I have chosen to divide the category of Theory Verification into two parts; one was participants' self-reporting as to whether or not they came to a greater self-awareness of their resistance to change, and the other for participants' opinions as to the effectiveness of the ITC language technology as a tool for integrating the vision of church into the Centre's ministry formation process. These findings are based on feedback from the participants, in which they have expressed their views of the theory as they have experienced it in the research design process itself.[2]

In my subsequent readings of the collected data, I searched for themes and patterns emerging throughout the research design process. In choosing the recurring themes and patterns, I was attentive to the potential for either constructing the themes according to my own preconceived categories or not seeing some themes because of the possible limited horizon from which I conducted this research. In an effort to be faithful to the data, I am attentive to the language used to report the findings, mindful that I do not try to fit the participants' feedback and experience into my predetermined concepts. Yet, as noted in the section on data analysis in the previous chapter, as I reflected over

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[2] In other words, the theory which the participant feedback is verifying, modifying or generating, is the researchers' presentation of the ITC language technolgy, as well as the background theory which was presented in the diagnostic phase and the article with which they left after the first session; i.e. transformational learning and our human dynamic immune system which keeps us from change. And of course, the theory on which the participants gave feedback, is also the participants' understanding and interpretation of the theory as it was presented by the researcher. In other words, this analysis, does not presume to verify, modify or generate theory for the ITC language technology as its authors, Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, have conceived it.

and over again on the emerging patterns, the five major concepts in the evolutionary-feminist framework of this dissertation kept surfacing as the most appropriate way to present the findings as recurring themes or patterns. After much reflection, re-reading, and re-thinking of the data as it presented itself, the five concepts of energy, consciousness, story, praxis, and system kept coming to the fore as the organizing principles for these themes or patterns. Those five themes are explained below.

For the purpose of ensuring participant confidentiality—given the small number of participants—I will use the pronoun he/she (him/her, his/her, him-/herself) when referring to any of the participants. I apologize to my readers for how this makes the reading of these findings cumbersome. Also, this does constrain the possibility of any gender analysis of the data; it does not compromise the nature of this research, as feminist action research, in that the ultimate goal of moving toward a more inclusive church upholds the feminist critical principle of the affirmation and promotion of the full humanity of women. Of course, this feminist principle is also inclusive of all humankind. The focus of similar research that is gender-based awaits another opportunity.

Theory Verification: Self-Reporting as to Greater Self-Awareness of Resistances to Change

Of the six who submitted final written questionnaires, five reported a greater self-awareness of what keeps them from fully realizing their commitment to one of the values associated with the significant changes in moving toward a more inclusive church. While one participant reported that the process helped focus his/her thinking on

certain issues and it was his/her intention to continue to work through these four languages by him-/herself and with another person after the research design was brought to closure. Although one participant indicated that the learning and greater self-awareness gleaned from this exercise was no surprise to him/her, another reported a profound surprise in what he/she discovered as he/she moved through all four languages. These same two participants acknowledged and marvelled at the complexity of the human person and experienced this language form as a means to go deeper into the unconscious substructures of our relationships to competing commitments and change. One participant noted how he/she discovered the human tendency to keep certain things hidden from our own "intelligence" (his/her words).

All participants generally reported that their engagement with the ITC language technology has given them opportunities for sharing and listening to others and themselves, leading to new insights into what they are actually doing and why. Each of the five self-reports, which indicated that the participants had experienced a move toward greater self-awareness, named their growth in areas in a holistic way that fit the four dimensions of an integral ministry formation process—spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, and human dimensions, as well as the social. One participant explicitly referred to this experience as "educational." This feedback is congruent with the educational idea found in the ITC language technology: "Some problems can teach us a great deal. If we can bear to stay in relation to some problems and not solve them too quickly, then 'we can use them to solve us.'"[3]

Participants referred to their new awarenesses of their natural built-in immune

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[3] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 76.

system to change as "tunnel vision" and "sabotage that keeps me from being the person I was created to be." One participant referred to his/her experience of the language form as an opportunity to hear and understand the concept of "our own powerful inclination not to change"—a concept for him/her that had "never been part of the equation" in his/her experience of other change-oriented processes.

The participants attributed reasons for their move toward a greater self-awareness in the following ways: The process itself was designed in a way that people entered deeper into each stage of the diagnostic phase, not knowing where it was actually leading them. The process was experienced as gentle and non-threatening, yet challenging. All six commented on the trust and confidence they experienced as foundational to this exercise. Two named that while they did not know everyone who had been invited, they did trust the researcher's judgment as to who she invited and how she would conduct this process. One participant commented on the positive approach in which the diagnostic phase was presented in that no blame was laid upon any individual nor institution, thus leading to, what seemed to him/her, the possibility for open discussion of even more controversial issues. All six respondents to the final questionnaire named their appreciation for the rhythm of the process, which included some input from the presenter, some personal reflection time, some "pair-share" time, as well as some discussion in the larger group.

While only two of the five participants in the focus group interview session delved a little into a follow-up process on their own following the diagnostic phase, all five did name that this phase of the research process was a good follow-up session for them. This session gave them the opportunity to revisit their four-column exercise, and

sharpen their experience and understanding of what each of the languages is designed to name, as well as to clarify the intentionality of the movement from the first language form through to the fourth. For one participant, this focus group interview was an opportunity to revisit his/her surprising discovery in a way that was less emotional and a little more objective. For another participant, this was an opportunity to develop an even greater insight into his/her pattern of behaviours, which confirmed that he/she was being held by the big assumption he/she named during the initial diagnostic phase. Two participants named that their experience of the ITC language technology helped them become less judgmental of others as to why they act the way they do, and to be more observant of behaviours in a group, especially when decisions are being made.

While much of the dialogue in the focus group interview session was captured in the final written responses, the open-ended questions in the focus interview group moved the group to look at the process as a movement toward courage and freedom. One participant suggested that in working with the ITC language technology, he/she was coming in touch with his/her courage to speak his/her truth as he/she tests his/her big assumption. For him/her this was the beginning of his/her journey into freedom. Another participant named that it is very difficult to engage in change without the support of a community. All agreed that change must start with us, and when we know that we ourselves can make that change, and then people around us begin to change also.

Theory Verification: Opinion as to Usefulness of the ITC Language Technology in the Centre

All six respondents to the final questionnaire indicated that the ITC language technology

could be an effective tool for integrating the Centre's vision into the ministry formation process, but not without some concerns that need to be taken into serious consideration. Although the types of suggested follow-ups were varied, for all the respondents, systematic and intentional follow-up to the initial diagnostic phase was necessary in order that ITC language technology be effective for integrating the Centre's vision. For one participant the first follow-up session should provide an opportunity to return to the pen-and-paper exercise in order to verify and clarify the process leading to a greater self-awareness. Three participants noted that the follow-up process should provide opportunities for support and challenge as the Centre members attempt to test their assumptions that keep them from fully realizing their commitments. Another participant suggested that the follow-up could be done in small groups as opposed to diads, giving the community an opportunity for an even deeper engagement in change according to the vision of the Centre.

All respondents raised the issue of a safe and trusting environment as a basic requirement for this language form to be an effective tool for the Centre. Two participants raised the question of diversity in the group as a potential challenge for openness and sharing in future sessions. Two participants addressed the need to accompany others with clarity and patience as they attempt to move through the "double negatives"[4] of the Fourth Language.

There were a variety of suggestions as to when and how this language form could and should be presented. There were concerns about time, in the sense of when the ITC language technology should be presented during the academic year and the time

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[4] The double negatives are designed to create an experience of cognitive dissonance. This is explained in Chapter Six under the heading of the Fourth Language.

necessary to live the process well. Suggestions were made to introduce it as one of the Centre's regular Saturday seminars or during one of the two retreat weekends. Two participants cautioned that this should *not* be presented during a busy time in the academic year, when papers are due and exams are on the horizon. It seemed that mid-year, perhaps around the time of the January retreat, was a good time, in that Centre members would have already developed a rapport with one another, and would be less rushed as they began a new semester. Three participants raised the issue of having enough *time* to engage in the ITC language technology as a potentially destabilizing experience, to let that experience work in them, and to continue to learn from that experience. This of course calls for a significant and intentional follow-up process.

Many of the suggestions addressed one or more areas of the Centre's life—the formation team, the community itself, and the candidates for ministry. One participant suggested that this language form could be a very useful exercise for the Centre to examine its own competing commitments as a community. For instance, he/she asks: "What is it doing that exalts the ordained over against the laity?" This same participant suggests that perhaps some team members might themselves be afraid of the new vision and might be "clinging to old patterns of behaviours, albeit unconsciously." He/she believes that this ITC language technology might help surface some lingering attitudes and fears.

The question of the formation team being well-versed in this language form was an issue for three of the six participants. For these participants, this tool could serve for building a cohesive and unified formation team around the Centre's vision. It was named that because the team bears responsibility for the vision and community-building, it

would be essential that the team be secure in accompanying the Centre members as they seek to integrate the Centre's values and become aware of their own competing commitments. It is suggested that the team give itself enough time to explain, discuss, implement, and evaluate the ITC language technology as it is introduced amongst team members and then into the community. These same issues meet the concern of another participant who emphasized the importance that the ITC language technology be presented and discussion facilitated by leaders who are known to be sincere and trustworthy. This would enhance the quality and depth of dialogue, creating more of an opportunity for greater self-awareness and growth.

Recognizing the Centre's attempts to contribute to moving toward a more responsible, more just, and more equal church—a more inclusive church—three participants noted that obstacles to that movement are often created by fears that are neither named nor even recognized. It was also reported that there was an understanding that change is not possible without experiencing some sort of disequilibrium, a disequilibrium that does not lose touch with its source. They recognize the responsibility of a ministry formation process to equip pastoral leaders with tools for surfacing and working with their own resistances to change so that they do not "unconsciously" block change as it occurs in their respective communities. One participant thought that the ITC language technology has the potential for being a way to form "good, strong, compassionate, and open leaders." Again, it was noted by three participants, that the ITC language technology is useful for becoming more aware of and accompanying others in their own struggles with change.

One participant noted the language form's capacity for deep structural change in

that it can reveal underlying issues that are "often not resolved through other plans for renewal and reform." Two participants noted the potential of this language form to be used in a variety of situations to surface issues of change in the community. It was noted by one participant that the method of presenting the significant changes in the Centre's vision (i.e. moving from ... to ...)[5] follows the same form as each of the four ITC languages.

Theory Modification

One participant suggested that this tool be used as a community-building exercise that could become even more socially interactive in moving from the pair-share, which is built into the initial ITC diagnostic phase, to include three or four participants, and eventually opening up interaction within the whole gathered group. This movement to include the whole group would allow new insights, connections, goals, and discoveries to emerge from the life of the group, as it becomes increasingly aware of its own assumptions that keep it from change in becoming the church we are called to be.

Another participant suggested that the three-hour diagnostic phase be expanded in order to allow for more reflection time. It was also suggested that this language form not only be *experienced* as a means for greater self-awareness for candidates for ministry, but that it also be *learned* for use as a tool for future pastoral leadership, so that it may be used in different situations as they occur. Because of the number of significant changes named in the Centre's Mission Statement, one participant suggested that the team and Centre members work through those changes systematically using the ITC

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[5] See Appendix I. Mission Statement

language technology for each of the changes.

Two participants noted that this language form could actually help people identify their own understandings and beliefs of church so that they may become more conscious of their competing commitments and more honest in claiming their own locations with respect to change. Another participant suggested that rather than begin with the participants naming the values that relate to the significant changes found in the Mission Statement, that they should begin by naming one significant change to which they are truly committed. For him/her, this would make the significant changes in the Centre's vision even more overt. A further suggestion in modifying the design of the process is to form a number of groups, each of which would look at one of the significant changes.

Two participants suggested that the process also be introduced to persons outside the immediate Centre membership or formation team so that the vision could be cultivated in a number of ecclesial settings. A question was raised as to how to hold together a diverse group by introducing the exercise in a way that peaks their interest, gives them the information and challenges them without burdening them with too many details or theory. I integrate this feedback into my findings as both affirmation and challenge in assessing the potential of this language form as a process for change. These findings heighten my awareness of the need to discern wisely as to how to use the ITC language technology for people to experience the actual movement to which the language form is directing them, and not try to rationalize it with its background theory. That can come after. In the case of this research process, I designed it in a way that gave background information so that they could give me their opinions of the potential of this

language for the Centre. In other words, as I hold together the two languages of *parole* and *parler*, I have a sense that I need to concentrate more on the *parler*, the form or the way I talk, rather than the content which is actually embedded in the *parler*.[6]

Theory Generation

Much to my delight and surprise, two participants named their participation in the research process design an experience of church, and in one case, it was as an ecumenical experience of church. To experience this process as an experience of church, there was a sense of common vision and purpose in the space and time we spent together. This was affirmed by another participant who named the ITC language technology as a tool for enabling unity of purpose, team ministry, and building up the Body of Christ. For another participant, the ITC language technology is a means to help people see the bigger picture of what today's church looks like, as well as how and where they might fit in. Because participants also reported that they themselves had experienced greater self-awareness in all four areas that fit the four dimensions of an integral ministry formation process (spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, and human dimensions, as well as the social), it seems that this language form could also serve as unifying force for holding together the various components of an integral formation process together.

Another participant, however, thought that this ITC language technology, as I used it to integrate the Centre's vision of a movement toward a more inclusive church,

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[6] This is an important piece of feedback for me, as I tend to err on the side of too much information in most of the presentations, rather than trust the experience or action as providing the information that others need. It is ironic that I am so taken by the importance of praxis as action-theory and yet my priority is most often given to theory. And like most persons who are challenged to change, I both resist and welcome this feedback.

could provoke a confrontation with the hierarchy of the Roman Church as "the

[hierarchy] seeks to maintain the *status quo*." For this participant, it was quite obvious

that the ITC language technology is intentionally designed to "disturb the very

foundation of our *status quo* and preserving equilibrium."[7]

Recurring Themes

As I organize the data according to emerging and recurring themes, I am attentive to not

forcing the data into my own predetermined language and concepts of consciousness,

energy, story, praxis, and system. Therefore, I have quoted certain phrases from the data,

as well as paraphrased others in an attempt to be faithful to the texts in my data analysis

and reporting of findings. While this assessment, of course, is not arbitrary, I have been

guided by the following question: "Does the general structural description provide an

accurate portrait of the common features and structural connections that are manifest in

the examples collected?"[8] In other words, do my categories adequately represent the

patterns and commonalities that are actually found in the data itself?

The data confirms the deep interconnectedness of all five concepts. Just as I

encountered much anguish in trying to extricate one concept from the others in order to

offer some clarity as to each of their uniqueness, so the data which I chose to present

under one theme is unquestionably connected to some of the other, if not all the other

themes. I begin each of the themes with a general description of how each concept is

understood as part of the theoretical framework to this dissertation and this overall

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[7] Kegan and Lahey, *How The Way We Talk*, 66.

[8] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design, Choosing Among Five Traditions* (London: Sage Publications, 1998), 208. Creswell credits this question to D.E. Polkinghorne.

research process. I then provide examples from the data that either verify or modify the concepts and theory, or even generate new ideas. Although some of the data has already been presented in the first part of the analysis, I repeat some of it, but not all.

Consciousness

The research findings have confirmed that ITC language technology is a language form designed for developing a greater capacity for greater self-awareness, which leads to more responsible action. According to participant self-reporting, their experience of the ITC language technology was an experience of a consciousness-raising group, which was referred to as an opportunity for both personal and social transformation. Their feedback revealed and confirmed our human tendency to keep certain things hidden from our own "intelligence." For the participants, the ITC language technology was a means to bring that which is hidden to the surface of our consciousness. In the focus group interview session, participants took the opportunity to share their own four-column exercises, highlighting *patterns* they had noticed in their own behaviours. For some this was not a surprise, and for others it was the first time they had become aware of these patterns in their behaviours. For three participants, this was a time of significant awareness, signalling for them a call to be attentive to how their big assumptions were driving the patterns of their behaviours and attitudes.

As noted in adaptive leadership theory, we must get on the balcony in order to notice the bigger picture and see the patterns of behaviours. One participant suggested that the ITC language technology could be a means of getting on the balcony, saying: "This process helps people to see the bigger picture of what today's church looks like

and how and where they might fit in." Another participant suggested that the ITC language technology could be a means for formation team members to get on the balcony in order to observe how they might be, as previously mentioned, "clinging to old patterns of behaviours, albeit unconsciously."

One participant notes that the ITC language technology "reveals underlying issues that are often not resolved through other plans for renewal or reform. When dealing with the basics and underlying substructures of a relationship or a combination of relationships, the system is more likely to succeed." Two participants noted that they had come to see that the fears and big assumptions, which they had named in the initial presentation of the diagnostic phase, were more in their imagination than in reality. Yet, according to their story, as it is told using the structure of the ITC language form, those same newly surfaced, imagined fears and big assumptions are actually driving their behaviours. As Kegan and Lahey note in their text, our internal languages, what we are actually saying to ourselves, even unconsciously or in our imaginations, points to our Big Assumptions.

In the focus group interview session, one participant suggested that we look at the last three significant changes named in the mission statement; namely, moving from an elitist view of ordained ministry ... to a complementarity[9] of ministry and solidarity in service; from men preparing for orders ... to women and men preparing for various pastoral leadership roles; and finally, from a cleric–lay axis ... to a community–ministries axis .... Here I quote the participant:

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[9] In the Mission Statement of 2003, the language of "complementarity" found in the original Mission Statement was replaced by the language of "mutuality." Unfortunately, the Mission Statement which was given to the participants did not include this change. This again highlights the critical importance of *parole* in shaping our identities and frames of reference. The Mission Statement in Appendix I am from our most recent handbook for the 2004-2005 formation year.

And we are here talking about the R. C. Church, which does not
ordain women; these [significant changes] are really threats to that
historic tradition. And if in my opinion you wish to achieve that, you
can't ram it down the throats, whereas this process would allow in a
non-threatening arena, the identification (like if you had two priests, a
couple of nuns, and a few lay people) and you went through the same
process you had here; I think that in a non-threatening arena, the nub
of what has to change in order to achieve these would become
apparent to all. Change would not necessarily happen, but the first step
to change happening is an awareness of what it is that has to be
changed. So, I think that this is a very good process to get that
underway.

One participant in the focus group interview session addressed the issue of time,

as he/she stated: "I have just come in touch with how long it takes the church to change.

I mean look at Luther; it is only 500 years ago. Look at us. So, I suspect that the Centre

for Ministry Formation is a leader in transition from what was to what will be." Others

addressed the exponential nature of change as it was affirmed that "this might be an

important tool—it's like little drops of water that eventually form a river." And as we

looked to how the Centre itself is responsible for being generative and engendering

change in its ministry formation process, one participant said: "Is it possible that the

conversion is such a slow process that each one of the people who leaves the Centre for

Ministry Formation influences 6 or 7, or 2 or 122, if that's the case ... assuming that

they influence others."

Another participant added:

It seems like this whole process is about seed sowing, reaching outside
of the Centre like an umbrella process that would affect others,
hopefully over time, a little step at a time; change takes time. People
become more aware so that change can come about and the more
involved the more informed they will become, and the more people get
on board, then change will happen.

And finally, participants confirmed that "change must begin with ourselves."

This simple maxim was repeated several times by four of the participants, all of whom acknowledged the exponential nature of change when it begins with self.

This data confirms some basic notions about the conditions which favour developing a greater consciousness and more complex and inclusive structures. Change cannot be legislated; it cannot be taught; and it cannot be external to the experience of the person who desires change. In other words, we are all invited to engage in change and to create conditions that favour the continuous evolving process into which are all invited.

Story

Participant feedback confirmed that story is vital to the human search for meaning and that beginning with the story of personal experience is crucial to the process of change. The findings also indicated that in the back and forth movement between experience and theory, story has the potential to broaden our horizons, to break open our conventional views of reality and ways of knowing. One participant confirmed this phenomenon as she shared in the focus group interview session:

> I think that just articulating it starts our reflecting on it and helps us see it in a different light. Let me share an example: the situation of conflict/confrontation today. The situation I had today was aided by the fact that there were others there who were also part of this process. I realize now how important is community. We can't tackle this ourselves, alone; I was supported by the community. That community supports me. I would not have had that insight if we had not had this discussion and reflected on it together.

This insight was followed by discussion as to how this support and growing awareness does take place in critically reflecting in the gathered community. One participant writes: "[T]his process allowed me to put words to my feelings, which are

sometimes all confused in us and are difficult to surface as they are so tightly woven into our personalities." As this same participant told his/her own story, in a way that was structured by the ITC language form (*parler*) in the initial diagnostic phase of the research design, he/she was shocked when he/she became aware of his/her own big assumption. In the focus group interview session three weeks later, he/she shared his/her story of great discomfort with this new awareness and in his/her struggle was able to confront that assumption in a way that it now had less power over him/her.

Praxis

The findings from this research design have shown that theory and action actually coalesce in praxis. In the example above, as the participant told the story he/she became aware of the values and theories embedded in it. Praxis is reflective action, which is characterized by attention, consciousness and change. In the telling of the story, the participant's view of that event has changed and so has his/her structures of meaning. The way he/she views how solutions get worked out, has now been consciously expanded by his/her awareness of values inherent in the action itself. This is liberating change, in that this greater self-awareness is leading him/her to a greater valuing of collaboration and the need for community in the decision-making process. In praxis, truth is encountered and revealed in the dialogue between story and reflection. Feminist thought would view this praxis as authentic in that it finds its home in universal call to the radical inclusivity of communion in which all of creation is continuously drawn into "mutual interdependence."[10] In the back and forth movement between experience and

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[10] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 66.

reflection, in the telling of the story, in reflecting on that story and rethinking it in community and in light of our expanding frames of reference, liberation has already begun. For some of the participants, liberation had already begun in the time between their experience of the diagnostic phase and the end of the focus group interview session.

One participant named that his/her experience of the ITC language technology was, in itself, an experience of discovering his/her assumptions and building his/her courage to speak that truth. This was for him/her, and others who participated in the focus group interview session, the beginning of a journey into freedom. Another participant notes that the research process was an effective method for people to open up and express themselves. He/she suggested that it could be used to slowly move toward incorporating more and more people into dialogue and the change process itself.

The two reports of the experience of the ITC language technology as being an experience of church affirm the ITC language technology as praxis. This learning process with its built-in intentional language form is value-directed and theory-laden because it is reflective. As action, the ITC language technology was not simply an application of theory, but rather an experience of the theory itself. The qualitative research was designed to reflect on what actually keeps us from fully realizing the values of being a more inclusive church. As noted by the two participants, the research process was also an actual experience of being a more inclusive church and becoming freer to become a more inclusive church. Given the powerful experience of this process, it was also suggested that this language form could be used over and over again to help us work through difficult situations.

These findings confirm that as a learning process, the ITC language technology is a praxeological process in which action coalesces with attention, reflection and change which is future-oriented and liberating. Just as evolutionary theory defies our conventional categories of time as chronological time, praxis defies our tendency to isolate past, from present and from future. As the findings indicate, in praxis, change is experienced in the present as it enfolds our history into the future. In this continuous process of action and reflection, we become freer from what keeps us from fully realizing our call to communion in the fullness of life and we stand in the space between past and future in which we glimpse an endless realm of potential and possibility.

Energy

Although none of the research participants actually used the word energy, one participant's contribution to the focus group interview demonstrated his/her experience and understanding of the difference between negentropy and entropy. This participant's comment is derived from the middle of a larger conversation in which he/she makes a comparison of another experience and his/her experience of the ITC language technology.

> When someone comes up with a plan. people shoot it down. It's like human nature … [a person I know] who is a consultant suggested that one way of overcoming that is to have the group imagine how they succeeded in realizing their goal—what did we do to realize that goal, that it was so successful and then we have everyone thinking positively, not negatively. What is a successful way to that goal?

This finding confirmed one of the basic premises of the ITC language technology which recognizes that some language forms serve the entropic force toward self-preservation, and others can be used as a tool to release the toxic entropic energy and

access negentropic energy from both its inner core and the environment in order to

enhance capacity and innovation.[11] Entropy, or wasted energy, is associated with closed

or non-vital systems and negentropy is linked to living systems. Negative feedback

produces entropy, which eventually closes the system down. On the other hand, positive

feedback produces negentropy, which this same participant reported as his/her

experience of the ITC process itself. For him/her, the ITC language technology was

experienced as positive and non-threatening in the way it was introduced and in the way

it lays no blame on anyone or any institution. He/she noted that because of its positive

forward movement, this kind of language form had the potential for open discussion of

even more controversial issues.

Two participants referred to the process of change, as they had experienced it, as

an opportunity to take a distance from their big assumptions and to examine them. One

participant in particular named the importance of being in touch with "the source" while

experiencing disequilibrium in relation to what he/she referred to as "re-equilibration."

These movements can be conceptualized in the three evolutionary energies, in which we

understand the autopoietic will to making meaning and preserve ourselves from

incoherence. The evolutionary motion of becoming is found in the three energies of

differentiation, autopoiesis, and communion—all of which are integrally related to the

continuous process of structural development and change. In the energy of

differentiation, we have the capacity to move away from control by external forces

toward greater autonomy self-responsibility. Autopoietic energy is the inner capacity of

all life to be coherent in its thrust toward generativity and self-renewal. The energy of

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[11] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 7.

communion is the capacity for perichoretic relations of mutuality and interdependence. These three energies invite us to freely engage in the evolutionary process of change toward greater complexity and inclusivity. The findings have confirmed that we can choose whether or not to respond to that call to open ourselves even more to the potential of fullness of life.

System

As concepts in the evolutionary theory of becoming, system and energy are integrally related. Some of the data collected affirmed the understanding of systems as dissipative, and the fundamental difference between open and closed. Closed systems, which seek to maintain the status quo, close themselves off to information calling for change in a way that is consistent with itself. Open systems, on the other hand, interact with the environment using positive and amplifying feedback to change around self-reference, the unifying principle that holds the boundaries of the system as it reorganizes and renews itself over time to a more complex level, in a way that is consistent with its own calling. Two participants alluded to their experience of change as open self-renewing systems with respect to their own personal call as well as the call of the church.

A participant confirms the idea of self-reference as the organizing principle, as he/she says: "I believe that any form of change calls for some form of destabilization. However, disequilibrium for the sake of disequilibrium is not necessarily healthy if there is not something [that] re-equilibrates—something [that] touches the very source of that which is changing."

As another participant notes, this was the first time that he/she encountered a

change process that introduces the concept of "our own powerful inclinations not to change" and this was done in a positive way, without laying blame. The positive way in which the languages were presented provided a forward movement toward change.

As noted above, time is an essential element in understanding and living any process of change. Participants noted the question of the ample time needed to explain, discuss, implement, and evaluate the ITC language technology, on the individual student level, the formation team level, as well as for the community as a whole. It was suggested that perhaps a commitment to a process of systematically moving through the significant changes could take up to five years. In other words, this is a long-term time commitment—not a quick-fix solution to the problem of change. Participants also noted that in the follow-up sessions, more time will be needed to check in with the participants to see how they are living with their new awarenessess, to support them, and if necessary, to even redo the diagnostic phase with them. As one participant wrote: "I realize this does take time and I am *beginning* to look at values that I espouse and question myself as to why … I have begun to question." It was also noted that some learning types may take longer to work through the process than others. Another participant notes that it is important to take the time to "live the process, to share, and to be destabilized or decentered—to let the experience work in us and not try to solve it too quickly, so that we move through the initial emotion and look at it more objectively. In my experience, the process can be unsettling, destabilizing, but so enlightening."

An underlying theme in all of the data collected was the participants' experience of, and potential for, this language form for building community—a community united around a particular vision or common goal. One participant writes: "At times of change

there is a certain stress and desire to keep all things the same. I think that this resistance

to change doesn't always have a basis in facts and this type of language technology can

help people identify their understandings or beliefs of church." This same participant

goes on to say: "The process also helps people to see the big picture of [what] today's

church looks like and how and where they might fit in." As noted in Chapter Four,

Wessels tells us that as we attempt to modify the current clergy–lay relations in moving

toward a more inclusive church, we have to see the current clergy–lay relations in light

of the bigger picture.

One of the sub-themes found in systems is environment. Closed systems protect

themselves from the threat of the environment. One of the ways of closing ourselves off

is to defend ourselves from, and blind ourselves to the very processes that foster life.[12]

One participant realized that his/her big assumptions were actually having him/her

engage in what she called "tunnel vision" in which he/she focussed on one aspect of

what he/she was living while ignoring other relevant information. In contrast to the

rigidity and insularity of closed systems, open systems see the environment as the space

for interaction with other systems, receiving feedback that signals the need for change,

and for drawing new energy (negentropy) in order to remain vital.

Two participants noted the difficulties they had in moving through the double

negatives[13] of the third-column language. This difficulty confirms the intent of this third

language for creating cognitive dissonance. As already mentioned in Chapter Six in the

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[12] Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*, 77.

[13] This double negative is an essential part of the overall language form. In working through this double negative, we come in touch with our fears or sense of loss if we stop what we are doing in column 3, our competing commitments.

explanation of the third language form, cognitive dissonance is a psychological conflict which stems from our becoming conscious of holding two or more incompatible beliefs simultaneously. It can be triggered by hearing words that do not fit our normal ways of understanding or viewing reality. This experience of cognitive dissonance signals a call for change. That signal can be received in a number of ways. The experience of cognitive dissonance can drive us into a state of defense in which we close ourselves off from the environment, literally pull up the drawbridge, in order to maintain our equilibrium at all costs. This is the response of a closed system.

Cognitive dissonance can also draw us into a state of disequilibrium which is marked by an intentional movement that is simultaneously inward *and* outward. As we come to trust our *autopoietic* power for self-renewal and self-transcendence, we freely engage with our environment, seeking feedback that both supports and challenges the change to which we are called. Paradoxically, both responses aim at self-preservation; one resists change, and the other freely embraces it. In embracing change and its ensuing disequilibrium, we disembed ourselves from our current systems of knowing with which we identified and by which we are unconsciously held.

The work of disembedding ourselves from our current systems of knowing calls for action which is rooted in the ideas of adaptive leadership theory. This theory presents the concept of holding environment as "any relationship in which one party has the power to hold the attention of another party and facilitate adaptive work."[14] Effective coaching is one of the ways to provide a holding environment for persons to discover their own incongruencies and to objectively engage in questions and feedback that are

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[14] Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, 104–105.

designed to confirm and *disconfirm* the person. An effective coach recognizes that pains

of change call for trust, compassion, and respect. They are sensitive to the need for skills

and trust, as well as the constraints of the holding environment.[15] In attending to and

reflecting on the research data, I noticed that this concept of holding environment is

actually found in the many suggestions which the participants recommended for both the

diagnostic phase and follow-up work of the ITC language technology.

Participants noted that the use of this language form in the Centre could provide

opportunities for the candidates for ministry to accompany others in their own change

processes. That accompaniment or coaching would include giving and receiving

feedback in ways that energy can be mobilized for innovation and vitality. All

participants emphasized their experience of, and ongoing need for, a safe environment

which they defined as trustworthy, gentle, supportive, non-judgmental, *and* challenging.

Some of the factors which the participants named for determining a safe environment are

the quality of facilitation, presentation, make-up of group, clarity of presentation, and

measures provided for follow-up. Some noted that the homogeneity of the group

provided a safer environment for them. Some questioned if there might have been that

necessary level of trust and honesty if it had been a heterogeneous (or diverse) group.[16]

This question of diversity is an important issue particularly as I focus on the use of this

language form as a means for moving toward a more inclusive church. One of the

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[15] Farber-Robertson, *Learning While Leading*, 66.

[16] I find this question of homogeneity and heterogeneity of the group interesting and challenging. Certainly like-minded persons might engage in a challenging change-oriented process more easily together. However, I am teased by the idea that each person is a system as well as the group itself. Would systems theory not advocate on behalf of the diversity in order that each system might become more itself?

defining marks of inclusivity is unity-in-diversity. As I maintain my focus on assessing

the effectiveness of this language form within the Centre, I am both heartened and

challenged by this feedback and hear the call to paying close attention to the quality of

the holding environment.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the findings that emerged from the data I collected in the

three phases of my research design process. The abductive mode of reasoning which I

chose for this research is congruent with an understanding of praxis as consisting of

attention, reflection and change. As praxis, the abductive mode of reasoning is theory-

laden and value-laden because it is reflective. Participants were invited to pay attention

to their experience of the language technology. I guided their attention with specific

questions (both open-ended in the focus group interview and in the written

questionnaire) which were oriented to their coming to a greater self-awareness of what

they had actually lived. They were given the opportunity to reflect on that experience in

light of the theories which they themselves had noticed and insights from those theories

which I shared with them in my presentation and in the handouts. In that reflection, they

noticed how they themselves had experienced change and they also suggested ways in

which the process could be changed for adapting it to the needs of the Centre.

Like the participants, I too was engaged in praxis as attention, reflection and

change. The process on attending to, reflecting on, and classifying the data was two-fold.

First, I classified the data according to the categories of Theory Verification, Theory

Modification, and Theory Generation. The first category of Theory Verification served

to verify both their experience and the opinions which flowed from that experience.

According to the findings, the participants did experience a greater self-awareness of their own built-in resistances to change. In reflecting on their experience, they came to the opinion that the ITC language technology could be an effective tool for integrating the Centre's vision into its overall integral ministry formation process. As noted above, that assessment includes some important modifications as to how, when, with whom, by whom, and over how much time to implement the diagnostic phase, as well as the follow-up accompaniment. Participants assessed that the ITC language technology is an effective tool for implementing deep structural change, both on a personal and collective level. Therefore, as participants suggested, the ITC language technology could be an effective tool for forming pastoral leaders as agents of transformation as ordained and lay ministers in their respective communities in which they minister. Furthermore, it was suggested that this same tool could serve as an effective tool for change in moving toward a more inclusive church with groupings of Roman Catholics who are not immediately connected to the Centre, either as staff or Centre members.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

As explained in the last chapter, my focus on the relationship between language and change has led me to explore the usefulness of the immunity-to-change (ITC) language technology as a tool for integrating the ecclesial vision of the Centre for Ministry Formation into its ministry formation process. The findings have shown that this language form has the potential to enable change in the Centre in order to more fully realize its mission of forming pastoral leaders for moving toward a more inclusive church. These findings have confirmed the usefulness of this language technology for change in the Centre.

As noted in its mission statement,[1] change is at the heart of the Centre's vision of church which is embedded in its vocational discernment and ministry formation process. That ecclesial vision is captured in the values and significant changes for ministry formation within an ecclesiological context which is faithful to the Second Vatican Council's call to a critical *ressourcement* and *aggiornamanto. Ressourcement* is a call to return to our roots. *Aggiornamento* summons us to make those changes which hold together a critical integration of our history in dialogue with the questions and issues in our current socio-historical context. The process of self-renewal is intrinsic to all forms

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[1] See Appendix I.

of life. Nothing and no one are excluded from the powerful force of transformation to which the Spirit calls us. All of life is called to change in a way that integrates its own history and is faithful to its mission of becoming all it is called to be. For Christians, each mission is specific and each mission is a participation in Christ's mission of transformation and humanization of the world. As a formation community, the Centre participates in the church's mission which is a participation in Christ's mission.

As a participant in Christ's mission, the Centre's specific goal is two-fold: Its primary purpose is to form collaborative, effective, faith-filled, discerning pastoral leaders as agents of transformation. And in fulfilling its primary task, the Centre becomes leaven for the ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church in the wider North American culture. Through this research process, I have come to a much deeper understanding of how the Centre is called to fulfill its mission. My goal has been to maximize the effectiveness of the Centre as a space for its members to become all they are called to be in preparation for pastoral leadership within a church which is constantly being summoned to renewal in faithfulness to its own calling.[2]

Just as my own mission is intertwined with the Centre's mission, the mission of each of the candidates for ministry is interconnected to the mission of the Centre. As particular expressions of the universal church our respective missions which are both specific and universal, reveal and participate in Christ's mission in the world. The same call to renewal which the Second Vatican Council gave to the church is given to us today, both personally and collectively. In the Centre, that invitation to change is lived out in a formation community which holds an ecclesial vision of moving toward a more

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[2] Abbott,"Decree on Ecumenism" in *The Documents of Vatican II*, para. 6, 350.

inclusive church.

As a community of faith and struggle, the Centre seeks to live out its ecclesial vision in a way that affirms the full humanity of both men and women. One of the fundamental questions which comes out of the lived experience of the Centre is: How can the Centre's ministry formation process make a difference for both the present and future life of the church? This question presupposes that the Centre's ministry formation process is, first and foremost, formation for pastoral leadership. Pastoral leadership education includes the development of certain skills and competencies, yet is primarily about the shaping of attitudes and the forming of one's identity as a collaborative, interdependent, integrated, and transformative pastoral leader as an agent of change.

In this dissertation, I have looked at this question through qualitative feminist action research, which was designed to assess the effectiveness of the ITC language technology as a tool for integrating the Centre's ecclesial vision into its ministry formation process. The research process is based on the assumption that there is indeed an intrinsic relationship between language and deep structural change. The ITC language technology is an intentional language form and process designed to surface and work toward transforming the inner contradictions that keep us from fully realizing the changes to which we are truly committed—changes at both the personal and collective levels.

The methodology for assessing the effectiveness of this language form is consistent with a feminist-evolutionary framework that forms the basis for this dissertation. Insights from the concepts of consciousness, story, energy, praxis, and system embedded in that framework have been integrated into my research

methodology, data analysis, as well as the research findings. This framework has also

provided a lens for a trinitarian theological foundation for critically retrieving the

ancient Greek concepts of *perichoresis* and *koinonia*. Faithful to the feminist insight into

the deeply formative nature of our God-language, this retrieval has revealed the

immanent-economic schema to our triune symbol of God and served as a critique to

ecclesial relations which promote dominance and exclusion. All of these concepts,

together with a more detailed exploration of the evolutionary theory of holons, serve as

the basis for a particular ecclesial vision for moving toward a more inclusive church.

This renewed ecclesial vision is a version of a community of disciples model of church

in which *perichoresis* and *koinonia* are at the heart of its mission, as well as its ecclesial

relations. While this model of church calls for a leap of imagination in moving from our

current ecclesial relations and structures, it is consistent with a developing feminist and

evolutionary consciousness in which an immanent and intentional God calls and guides

the church in the ways of truth, through the continual process of renewal and

reconstruction.

My focus on the relationship between language and change within a feminist-

evolutionary framework has also been the guiding impetus for my proposal for the

various components necessary for an integral formation for pastoral leaders as agents of

change. Pastoral leadership must necessarily include a combination of informational and

transformational learning aimed at forming leaders who can freely embrace the

dynamism of life. The intentional embracing of change as intrinsic to all of life, calls for

developing more complex orders of consciousness through which we gradually change

in our relationship to change itself. The ITC language technology is designed as a tool

for deep structural change, which is change in our mental structures. By definition, the term mental structure aims at the whole person by including the cognitive and affective, as well as our ways of relating. As education for deep structural change, pastoral leadership education must be holistic education, holding together the pastoral, human, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of formation within a formation community that identifies itself as a community of learners. My research has shown that the ITC language technology can be an effective tool for integrating all four dimensions of ministry formation, as well as the social, within the formation community.

My focus on holistic education has been shaped by the evolutionary-feminist lens that has led me to appreciate even more fully the meaning of education as *educare*. *Educare* conveys the idea of education as "leading or bringing out."[3] Even though I had already been operating with an immanent view of education prior to this research, I have come to see *educare* as a participation in the evolutionary process of change in which freedom, fullness of life and mission are its defining marks. *Educare* honours our immanent capacity for becoming all we are called to be. As transformational learning and adaptive leadership theory indicate, it is the educator's role is to provide a space which is intentionally conducive for change to transpire.

An evolutionary view of education exposes the limits of a mechanistic view of research in which external stimuli are applied in order to measure predictable "cause-and-effect" outcomes. This view of education attends to two essential components in the space for *educare*. The first is the language and meaningful guidance of education; and

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[3] This etymology was taken from the website for Montessori Educare School which is located in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. "Educare" is derived from the Latin "edu cere" which means "to lead or bring out." http://www.montessorieducare.org/?/about/ Accessed 24 February 2005.

the second is, the environmental factors which have a bearing on the educational

outcomes. Both these components are necessary and integrally related in assessing the

goals and outcomes of an intentional learning process and its particular learning

environment. [4] This view honours the complexity and deep interconnectedness of the

many factors determining a person's or community's capacity for change in any given

time and in any given space. This complexity however does not render the intentional

learning process ineffective; rather, it cautions the researcher/educator against

overconfidence in predicting or deducing educational outcomes for particular

educational experiences. The specific findings of my research design affirmed the

effectiveness of the ITC language technology as a tool for developing self-awareness.

Yet, although developing self-awareness is recognized as one potential causal agent for

learning, [5] educational theorists recognize that we can only at best, develop theory that is

compatible with the outcomes which have been observed. [6]

While this research has primarily focused on language as one of the two essential

components of education, I have also paid attention to the environmental factors that are

intrinsically related to the outcomes of the ITC language technology as a tool for change

in the Centre. This is evident in the findings of the action-research design indicate that

the ITC language technology can be useful tool of change in the Centre *and* the degree

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[4] James F. Andris, "The Impact of Quantum Theoretical Models on Consciousness on the Study of Education" " presented as part of a poster session at Consciousness and its Place in Nature: Toward a Science of Consciousness. Skövde, Sweden, 10 August, 2001 <http://w.ww.sieu.edu/~jandris/qtcer.htm>. Accessed August 2004, 7.

[5] Andris, "The Impact of Quantum Theoretical Models", 2.

[6] G. Cziko, "Unpredictability and Indeterminism in Human Behavior: Arguments and Implications for Educational Research" in *Educational Researcher*, 18 (3), 1989, 20, as referred to in Andris, "The Impact of Quantum Theoretical Models,", 4.

of its usefulness is dependent upon a number of factors, one of which is the quality of the environment in which the ITC language technology is lived. Many of those environmental factors are related to either the immediate environment in which the diagnostic phase of ITC language technology is presented or the environment in which the follow-up work takes place. However, it must be recognized that the environment or external stimuli for transformational learning is never objective or neutral. It is the *meaning* that individuals attach to their respective experiences of that environment—a function of previous experiences—that serves as a component of the determined educational outcomes.[7] And as constructive-development theory has shown, those meanings are embedded in our mental structures which serve as the lens to give meaning to those same experiences; hence, the integral relationship between the two essential components for assessing the effectiveness of all intentional learning processes.

In my goal to propose the ITC language technology as an intentional learning process in the Centre, I have explored the various facets of Centre's ministry formation process with lenses from a variety of academic disciplines. As I move into the conclusion of this research, I ask a fundamental question which aims to unify this diversity of ways to explore the basis for enhancing the Centre's capacity for facilitating change in moving toward a more inclusive church. That question is: How can the Centre's ministry formation process make a difference to the present and future life of the church?

Because my question is located in the present and is future-oriented, its answer must be rooted in our current praxis of ministry formation. Attention, reflection and

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[7] Andris, "The Impact of Quantum Theoretical Models", 4.

change define our action as praxis which is laden with value, theory and vision. Our praxis embraces its rich history and embodies its future orientation in its current ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church. Our choice of action and our choice of language, both *parole* and *parler,* are crucial to whether or not we are faithful to our mission and ecclesial vision. In a feminist-evolutionary framework, the narrative process of story and reflection is a praxeological process, which incorporates the acts of discovery, construction, and growing consciousness. My research findings indicate that the ITC language technology, as it incorporates the values and changes of moving toward a more inclusive church, is a praxeological process which is imbued with the power to enhance our capacity for change. And as evolutionary-feminist thought has shown, change is oriented toward greater self-awareness, affirmation, and freedom for both women and men.

Because of the limited sample in my research design, and in my need to protect confidentiality, I was not able to do a gender analysis of the findings. However, the majority of the participants were women. Based on their reports, the diagnostic phase of the ITC language technology is an effective tool for deep structural change for both men and women. This meets the view of Kegan and Lahey who contend that the ITC language technology, along with its underlying theoretical and conceptual framework, is cross-cultural and gender-neutral. They attribute this "neutrality" to the fact that the language technology is the *parler* or process for determining how we know, rather than the *parole* or content of what we know.[8] As I ponder this claim in dialogue with the findings, it seems to me that *parler* transcends the limits placed on the *parole. Parler* is

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[8] This was discussed with Lisa Lahey, and was included in the discussion in the Train-the-Trainer Institute for the ITC language technology. I participated in this institute in April 2002.

a verb, an action; it refers to the movement or flow of words. *Parole* is a noun; it is static; it is fixed rather than moving. Like the mechanical idea of energy as both dynamic and static, the *parler* of the ITC language technology has the energy to uncouple the *parole* from our own actions and meaning we give to those actions. The goal of that movement is to be freed for participating in the fullness of our humanity.

Both *parler* and *parole are* integral to the follow-up work, which is an opportunity to delve into the history of our big assumptions and to test their validity. This work can be highly emotional and learning will be enabled and constrained by the historical knowledge-power networks in which our big assumptions are embedded. The assumptions of our historical networks and their supporting ideologies must also be brought into our developing awareness, in order to critically reflect on those assumptions as they affect our on degree of autonomous learning.[9] These learning experiences must be designed and lived in a way that is gender-sensitive as well as culture-sensitive.[10] As a feminist pastoral educator, I am attentive to presenting learning opportunities for all learners to become authors of their own lives. All learning activities, for both men and women, must be planned and implemented to encourage connections and relationship in ways that take into account the affective, as well as rational and cognitive modes of learning, in the learning process itself.[11] The primary concern of education for women is that it increases their self-esteem, knowledge, capacity for voice, and status in both society and church.

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[9] Mezirow, "Learning to Think" in Mezirow and Associates, *Learning as Transformation*, 7.

[10] Given my current location in my own learning process, I am not in a position suggest specific ways in which this learning could become culture-sensitive. This is research for another time.

[11] Tisdell, "Feminist Pedagogies" in Hayes and Flannery, *Women as Learners*, 156.

If the Centre aims to enable its candidates for ministry to embrace the dynamism of life in order to become agents of change for moving toward a more inclusive church, then women especially must intentionally be given opportunities to tell their stories. As I myself have learned throughout this research process, our growing feminist consciousness insists that women must name their experiences. To avoid naming the experience is to collude with the theory and structures that are the very source of legitimation for exclusionary practices. In other words, women have a responsibility to articulate their context, tell their stories of call to discipleship and ecclesial ministry. Given the research findings, which indicate that the participants' experience of the ITC language technology was, in itself, an experience of church, it seems feasible that the ITC language technology, as both form and process, could provide a safe space for transformational learning in the listening to women's and men's stories, and reflecting on those stories in community with an attentiveness to politically-situated perspectives, power, and language.[12]

An integral pastoral leadership education calls for self-knowledge that enables candidates to become aware of their issues and of the way their personal history filters their "reading of experience so that [they] do not hold others responsible for the way [they] feel in response to their actions or choices."[13] As research has indicated, women are not without their own inner contradictions and they too have the same opportunities to "tell on themselves" without letting others off the hook.[14] The ITC language

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[12] Griffiths, *Feminisms and the Self*, 6.

[13] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 132.

[14] Kegan and Lahey, *Faciltators' Guide*, 4.18

technology can be a catalyst for the movement of both men and women toward greater self-awareness and as they take their places respective places as co-disciples in the one community of disciples, they are coresponsible for their own formation as agents of transformation and for the life of the community.

Becoming agents of transformation presupposes that the learner has developed the capacity to intentionally initiate and engage in transformative practices as an autonomous self in relationship with others. This autonomy presupposes that learners have moved, or are moving into, a fourth-order consciousness in which we control our own issues rather than have our issues control us. The demand for the "construction of self as author, maker, critiquer, and *re*maker of its experience" is a demand of fourth-order consciousness.[15] As noted in Chapter Six, third-order thinkers are not capable of this level of differentiation, as they are still embedded in their interpersonal relationships. Although the third level of complexity is usually attained in adolescence, it seems the majority of the adult population continues to operate at that level of consciousness.

A comparative study of average personal authority[16] between a sample of the general population and a sample of candidates for ordained ministry with a mean age of 32 years, indicates that, on average, candidates for ordained ministry operate at the same

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[15] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 133.

[16] Martin Rovers, *Who's In The Seminary: Roman Catholic Seminarians Today* (Ottawa, Ontario: Novalis), 1996. Although this study does not use the same constructive-development framework of mental structures or orders of consciousness, a close look at the criteria for personal autonomy reveals enough similarities to justify this comparison. See Chapter 2, "The Theory of Personal Authority, or Maturity," 17–22.

third level of complexity as the general population[17] This is an important point with respect to the fit between the Centre's ecclesial vision and the orders of consciousness of the candidates for ministry. It seems that the values embodied in the significant changes in ministry formation, call for movement beyond a third order level of consciousness, a movement for which those at least beginning the formation process are not equipped. The Centre's ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church presupposes not only fourth-order thinking, in which persons become more independent and self-authoring; pastoral leadership for an ecclesial vision of moving toward a more inclusive church calls for a movement from fourth-order independence to a stance of fifth-order interdependence. In this meaning system, we have learned to stand as selves, from our own selves as systems and from our own internal authorities so that we can recognize the incompleteness of our own theories, and in so doing, to embrace the conflict of multiple forms or contradictory systems simultaneously within the same self.[18] According to Kegan, very few people attain this fifth order of consciousness.[19]

The main objective of the ITC language technology is to enable persons to disembed themselves from their systems of meaning, to objectify that which they hold as ultimate or absolute, in order that they may reflect on it, inquire into its roots, and begin to question its validity. While the ITC language technology as an intentional learning process for deep structural change is aimed at changing the structures out of which we

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[17] Rovers, *Who's in the Seminary*, 42. In coming to this conclusion, I have taken the mean age between the 20-year-old male and female university students and the 43-year-old male and female senior managers as a measure of the general population to contrast with the mean age of 31.4 years for candidates for ordained ministry. It is important to note that this comparison does not include a gender analysis, which might have revealed different results.

[18] Kegan, "What 'Form' Transforms" in Mezirow, *Learning as Transformation*, 68–69.

[19] Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 335-336.

make meaning, that change may deepen a person's capacity to make meaning in their *current* order of thinking, and may not necessarily lead to a more complex or higher ordering of consciousness.[20] However, it is possible that this movement to the next level of consciousness may happen over time. It is important to recognize that all persons have varying degrees of capacity to learn. We must acknowledge that some persons do not learn from a potentially developmental experience, even when the proper elements of assessment, challenge, and support are in place and in the right proportion.[21] Recognizing that developing greater control of one's life as a liberated learner is, in itself, a process, the change process as a journey to self-empowerment and autonomy is intrinsically affected by social, cultural, and historical conditions.

Personal change is deeply connected with change in our environment, in the church, and in the world in which we live. I began this dissertation with a quotation from Mahatma Gandhi: "You must become the change you want to see in the world." This same wisdom was echoed by participants who generously shared their time, energy, and insights in this research process. Furthermore, in their challenge to all leaders to claim their role of language leaders, Kegan and Lahey also share the same wisdom as Gandhi when they write: "It may be nearly impossible for us to bring about any important change in an organization without changing ourselves (at least somewhat)."[22] And the leadership idea of the ITC language technology is that "we are not able to effect any significant change until we recognize the dynamic immune system by which we

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[20] This was discussed in a telephone conversation with Lisa Lahey on April 19, 2004.

[21] McCauley, *The Center for Creative Leadership*, 245.

[22] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 63.

continuously manufacture nonchange."[23] Recognition begins with story. My own story of loss and abandonment is closely intertwined with my family story of control and abuse in its history of lay–ecclesial relations. Unless our stories are told and reflected upon in community, they bind us to patterns of behaviours that keep us from fully realizing our full potential and mission.

My own mission has been imbued with a passion for deepening my understanding and use of language that enables change. This particular research process has not exhausted that passion. Rather, it has fuelled that passion as I look forward to continuing to ever deepen my understanding of the intrinsic relationship between language and change—change that must inevitably begin, over and over again, with ourselves as we seek out the meaning and purpose of our lives, both personally and collectively.

In our search for meaning, we pose many questions about the past, yet as "reflective human beings with hopes and dreams in our hearts," it is the future that lures us forward, that inspires and motivates us.[24] As we move forward, we discover the call to live with mystery and "develop the wisdom and skill to befriend paradox."[25] As I seek to befriend the paradox of our attempts to live the vision of a moving toward more inclusive church, I am inspired by the words of Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza:

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[23] Kegan and Lahey, *How the Way We Talk*, 76.

[24] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 22.

[25] O'Murchu, *Evolutionary Faith*, 20.

> If someone dreams alone,
> then it remains only a dream.
> If many dream together,
> then this is the beginning,
> the beginning of a new reality.
> Dream our Dream.[26]

I am grateful for all those who invite me to dream with them and others. It is my sincere hope that this dissertation contributes to the unfolding of a new reality.

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[26] Fiorenza, 1. This is taken from a song from a women's movement in Germany (author unknown).

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Centre

The Centre for Ministry Formation gathers together disciples of Jesus Christ and helps them discern their call to share in the mission of the People of God. Specifically, the Centre offers human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation in preparation for ministry. Integral formation is the defining concern of the Centre.

The Centre embraces a renewed vision of pastoral leadership whereby both ordained and lay ministers are co-responsible in the service of the People of God. In accomplishing its mission, the Centre combines tradition and innovation. The Centre innovates by offering formation for a variety of ministries in the life of the Church, thus enriching and expanding the living tradition of preparation for presbyteral ministry in Saint Paul University Seminary.

The Centre welcomes the unique contributions of each of its partners in formation: the faculties of Saint Paul University for accredited academic and pastoral formation; experienced pastors; supervisors; members and formators of other formation communities; spiritual directors and counselors for human, faith, and professional development.

The Vision of the Centre

1. Ministries in the Church

The mission of the Church, the inheritance of Jesus Christ, grounds the Centre's vision of formation. The Church accomplishes its mission in proclaiming the Good News of the Reign of God in the world, and by calling all persons to become disciples of Jesus Christ. For this mission, the Holy Spirit bestows gifts on all the baptized. Among these gifted people, the People of God recognizes and mandates a plurality of ministries, including ordained ministries. The image of Church as communion inspires a formation which values all the baptized and all ministries.

2. Values

The Centre seeks to practice and promote among all its members these values: self-knowledge; communion with God and others; love of church; a ser. se of responsibility; an ecumenical spirit; equality; partnership; collegiality; inclusivity; bilingualism; solidarity; service.

3. Welcoming members of all Christian faith traditions:

The Centre for Ministry Formation is a Roman Catholic centre, which offers formation services to persons of all Christians faith traditions. In a spirit of communion of the baptized, the Centre values the ecumenical spirit that enriches faith sharing as well as formation for ministry. In solidarity with members of all Christian traditions, the Centre strives in good faith to explore ways to move towards ecumenical integrity.

Saint Paul University
Centre for Ministry Formation

MISSION STATEMENT (2-2)

4. Principles of Formation

The Centre provides a dynamic formation, which is both personal and community-centred, bringing to be a church of active participants, empowered by partnership and interdependence. The Centre promotes: personal responsibility for one's own formation; attention to the needs; interests and aspiration of the individual in dialogue with the present and future needs of the People of God; apprenticeship to the life and practice of ministry; personal maturity in the ways of the gospel and leadership; a community of formation in which co-responsibility, celebration, and renewal flourish; and vibrant links with local church community.

5. Services and Activities

The Centre accomplishes its mission by offering services and formation activities. Among the services are: assessment of gifts and readiness to enter formation or practice ministry; mentoring; links with dioceses and local churches; intellectual formation in collaboration with the University faculties; individual and group spiritual direction; pastoral profiles; field placements and pastoral internship. Specific activities include: prayer; liturgical celebration; ritual; adult faith sharing; integration workshops; mutual support and community building events.

Significant Changes

In meeting the challenges of being church emerging from Vatican II, significant shifts of perspective and emphasis occur. Some of these transitions for the Centre are moving from:

A Seminary forming presbyters... to a Centre preparing for a variety of ministries.

A monastic style of spiritual life... to a spiritual life based on pastoral practice.

A vision of mission and ministry restricted to bishops, priests, and deacons... to a mission shared by all the baptized, in a multiplicity of charisms and ministries.

An elitist view of ordained ministry... to a mutuality of ministries and solidarity in service.

Men preparing for orders... to women and men preparing for various pastoral leadership roles.

A cleric-lay axis... to a community-ministries axis.

Saint Paul University
Centre for Ministry Formation

DIAGNOSTIC PHASE – 4-COLUMN EXERCISE

Column I		Column II	Column III	Column IV
The first language : *Language of* *Commitment*		*The second language :* *Language of Personal* *Responsibility*	*Third language :* *Language of Competing* *Commitments*	*Fourth language :* *Language of Assumptions We Hold*
I am committed to :		*What I am doing or not doing that keeps me from my commitment from being fully realized......*	*I may also be committed to...*	*I assume that if...*
I am committed to the value of partnership	I often make unilateral decisions		If I do not make unilateral decisions, then I fear I will not be able to make any decisions and actually lose control. _____ I am also committed to not losing control and ensuring decisions are made according to my own standards.	If I do lose control, I will be judged as incompetent in my role as Director of the Centre. _____ I assume that if am judged to be incompetent, this could have dire consequences not only for me in my role, but also for me as a woman in a pastoral leadership role; and even for other women in leadership roles in formation for ministry in the Roman Catholic Church.

McMaster University Research Ethics Board (MREB)
c/o Office of Research Services, MREB Secretariat, GH 306K, x 23142, e-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca
CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS CLEARANCE TO INVOLVE HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

APPLICATION STATUS: NEW: ☒   RENEWAL ☐   ADDENDUM ☐   REB# **2004 139**

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: **Assessing the effective use of the Immunity-to-Change language technology in the Centre for Ministry Formation at Saint Paul University**

	NAME	DEPT./ADDRESS	# EXT	E - MAIL
Faculty Investigator(s)/Supervisor(s)	J. Bellous	Divinity	24401	bellousj
Student Investigator(s)	L. Ste-Marie	Divinity	6136733600	lste-marie@ustpaul.ca

The application in support of the above research project has been reviewed by the MREB to ensure compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the McMaster University Policies and Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants. The following ethics certification is provided by the MREB:

☐ The application protocol is approved as presented without questions or requests for modification.

☒ The application protocol is approved as revised without questions or requests for modification.

☐ The application protocol is approved subject to clarification and/or modifications as appended or identified below.

COMMENTS & CONDITIONS:

See attached.

Reporting Frequency:	Annual Date:		Other:
DATE: October 18, 2004		Dr. D. Maurer, Chair, REB: _Al Maurer_	P:\ethics\reviewers\forms\certificate.frm

MREB & SREC

From: "Daphne Maurer" <mrebchair@mcmaster.ca>
To: "Bellous Joyce" <bellousj@mcmaster.ca>; <lster-marie@ustpaul.ca>
Cc: "Michael Wilson" <ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca>; "Laurel Evans" <levans@mcmaster.ca>
Sent: Monday, October 18, 2004 10:45 PM
Subject: Ethics protocol 2004-139

Dear Lorraine and Joyce:

Your new protocol, Assessing the effective use of the
Immunity-to-Change language technology in the Centre for Ministry
Formation at Saint Paul University, has been reviewed and approved by
the McMaster Research Ethics Board. We do not insist on your having
approval from the St. Paul's Research Ethics Board if they do not
require it, but want you to confirm with the Chair of that Board that
it is not needed.

Good luck with your project, and I am happy that you were able to find
a way to bypass the power relationship.

Regards,

Daphne

Daphne Maurer, Ph.D.
Chair, McMaster Research Ethics Board
Professor of Psychology

Louis,

Voici les informations
concernant mon projet
de recherche.

Merci de prendre le temps
de regarder ces documents
et me confirmer si je dois
demander l'approbation de l'USP.

Lorraine Ste-Marie
X 3011

Lorraine Ste-Marie

Merci Louis.

Lorraine Date sent: Wed, 17 Nov 2004 11:23:12 -0500 (Eastern Stand
Time)
From: "Louis Perron" <lperron@ustpaul.ca>
To: <lste-marie@ustpaul.ca>
Subject: Your project

Dear Lorraine:

I have reviewed your research project "Assessing the effective use of
the Immunity-to-Change language technology in the Centre for Ministry
Formation at Saint Paul University". I hereby confirm that approval
from SPU's REB is not required.

I wish you the best success with your research.

Yours,

Louis Perron, Ph.D.
Chair
REB

McMaster University Research Ethics Board (MREB)
FACULTY AND GRADUATE
Application to Involve Human Participants in Research
[Behavioural / Non- Medical]

Please refer to the McMaster University Research Ethics Guidelines and Researcher's Handbook, found at _____ **prior to completion and submission of this application. If you have questions about or require assistance respecting completion of this form, please contact the Ethics Secretariat at ext. 23142, or** _____

> Send this form and all accompanying material in quadruplicate if being submitted in hard-copy. If submitting by e-mail, send the application plus attachments, and forward the original signed signature page to the Ethics Secretariat, Office of Research Services. Room 306 Gilmour Hall, ext. 23142, _____
> If you want to change a previously approved protocol, please complete the "Change Request" form

Date: October 4, 2004 Application Status: New Change Renewal Protocol Number:

SECTION A – GENERAL INFORMATION

1.   **Title of the Research Project:** Assessing the effective use of the Immunity-to-Change language technology in the Centre for Ministry Formation at Saint Paul University.

2.   **Investigator Information**

	Name	Department/Office	Phone No.	E-Mail
Faculty Investigator				
Faculty Co-Investigator				
Student Investigator	Lorraine Ste-Marie	McMaster Divinity College	613-673-3600	lste-marie@ustpaul.ca
Student Faculty Supervisor	Joyce Bellous	McMaster Divinity College	X24401	bellousj@mcmaster.ca

3.   **Proposed Date** (a) of commencement: End of October 2004   (b) of completion: January 2005

4.   **Indicate the location(s) where the research will be conducted:**

McMaster University
Hospital   Specify Site:
Community   Specify Site:
Other   Specify Site: Centre for Ministry Formation, Saint Paul University

P:/ethics/forms/appln.wpd

5. **Other Research Ethics Board Approval**

(a) Is this a multi-centred study?   **Yes   No**

(b) Has any other institutional Ethics Board approved this project ? **Yes   No**

(c) If Yes, there is no need to provide further details about the protocol **at this time,** provided that **all** of the following information is provided:

        Title of the project approved elsewhere:

        Name of the Other Institution:

        Name of the Other Board: Date of the Decision:

        A contact name and phone number for the other Board:

        A copy of the application to the other institution together with **all** accompanying materials

        A copy of the clearance certificate / approval

If all of the above information cannot be provided, please complete the balance of this application.

(d) Will any other Research Ethics Board be asked for approval?   **Yes   No**
If yes, please specify

6. **Level of the Project**

Faculty Research   Post-Doctoral   PhD.

Masters   Faculty/Hospital Research

Other (specify)

7. **Funding of the Project**

(a) Is this project currently being funded   **Yes   No**

(b) If **No.** is funding being sought   **Yes   No**

(c) Period of Funding: From   To:

(d) Agency or Sponsor (funded or applied for)

CIHR   NSERC   SSHRC   ARB

NIH   Other   (specify):

8. **Conflict of Interest**

(a)   Will the researcher(s), members of the research team, and/or their partners or immediate family members:

    (i) receive any personal benefits (for example a financial benefit such as remuneration, intellectual property rights, rights of employment, consultancies, board membership, share ownership, stock options etc.) as a result of or connected to this study?   **Yes   No**

    (ii) if **Yes**, please describe the benefits below. (Do not include conference and travel expense coverage, possible academic promotion, or other benefits which are integral to the conduct of research generally).

(b)   Describe any restrictions regarding access to or disclosure of information (during or at the end of the study) that the sponsor has placed on the investigator(s).

SECTION B – SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

9.   **Rationale**

Describe the purpose and background rationale for the proposed project, as well as the hypotheses(is)/research questions to be examined.

Background: Language, as in the spoken word, carries within it the power to shape, construct, deconstruct, transform, and enable one to discover one's own identity as well as that of the other, and one's sense of the world and church.   This is the premise of developmental psychology and sociology, as well as of theology, particularly with the latter's emphasis on the power of the Word to change hearts of stone to hearts of flesh. This is also the premise of Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, authors of the book Seven Languages for Transformation: How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work (Jossey-Bass, 2001).

Change is intrinsic to all life forms, including humans, individually and collectively. An integral ministry formation process must include opportunities for candidates for ministry to engage in challenging experiences that call for the changing of old habits. The mission of my specific context of ministry, the Centre for Ministry Formation (Saint Paul University, Ottawa) is to prepare ministers (both lay and ordained) for a church which is in transition toward becoming a more inclusive church, which is committed to a greater respect for diversity and inclusivity. The transition to a more inclusive church calls for changing behaviours and attitudes which perpetuate clericalism, sexism, and classicism. The details of the Centre's mission are included in the members' handbook, which is used throughout the ministry formation process. All Centre members begin the Centre's ministry formation process with a commitment to the church which is in transition to becoming a more inclusive church.

Yet, as Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey tell us, even the best intentioned people will keep themselves from doing what it is they are genuinely committed to. In their many years of research and practice as development educators, Kegan and Lahey have discovered that most persons have built-in immune systems -- systems of countervailing motions -- that maintains the status quo. The Immunity-to-Change language technology is based on Kegan's constructive-development theory, and in particular, object-relation theory, in which persons move from a stance of subject-to- object with relation to what really keeps them from making the changes that they say they intend to make.

Purpose: I will present the diagnostic phase of this language technology with persons who are partners of the Centre for Ministry Formation -- supervisors, local pastoral leaders, as well as persons who participated in the development and are familiar with the vision and mission of the Centre. The data which I will collect will be used to assess the usefulness of the immunity-to-change language technology as a tool for integrating the Centre for Ministry Formation's vision into its ministry formation process. The usefulness will be determined by the following outcomes:

1. The participants' feedback on the impact of the pen-and-paper exercise (diagnostic phase) on the participant. That feedback will be collected in a focus group interview session (see below). Specifically, the participants will assess if and how the language technology has been useful in helping them become aware of their own assumptions that keep them from living out their own commitments.

2. Participant's opinion of this language technology as a useful tool for integrating the Centre's vision of moving toward a more inclusive church into its ministry formation process. This information could include some suggestions for modifications to the design of the various activities in the language technology process so that I can develop ways to align the presentation of this language technology with the Centre's vision.

These outcomes will be determined through self-reporting and conversations in the focus group interview session, as well as through a written questionnaire.

Research question: What is the usefulness of the language technology as a) a tool for transformative learning and b) a tool for integrating the Centre's vision into its overall ministry formation.

10.   **Methodology**

Describe sequentially, and in detail, all procedures in which the research participants will be involved (e.g. paper and pencil tasks, interviews, surveys, questionnaires, physical assessments, physiological tests, time requirements etc.)

N.B. Attach a copy of all questionnaire(s), interview guides or other test instruments.

This is a qualitative research study which includes a group standardized pencil-and-paper exercise, one focus group session and a written questionnaire.

1. The one-hour information session will take place at the end of October (see attached).
2. The standardized pencil-and-paper exercise is a the three-hour session (diagnostic phase) of the Immunity-to-change language technology in which participants will be guided through a four-column exercise. Following the pen-and-pencil exercise, participants will be given a brief presentation (orally) with respect to follow-up that might be suggested as part of an overall ministry formation process. They would also receive something in writing to which they will be asked to respond at the focus group interview session. This diagnostic phase will be presented at the beginning of November. (See attached 4-column pencil-and-paper exercise and presentation of diagnostic phase)
3. Participants will be expected to attend one 1-1/2 hour focus session at the end of November (see attached).
4. Participants will be asked to respond in writing to a questionnaire which are to be returned to me at the beginning of January.(See attached)
5. Activity log: I will keep a log of my own observations during the diagnostic phase as well as the focus group interview session. The data in that activity log will pertain to how the presentation of the diagnostic phase was received and the questions which emerged for me during that presentation.

Total time required of participants - including information meeting and answering of questionnaire: approximately 7 to 8 hours maximum (depending on how much time is given to completing the questionnaire).

11.   **Experience**

What is your experience with this kind of research?

This is my first experience with this kind of research. I have taken an advanced research methods course as part of the Doctor of Ministry Program and am working closely with my faculty supervisor, Dr. Joyce Bellous I have some familiarity with this language technology as I have participated in an intensive Train-the-Trainer Institute in Boston with the developers of this language technology; Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, both of whom are professors at Harvard University. I am a licensed user of their training manual. I have worked personally with this language form, as well as with some of my colleagues in ministry formation at Saint Paul University under the supervision of Dr. Lahey as part of the course requirements for the Doctor of Ministry Program.

12.   **Participants**

Describe the number of participants and any salient characteristics (such as age, gender, location, affiliation, etc.)

It is my intention to have a minimum of 8 participants – all of whom have some experience and understanding of the vision and mission of the Centre for Ministry Formation. It is my hope to have a

representative population of the diversity of the various partners (pastoral leaders-both lay and ordained), supervisors, "friends" of Centre, male and female).

13. **Recruitment**

Describe how and from what sources the participants will be recruited, including any relationship between the investigator(s) and participant(s) (e.g. instructor-student; manager-employee).

N.B. Attach a copy of any poster(s), advertisement(s) or letter(s) to be used for recruitment.

A letter of invitation (attached) to an information session will be sent out to the potential participants the third week of October. My relationship with the potential participants is director of Centre-partner with the Centre. Their participation is free and voluntary. Their participation or non-participation will have no effect on their present nor future partnership. All participants are free to withdraw at any time, without any consequences.

14. **Compensation**   Yes   No

(a) Will participants receive compensation for participation?
                                               Financial
                                               In-Kind

Other   (specify)
(b) If yes, please provide details.

N/A

(c) If participants choose to withdraw, how will you deal with compensation?

N/A

SECTION C – DESCRIPTION OF THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

15. **Possible Risks**

1. Indicate if the participants might experience any of the following risks:

a) Physical risk (including any bodily contact or administration of any substance)?   Yes   No

b) Psychological risks (including feeling demeaned, embarrassed worried or upset)?   Yes   No

c) Social risks (including possible loss of status, privacy and / or reputation)?   Yes   No

d) Is there any deception involved?   Yes   No x

e) Are any possible risks to participants greater than those the participants might encounter in their everyday life?   Yes   No x

2. If you answered **Yes** to any of a – e above, please explain the risk.

b) psychological risks: Although I consider the psychological risk to be minimal, it is important to keep in mind that the ITC language technology is a tool for transformational learning, which can be an emotional experience for some people. For example, the participants' current frames of reference (ways of knowing) are the product of previous formation, which is culturally and contextually conditioned. It is those frames of reference that can be potentially transformed with this language technology.

Also, although confidentiality will be stressed throughout the research process, as with any group format, there is the risk of breach of confidentiality. Given this, it will be stressed at the beginning of the presentation of the diagnostic phase, as well as the focus group interview session that all are invited to share according to their level of comfort.

3. Describe how the risks will be managed (including an explanation as to why alternative approaches could not be used).

The risks will be minimized and managed in the following ways:
1. All participants will participate on a free and voluntary basis.
2. All participants are free to withdraw at any time.
3. Confidentiality will be stressed throughout the process.
4. Participants are free to share according to their own comfort level in all aspects of the research process, without any consequences.
In order for the participant to assess the effectiveness of this language technology as an effective tool for use in the Centre for Ministry Formation, it is essential that they themselves experience the presentation of the diagnostic phase. The focus group interview session and follow-up written questionnaire are necessary for gathering data in order to assess the usefulness of this language form in the Centre.

16.   Possible Benefits

Discuss any potential direct benefits to the participants from their involvement in the project. Comment on the (potential) benefits to (the scientific community) / society that would justify involvement of participants in this study.

On a professional level, participants will have the opportunity to contribute to the on-going development of the ministry formation process at the Centre for Ministry Formation. On a personal level, participants could become aware or more aware of what keeps them from making the changes to which they are truly committed. This awareness could potentially lead to a greater effectiveness in realizing their own commitments.

SECTION D – THE INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

17.   The Consent Process

Describe the process that the investigator(s) will be using to obtain informed consent, including a description of who will be obtaining informed consent and a script of what they will say, if anything.

An letter of information and a consent form will be distributed at the information session. I, the researcher, will go over both the letter of information and the consent form in detail, and provide space for questions and clarification. Interested persons will be invited to take both with them. Should they choose to participate, they will meet with me so that we can both sign the consent form in duplicate. One will remain with the participant and the other with me.

Indicate how consent will be documented. Attach a copy of the Letter of Information if applicable and the consent form if applicable. If there will be no written consent form, explain why not and describe the alternative means that will be used to document consent. Attach the content of any telephone script that will be used in the consent process (if applicable).

For information about the required elements in the letter of information and the consent form, please refer to "Instructions for the Preparation of an Information Letter/Consent Form":

One of the duplicate consent forms will remain with me and be filed in the same locked cabinet in which all the collected data will be stored during the research process. Copies of the information letter and consent form are attached.

18. **Consent by an authorized party**

If the participants are minors or for other reasons are not competent to consent, describe the proposed alternate source of consent, including any permission / information letter to be provided to the person(s) providing the alternate consent.

n/a

19. **Alternatives to prior individual consent**

If obtaining individual participant consent prior to commencement of the research project is not appropriate for this research, please explain and provide details for a proposed alternative consent process.

n/a

20. **Debriefing (Participant feedback)**

Explain what feedback/ information will be provided to the participants after participation in the project. (For example, a more complete description of the purpose of the research, access to the results of the research).

N.B. Please provide a copy of the written debriefing form, if applicable.

It is my intention to invite all participants to a meeting in May 2005, at which time, the results of the research findings will be shared and we will celebrate their generous and active role in furthering my research and hopefully, enhancing the work of the Centre. All participants will be told that photocopies of the full doctoral thesis will be available for those who express an interest.

21. **Participant withdrawal**

a) Describe how the participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project. Outline the procedures which will be followed to allow the participants to exercise this right.

At the information session, participants will be told they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. Should they wish to withdraw, they have the option to inform me verbally or in writing.

b) Indicate what will be done with the participant's data and any consequences which withdrawal might have on the participant, including any effect that withdrawal may have respecting participant compensation.

They will also have the option to choose to tell me why they are withdrawing and if I may use that information in my I will record this withdrawal as part of the data. This is clearly indicated on the letter of information and

consent form; which both they and I will sign (see attached). The initial number of participants and the number of withdrawals will be recorded in my activity log. Participants who choose to withdraw have the option of giving me the reason for their withdrawal or not. As noted in the letter of information and consent form, the participant may choose whether or not the data collected until the time of withdrawal can be used as part of the overall research. That choice will be communicated directly to me, either in writing or verbally. Their withdrawal will not be judged, nor will it impact their partnership with the Centre.

c) If the participants will not have the right to withdraw from the project, please explain.

n/a

SECTION E – CONFIDENTIALITY

22.   a) Will the data be treated as confidential?   **Yes**   **No**

b) Describe the procedures to be used to ensure anonymity of participants or confidentiality of data both during the conduct of the research and in the release of its findings.

No persons shall be referred to by name. When specific details might divulge the identity of the participant, every effort will be made to safeguard anonymity.

c) Explain how written records, video/audio tapes and questionnaires will be secured, and provide details of their final disposal or storage.

Written records will be secured in a locked file cabinet in my office at Saint Paul University, as well as in my private office at home. Once the final research is published, the gathered data will be shredded. The audio-tapes will be erased following the publication of the research.

d) If participant anonymity/confidentiality is not appropriate to this research project, explain, including providing details of how all participants will be advised of the fact that data will not be anonymous or confidential.

n/a

SECTION F -- MONITORING ONGOING RESEARCH

23.   **Annual Review and Adverse Events**

a) Minimum review requires the completion of a "Renewal/Project Completed" form at least annually. Indicate whether any additional monitoring or review would be appropriate for this project.

__It is the investigator's responsibility to notify the REB using the "Renewal/Project Completed" form,__ *__when the project is completed, or if it is cancelled.__*

N/A

b) **Adverse events** (unanticipated negative consequences or results affecting participants) must be reported to the REB Secretariat and the MREB Chair, as soon as possible and in any event, no more than 3 days subsequent to their occurrence.

24.　**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

(Use an additional page if more space is required to complete any sections of the form, or if there is any other information relevant to the project which you wish to provide to the Research Ethics Board.)

SECTION G – SIGNATURES

SECTION G – SIGNATURES

Faculty Investigator Assurance:

"I confirm that I have read the McMaster Research Ethics Board Guidelines for Research with Human Participants and I agree to comply with the conditions outlined in the Guidelines".

Signature of Faculty Investigator _____**Date**_____

October 2004

Dear ....:

I am in the final phase of the Doctor of Ministry programme at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton. This final phase includes a qualitative research study which is oriented to my place of ministry, the Centre for Ministry Formation.

My particular research focuses on a novel language form which I believe has power to help us develop a greater awareness of what keeps us from making the changes to which we are truly committed. In order to conduct the research, I will need at least eight participants who are willing to engage in a research process to assess the effectiveness of a language form which, in the future, could be used as a tool for helping members integrate the Centre's vision into their overall ministry formation process. It is my hope that I will have sufficient representation of the diversity of the Centre's partners; educators, supervisors, pastoral leaders, age, gender, culture, specificity of ministry, etc.

If you are interested in hearing more about this research, please let me know and I will provide you with a complete letter of information as well as a consent form.

Thank you.

Lorraine Ste-Marie

McMaster
University

Letter of Information

**Piloting the Immunity-to-Change language technology
in the Centre for Ministry Formation**

Researcher: Lorraine Ste-Marie

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Joyce Bellous
McMaster Divinity College
Hamilton, Ontario
905-525-9140, ext. 24401

Purpose of Study: To assess the usefulness of the Immunity-to-change language technology
as a tool for integrating the Centre for Ministry Formation's vision into its
ministry formation process.

Procedures Involved in the Research:

You will participate in:
1. A three-hour presentation of the diagnostic phase of the languages of transformation at the
beginning of October. In this session you will participate in a pen-and-pencil exercise designed
to help you become aware of what keeps you from making the changes to which you are truly
committed. The presentation will end with a suggested process for follow-up to this initial phase
for presenting it as a tool for integrating the vision of the Centre into its ministry formation
process. Data will be collected through note-taking.
2. One - 1½ hour focus group session, at the end of November 2004. In this session, we will
discuss the impact of this exercise had on your own level of awareness of what ':eeps you from
making the changes to which you are committed, as well as your opinion on its usefulness for
the Centre's ministry formation process. You will be invited to suggest ways to implement this
exercise in the future. Data will be collected through note-taking and tape-recording.
3. You will be asked to complete a written questionnaire after having participated in the focus
group interview session. I ask that the questionnaire be returned to me by January 7th, 2005.
This research design calls for a maximum of 8 hours of participation in the various stages of the
research process, including the information session. Your participation is completed with your
submission of the questionnaire on January 7th, 2005.

Potential Risks:
You are free to share according to your own comfort level in the presentation of the diagnostic
groups as well as in the focus group interview session. You do not need to answer questions that
make you uncomfortable or that you do not want to answer. The ITC language technology is

designed for transformational learning, which for some people can be a dis-orienting or emotional experience. You may withdraw from the research process at any time without any consequences.

As with any group format, there is the risk of breach of confidentiality; however, confidentiality will be stressed throughout the whole research process. Because, I cannot guarantee that all participants in the group will honour confidentiality, participants are completely free to decide what to reveal in either of the group sessions.

Potential Benefits:
Change is an integral part of any human development process. This research may benefit you directly in your developing a greater awareness of your own built-in resistances to change and therefore becoming more capable to make the changes to which you are truly committed. It may also benefit the members of the Centre for Ministry Formation as the findings could lead to enhancing the Centre's current ministry formation process.

Confidentiality:
Your privacy will be respected and confidentiality will be ensured in the following ways:
1. All participants will be reminded of confidentiality throughout the research process.
2. Information obtained will be kept confidential to the full extent of the law and I will treat all information provided to me as subject to research-participant privilege.
3. Written records will be secured in a locked file cabinet in my office at Saint Paul University and in my home office.
4. No persons shall be referred to by name, and every effort will be made to safeguard anonymity in the publishing of the final research.
5. Once the final research is published, the gathered data will be shredded and the audio-tapes will be erased.

Participation:
Your participation in this research process is free and voluntary. This research process is extra to the current ways in which you are in partnership with the Centre. Is your choice to participate in this research process or not. Your decision will not affect your current nor future partnership with the Centre's ministry formation process. If you decide to participate, you can withdraw at any time, even after signing the consent form or part way through the research process. You may choose not to answer some of the questions and still participate in the research process. You may withdraw from the research process at any time and you may choose whether or not the data which has already been collected may be used in the research findings. If you decide to withdraw, there will be no consequences.

Study De-briefing:
The research findings will be made available to you when the full doctoral thesis project is submitted and accepted. It is expected that this will take place in May 2005, at which time all participants will be invited for a de-briefing and celebration for your active role in furthering this research and in contributing to the development of the work of the Centre.

Information about Participating as a Study Subject:
If you have any questions or require more information about the research itself, please contact Dr. Joyce Bellous at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton. This study has been reviewed and approved by the McMaster Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, you may contact:
McMaster Research Ethics Board Secretariat
Telephone: 905-525-9140, ext. 23142

Consent

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the research process being conducted by Lorraine Ste-Marie, of McMaster University. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this research, and to receive any additional details I wanted to know about the research. I understand I may withdraw from the study at any time, if I choose to do so. I have been given a copy of this form.

Participant: ....

In my opinion, the person who has signed above is agreeing to participate in this study voluntarily, and understands the nature of the research and the consequences of participation in it.

Researcher: ....

Date: ....

Diagnostic Phase

The presentation of immunity-to-change language technology is the initial phase of the curriculum implementation. This will be done in a 3 hour session planned for the beginning of November 2004. The process and content of the ITC language technology will be presented according to design presented in the Train the Trainers Institute in April 2003, and as described in the Train the Trainers Manual which was given to participants of that institute. I am a licensed user of the training manual (license #304).

Some background information which will form the basis of the presentation and a general overview of the four-column exercise. Most of the information noted in this overview is found in the book, *How The Way We Talk Can Change The Way We Work*

The ITC language technology as a means to transformation: The ITC language technology is a language form which aims at both individual and collective transformation. Here the distinction is made between informational and transformational learning. In-form-ative learning fits into the *form* of the persons' existing habits of mind, points of view, or frames of reference. In-form-ative learning is aimed at changes in *what* we know by bringing new content into the form of our existing way of knowing. In-form-ative learning seeks to increase our fund of knowledge, our repertoire of skills, and extends our already established cognitive capacities into new terrain. It is through our habits of mind and frames of reference that we make meaning of our outer and inner experiences.

Trans-form-ative learning is aimed at changes in *how* we know. Compared to informational learning, which seeks an increase in a fund of knowledge or a change in behaviour, transformational learning seeks a change in the way a person knows, in that the existing frame of reference is at risk of change. One of the primary goals of transformative learning is to enable learners to engage in challenging experiences that call for the changing of old habits.

In any integral ministry formation process, there is a need for both informational and transformational learning – both are expansive and valuable, one within a pre-existing frame of mind and the other reconstructing the frame itself. Transformational learning enhances the learners' capacity for informational learning in that the learners develop a capacity for critical reflection on the perspectives and biases of the facts as they are presented.

Some details: The ITC language technology introduces novel language **forms** – novel in the sense that they are all qualitatively different language forms. These internal *and interpersonal language forms are the tools for transforming the "customary mental or social arrangements into a form that increases the possibility of transformational learning In their many years of research and practice as developmental educators, Kegan and Lahey have discovered that most persons have a built-in immune system -- a system of countervailing motion -- that maintains the status quo. Their basic premise is that even the best-intentioned people will keep themselves from doing what it is they are genuinely* committed to. The ITC language technology is a means to construct a language which carries within it enough energy to lift it from the dynamic equilibrium of the immune system. To engage in the learning potential of the ITC language is to engage in a creative process rooted in personal concrete experience. This is a creative process of constructing and organizing meaning, a process in which all persons participate intentionally or not.

The key to all this is about making a difference for the long-term... The Centre is about preparing ministers for a church which is in transition – moving toward a more inclusive

church... A more inclusive church is a church committed to greater respect for diversity and inclusivity – a church in which all are welcomed and valued, regardless of their age, gender, status, or form of ministry .

The First Language:
From a Language of Complaint to a Language of Commitment
I am committed to the value of or the importance of....... Although the Language of Complaint is a very common form of language in many communities, on its own, it has very little potential for transformation. Yet, Kegan and Lahey recognize that complaints carry within them an untapped potential. In the complaints we find the seeds of that for which we care most in that every complaint directs us to a genuine commitment. As with all languages, Kegan and Lahey strongly recommend that all leaders engage in the exercises, in this case paying attention to and honouring their own complaints. Leaders are called to foster a "language context" *which is both a place and a disposition that honours critical evaluations as opportunities to identify not only that which is missing but even more importantly to bring the vitalizing energy of commitment into the workplace. This is done through the use of the first language form, the Language of Commitment. These language contexts should encourage people to pursue the transformative potential of their complaints, by moving from the unproductive world of complaint to the productive world of identifying and giving voice to their personal commitments at work. For Kegan and Lahey, this first language, the Language of Commitment creates a forward movement. It can be considered a doorway to our deeper commitments; a doorway into a room with wider possibility.*

Here, I will invite the participants look at the significant changes which are part of the mission statement and have them name to which change(s) are they truly committed. I could then ask them what are the values to which these changes point and then, what are the visible signs that they are committed to those values; eg. co-responsibility, partnership, inclusivity, solidarity, equality, self-knowledge, communion with others (all these are found in our mission statement).

The Second Language:
From the Language of Blame to the Language of Personal Responsibility
What I am doing or not doing that keeps my commitment from being fully realized.....
In this language, Kegan and Lahey invite us to look at what it is we are actually doing that is *keeping* us from realizing our first-column commitments. The emphasis here is on the activity, and not on a disposition, nor a trait or attitude Recognizing that the language of personal responsibility is a relatively rare form of sustained speech in any work environment, Kegan and Lahey remind that us that this language form can render persons vulnerable. A supportive and safe environment will be needed in order for persons to tell stories on themselves and to take a distance in order to become aware of what they are actually doing. Important to note that this language form is not about taking the blame, nor is it about de-bugging the system *The language of personal responsibility provides a learning opportunity in that it allows to learn from the behaviours which we identity and to learn from the story we tell on our selves.*

It is with this language that we come in touch with the notion of what Kegan and Lahey refer to as "problems that solve us." As with adaptive leadership theory (eg. Ronald Heifetz), these problem behaviours which we encounter in this 2nd language do not call for a quick fix. They are oft-times problems which require us to stretch and change our ways of thinking. Deep

structural change is not possible until we stay with our behaviours which contradict or undermine our genuine first-column commitments in order to take them deeper. This language form upholds the wisdom that behaviours do not change without addressing their source, the very forces which are at work in keeping us from realizing our commitments. Kegan and Lahey remind leaders that those who take an interest in fostering a language of personal responsibility are more likely to engage in more productive conversations with others as well as themselves. Moving into the next language form, the language of competing commitments activates the potential of self-responsibility.

Third Language:
From the Language of New Year's Resolutions to the Language of Competing Commitments
I may also be committed to....

Kegan and Lahey note that most attempts at effecting change end with the 2nd column in that once the contradicting behaviours are named, all efforts are made to eradicate or rectify those behaviours. This is not a long-term solution; hence the reason why they move us from a Language of New Year's Resolutions to a Language of Competing Commitments. In this 3rd language form, fear is the gateway into discovering the *bigger* powers that are at work in keeping us from realizing our commitment. However, the intent of this column is actually not about naming the fears which we *have*; it is about discovering that we may be actively committed to keeping those things that we are afraid of from happening. The Language of Competing Commitments actually names a particular form of self-protection to which we are committed. As we look at the mental map we are creating, we notice that the languages of 1st and 3rd columns actually contradict each other. Naming our competing commitments reveals our active, energy-expending way of living that keeps us from fully realizing the first column commitments. This third language form reveals the force of dynamic equilibrium that powerfully works to maintain the status quo.

From an educational and psychological point of view, the problem is not the competing commitment itself. In fact Kegan and Lahey name that competing commitments are normal, human motive. The problem is that we are not aware of the competing commitment. Any possibility of deep structural change calls for self-awareness. Having made our competing commitments into objects of our awareness, we are called to recognize the inner contradictions as a valuable source of challenge.

Fourth Language: *From the Language of Big Assumptions that Hold Us*
to the Language of Assumptions We Hold
I assume that if.....

The first 3 columns provide an opportunity to construct a map, or a mental machine, to portray our immune system preventing change. The 3rd language, the language of competing commitments is the material by which we surface the assumptions-we-take-for-truth. The 4th language is another intentional language form, which enables us to transform the language of competing commitments into what Kegan and Lahey refer to as our Big Assumptions. It is understood that the Big Assumptions exist in both the individual and collective psyche.

The Big Assumption, or BA, is closely related to the concept of ultimacy which is an issue in every mental structure. As noted above, our way of making meaning is not merely an *adequate* way of constructing the world, but it is our *most adequate* construction. And so, BA's

are the most adequate "meaning-regulative principles by which we shape the world in which we live." *The BA's set the terms for what persons can and can't do within their world. The BA's are ingeniously embedded theories in the competing commitments which keep persons from the change which they sincerely intend. Looking at our assumptions is about uncoupling "reality" from "our way of shaping reality." It is recognized that although there is some element of the truth in the BA's, that truth is not ultimate or absolute in all circumstances.*

Kegan and Lahey invite us into a relationship with those Big Assumptions as we dis-embed ourselves from the Big Assumptions. As we attend to the BA's, we become conscious of how they can lead them to systematically attend to certain data and to ignore other data. Naming those BA's usually take us into "highly consequential territory" as we begin the process of exploring whether or not they are actually true. This growing consciousness provides us with opportunities to begin to test the validity of those assumptions.

The naming of the BA's brings to closure the diagnostic phase of the ITC language technology. This presentation will end with a reiteration of the follow-up process. This is a crucial stage in the research process in that the diagnostic phase could stand alone and be an exercise in "gee, I did not know that" and then fade off into a distant memory. The follow-up phase will provide the opportunity for this newfound awareness (BA) to be carefully looked at for its history, roots and impact on one's behaviours. This phase has its own set of requirements in order to enable persons to continue to be in relation to their BA's as they engage in the messy work of seeking out the root and testing the validity of their Big Assumptions.

After participants have elaborated their four-column maps in the three-hour workshop and have begun to let each other in on their inner contradictions and BA's, participants will be asked *not* to make any changes in their thinking or their behaviour for the next two weeks. They will be asked to become simply better *observers* of themselves in relation to their BA's. They will be asked to notice and keep track of what does or does not occur as a consequence of holding their BA as true.

Here a follow-us plan will be suggested for participants to imagine how we could introduce this into the Centre as part of the overall ministry formation. It is possible that some participants may choose to do their own follow-up; however, this is not part expected nor part of the research design. This follow-up plan in the context of the Centre for Ministry Formation would call for a Centre member to pair up with another Centre member who will partner them in their growing self-awareness. This calls for re-affirming the identity of the formation community as a mentoring community – in which the participants are co-educators in the learning process. Ideally, each Centre member would pair up with a peer to test the BA. Here I recognize that should we introduce this into the Centre, peer mentors would need to be prepared for this role: This is not about therapeutic counselling (but it could send someone off to therapeutic counselling and there is service available for that as part of ministry formation process).

DIAGNOSTIC PHASE – 4-COLUMN EXERCISE

Column I	Column II	Column III	Column IV
The first language : *Language of* *Commitment*	*The second language :* *Language of Personal* *Responsibility*	*Third language :* *Language of Competing* *Commitments*	*Fourth language :* *Language of Assumptions We Hold*
I am committed to :	*What I am doing or not doing that* *keeps me from my commitment* *from being fully realized…….*	*I may also be committed to…*	*I assume that if….*

Interview Guide for Focus Group Sessions:

Rationale: A critical part of the research process is to document the receptiveness and the experiences of the participants. Participant input is therefore essential and provides data which will be helpful in assessing the effectiveness of the ITC language technology -- both as they lived it as well as their opinions as to its effectiveness for integration into the Centre's ministry formation process. The research process is designed to give participants the opportunity for dialogue amongst themselves prior to completing individually the written questionnaire.
The focus group session is designed for 1 ½ hours.

Design:
Mutual welcome

Overview of the purpose of the focus group session, including my intended use of the data. Also, I will reiterate the measures I am taking to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. I will ask permission for note-taking and tape-recording.

Review of what the participants were presented in:
1) diagnostic phase of immunity-to-change language technology
2) suggestions for follow-up phase

Questions:
a. This research has been about using a particular language form and process to help you become aware of your immune system to change. In general, has this language form been helpful to you in *seeing* your competing commitments? In other words, has the diagnostic phase had any impact on your own awareness of what keeps you from making the changes to which you are truly committed? If so, how?
b. I gave you some suggestions for a follow-up phase to the initial diagnostic phase. Did any of you have or take the opportunity to engage in that phase? If so, was it any easier for you to go further with your new awareness?
c. Can you make any connections between this research process and the significant changes found in the CFM vision? If so, where? Can you give me an example.
d. Can you see signs that this language technology could be a helpful tool for integrating the Centre's vision into our ministry formation process? What are they? What signs are giving you doubts as to its usefulness?
e. What suggestions would you make in introducing this to the formation community at large? What are the assumptions behind our introducing this learning tool? What obstacles or traps might we encounter?

Hand out final written questionnaire and request that it be submitted to me by January 7th, 2005.

Thank you to all participants and a reminder that the final results of the research process will be shared in May 2005.

Research Process: Assessing the effective use of the immunity-to-change language technology in the Centre for Ministry Formation at Saint Paul University.

Final Questionnaire:

This research has been about using a particular language form and process to help you become aware of your immune system to change. Has this language form been helpful to you in *seeing* your competing commitments? If so, how? If not, why not?

Did you have any opportunity to engage in the follow-up process to this language technology? If so, how did that happen? Was it helpful? If so, how? If not, why not? What would you suggest as an alternate or different follow-up process?

If you had to summarize all that you lived in this research process in two or three sentences, what would you say?

What kind of connections can you make between this research process and the significant changes found in the CFM vision?

Now that the research process is coming to an end, do you think this language form could be a useful tool for integrating the Centre's vision into our ministry formation process? If so, why? If not, why not? What suggestions would you make for introducing this to the formation community? Timing? Follow-up? Design? Follow-up process? Making concrete links with formation goals, as named in the members' formation covenant?

Are there any other comments or feedback that would be helpful for this research?

Please return this completed questionnaire to Lorraine by January 7th, 2005.

Thank you very much for your participation in this research process.

Activity Log:
This research method will be used to record my observations during the presentation of the diagnostic phase, as well as the focus group interview session. The data recorded in this log will be restricted to my observations of how the overall presentation was received by the participants as well as questions which emerged for me during the presentation. Details as to actual participant attendance in the three main stages of the research process will be recorded. Any unplanned occurrence and its relevancy to the process will be recorded.

The participants will be informed that I am keeping a log as well as the same policy of confidentiality for all aspects of the research process.

Context of my current research:

The following information will be shared to set the context of the research at the beginning of the diagnostic phase session:

1. Overview of my doctoral research to date:

I will give a brief overview of my doctoral research to date, as well as the findings of the diagnostic analysis which I did as part of the Supervised Field Experience I and the strategic plan of the Supervised Field Experience II.

In 2002, I conducted a survey with some of the Centre members and persons closely affiliated to the Centre with respect to how effective we were in living out our mission statement, in particular with moving toward the "significant changes" in a post-Vatican II church. I have brought copies of the mission statement - let's look at that statement together, particularly at the "significant changes" at the bottom of page 2. The responses I got in this survey pointed to the Centre having a major challenge in sustaining this sense of transition in our everyday living over the long-run. The results of the survey gave some serious indication for much intentional work to be done in the enabling of the Centre's vision. So the question has been for me: What can we do as part of the ministry formation process that can provide a better opportunity for change – change that can be sustained over a long period of time. What needs to be included as part of our ministry formation process which will enable the transitions named in our mission statement? Another way of asking the question could be: How can the Centre form collaborative and discerning pastoral leaders to become agents of change in their own pastoral environment?

Change can happen in different ways: We can learn skills and gain all kinds of knowledge, this you already do in your courses here at Saint Paul. This is what we call informational learning. This change occurs at the level of *what* we know by bringing new content into our established structure of the mind --new skills and knowledge are all going in to the existing form (our existing ways of knowing); hence in-form-ing. (Here I will use an overhead with a "form"). Informational learning seeks to increase our fund of knowledge, our repertoire of skills.

And there is what we call transformational learning. Transformational learning is aimed at changes in *how* we know. Compared to informational learning, which seeks an increase in a fund of knowledge or a change in behaviour, transformational learning seeks a change in the way we know, in that the existing way of knowing is at risk of change. (Here I will use the overhead again with the "form"). Transformational learning is not about how knowledge is coming into the pre-existing form, but it is about changing the "form" itself, and not just changing the form, but creating grater capacity. Transformational learning alters, expands the very "form" of our knowing.

In any integral ministry formation process, such as ours, there is a need for both informational and transformational learning – both are expansive and valuable, one within a pre-existing frame of mind and the other reconstructing the frame itself. Transformational learning enhances our capacity for informational learning in that we develop a capacity for critical

reflection on the perspectives and biases of the facts as they are presented.

When I began this project, I was especially intrigued by the formative nature of language as it relates to human development on both the individual and collective level. In my on-going research, I have come to an even greater appreciation of the power of language to shape our ways of knowing and seeing. In particular, I have worked with a novel language form which is a tool for transformational learning. It is this novel language form which is called the Immunity-to-Change language technology which I am hoping to pilot with those who choose to be part of this research process. One of the primary goals of the ITC language technology is to enable you to engage in challenging experiences that call for the changing of old habits in your ways of knowing.

And so the overall goal of this research process is to assess how useful the ITC language technology in integrating the Centre's vision (particuarly around these "significant changes") in the ministry formation process... in other words, that the vision becomes an integral part of the ministry formation process, and not just an afterthought. It is this vision which distinguishes the Centre for Ministry Formation from other institutions which offer ministry formation for candidates for ordained ministry *or* for candidates for lay ministry. As a formation community, we are struggling to live out that vision, not just for the time our candidates are with us at Saint Paul, but even more importantly for the future when they will be ministering in their respective communities.

2. A brief overview of my qualitative research:
First, I want to put my research process in the category of "qualitative research" in that it is not about gathering statistics (quantitative). Rather, qualitative research uses a variety of methods for data collection and analysis. My qualitative research process involves collecting and analyzing the data from the various stages of the research process. We will look at those stages right after we look at the purpose.

Purpose:
Originally, it was my intention to pilot-test the immunity-to-change language technology right here in the Centre for Ministry Formation, with members, as well as with some of the formation team. Since my original proposal, I came in touch with the question which that raised with respect to the power relation between myself and the centre members. Therefore, I redesigned my research process in a way that I would invite persons who are not directly engaged in the formation process at this time. Therefore, you who are partners with us in the formation process, some of whom have been involved in the beginning conversations in the development of the Centre, are invited to experience the initial diagnostic phase of this language form and to either engage in your own follow-up process or imagine what it might be like for our candidates for ministry. The data I collect during the various stages of the research process will be used to assess the usefulness of the immunity-to-change language technology as a tool for integrating the Centre for Ministry Formation's vision into its ministry formation process. The extent of its usefulness will be determined by the following outcomes:

1. The impact on the participant's awareness of your own resistances to change and the assumptions that keep you from living out of your primary commitments. The assessment of the

impact will be done through self-reporting both in the focus group interview session as well as in the written questionnaire which I will ask you to submit.

2. Participant's opinion of this language technology as a useful tool for integrating the Centre's vision of moving toward a more inclusive church into its ministry formation process. This information could also include some suggestions for modifications to the design of the various activities in the language technology process.

These outcomes will be determined through self-reporting, a conversation in the focus group interview session as well as a written questionnaire.

Letter of Information and Consent Form:
At this point, I will go through the letter of information and consent form which all have signed. As I go through it, I will stress the voluntary and free choice to participate, the fact there will be no consequences to their choice and that they may withdraw at any time, the confidentiality of the process and what I will do with the data which I will gather. I will also tell them that I myself will be keeping an activity log in which I will be noting details and questions which emerge during the presentation of the diagnostic phase and the focus group interview session. The information in that activity log will be integrated into my final findings, including the data I have collected from their direct input, as well as their written questionnaires..

Use of information:
Your feedback in the focus group interview session and the written questionnaire is the main ingredient in this research process. It is my hope that the findings from the data will indicate that this ITC language technology is a useful tool (with some proposed modifications) for integrating the Centre's vision into our overall ministry formation process.

Questions for clarification: Are there are any questions at this point.

Thank you for your interest and being here to begin the research process.

Gilles & Lorraine Ste-Marie

From: "Gilles & Lorraine Ste-Marie" <ste-marie@storm.ca>
To: "Carmel Horan" <horanc@comnet.ca>; "Fr. Dan Hawkins" <Hawkins.D@sympatico.ca>; "Sherri Vallee" <ValleeSL@McMaster.ca>; "Suzie Arsenault" <arsenault.s@diocesegatineau-hull.qc.ca>; "Viola Basque" <v.basque@sympatico.ca>; "Catherine and Bill Thurlow" <cwthurlow@sympatico.ca>
Cc: <ste-marie@storm.ca>
Sent: Sunday, November 21, 2004 2:22 PM
Subject: follow-up to Friday's research meeting

Hello to each of you,
As mentioned on Friday, I am now giving you some additional information re the Big Assumptions which I should have presented in finishing the session. Hope this is helpful for you in what you yourself experienced for your growing awareness, as well as assessing the feasibility of this language form as a tool for ministry formation.

First:
How much is my big assumption getting in my way?
1. not at all
2. not much
3. somewhat
4. considerably
5. Very considerably: a whole lot

Second, if I were to be free of my big assumption (or freer)
1. it wouldn't matter at all
2. it wouldn't matter much
3. It would matter somewhat
4. it would matter a lot
5. it would matter a very great deal

and Third, here are seven proposed means to lvereraging the big assumption.
1. Observing the Big Assumption in action.
2. Staying altert to natural challenges and counters to the big assumption
3. writing the biography of the big assumption.
4. Designing a modest safe, actionable test of the big assumption
5. Examining the rseults of the test
6. re-designing, re-running and re-examining next tests of the big assumption
7. re-designing the big assumption itself.... (this is where the framework -transformation - is changed).

Again, thank you for your participation on Friday. Look forward to seeing you on DEc 9th from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

For your information, I am off to Hamilton today until the 29th or November.

Take care
Lorraine