

ANNOTATION

Sanderl, Michael Eamon. "Catholic Identity and Lasallian Culture in Higher Education: The Contributions of Campus Ministry." Doctoral dissertation, University of San Francisco, 2004.

The purpose of Michael Eamon Sanderl's dissertation, "Catholic Identity and Lasallian Culture in Higher Education: The Contributions of Campus Ministry," is "to investigate how the seven Catholic Lasallian institutions of higher education in the United States articulate and express their Catholic identity and Lasallian culture and how this identity and culture are currently expressed and developed in campus ministry" (4). His research is guided by three research questions: "How do the seven Catholic Lasallian institutions of higher education in the United States/Toronto Region articulate and express their Catholic identity and Lasallian culture through campus ministry? How does campus ministry articulate, express, strengthen, and contribute to the Catholic identity and Lasallian culture in each of these schools? (18) How do administrators, campus ministry staff, and college students participating in campus ministry at these schools understand the Catholic identity and Lasallian culture of their college or university through campus ministry?" (20).

Sanderl defines key terms and addresses the limits of his research. He defines general terms, including: *aggiornamento*, campus ministry, charism, and religious order; and terms unique to the Christian Brothers, including: Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies, District, General Chapter, Huether Conference, The Institute, Lasallian, Lasallian Leadership Institute, Partners, Region, and The Rule. It is most important to understand the terms "Catholic identity," as developed from official Roman Catholic Church documents, and "Lasallian culture," as developed from G. A. Van Grieken's ten operative commitments addressing the spirits of faith and zeal. There are several limits to Sanderl's research including that he is a Christian Brother and an alumnus of one of the included schools. There is much variance among the seven Catholic Lasallian universities and colleges in North America and in their campus ministries, particularly among its staff, offerings, and student participation. This may have caused involvement in this study to fluctuate with regard to the return-rate and participation in the quantitative and qualitative phases. Participants may not have understood the language in the survey or interview or may have different levels of experience and exposure to Catholic identity or Lasallian culture through campus ministry that affected their responses to questions and their ability to participate. Because seven Catholic Lasallian schools are included in this study, the generalizability of this research to other Catholic colleges and universities and their campus ministries is limited.

Sanderl's method for research begins with a literature review that examines Catholic identity, using Roman Catholic Church documents, and Lasallian characteristics and school culture, using Lasallian documents. He uses a two-phase design that includes a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase, and respondents include 41 administrators, 29 campus ministry staff members, and 182 students who participate in campus ministry. Sanderl designed the 35-item

Catholic Identity and Lasallian Culture in Higher Education Survey using a five point Likert-type scale along with four open-ended questions that was distributed to all participants of the three population cohorts. The frequency, mean, and standard deviation for each survey item for each cohort are reported, and comparisons are made among the cohorts using ANOVA measurements, post-hoc analysis, and independent t-tests to report significant differences. The Levene's Test is used to determine the homogeneity of variances assumption, and the survey items are coded according to this study's research questions. From the results of the survey, he develops follow-up interview questions to use during a six-week process of interviewing each school's president and holding two focus-groups for staff and student cohorts, respectively. Each focus group interview lasts for 45 minutes with a maximum of 10 participants. Appended to this paper are materials used to conduct this research: maps, surveys, interview questions, and letters.

Sanderl organizes his findings based upon the themes of the three research questions: how the included schools express their Catholic identity and Lasallian culture through campus ministry, how campus ministry furthers this identity and culture, and how administrators, campus ministry staff, and students understand this identity and culture of their school through campus ministry. Regarding the first research question, it is difficult for respondents to articulate the meaning and depth behind the identity and culture they believe is present in their schools, though they are able to name meaningful religious experiences that they participate in with campus ministry. Regarding the second research question, there is a greater emphasis placed upon the Lasallian identity by campus ministry than by other cohorts, and the service and outreach opportunities that they offer, synonymous with the Lasallian identity, are appealing and non-threatening to students. Regarding the third research question, the administrators understand Catholic identity and Lasallian culture from a macro perspective of their institutions' identity. Campus ministry staff understands this from macro and micro perspectives where they affect institution identity through interpersonal involvement, and students understand this from a micro perspective of their own experiences within campus ministry.

Sanderl's work is important and helpful for the overall study of Lasallian higher education. For each of the three population cohorts in this study, Sanderl identifies five major conclusions that can be drawn from his research. These conclusions have important implications for Catholic identity and Lasallian culture in higher education for each of these cohorts and, more specifically, for campus ministry and its staff at the seven Catholic Lasallian institutions of higher education in this study. He makes recommendations for the professional practice of campus ministry efforts, programs, and personnel, including: being visible on campus, serving on the school's committees, and partnering with academic departments, especially education. He recommends future research to benefit campus ministry, Catholic identity, and Lasallian culture, particularly for the seven post-secondary schools in this study. This includes: best practices in campus ministry, the effects of plurality and diversity in people's understanding and expression of Catholic identity, studying parallel changes in the Catholic Church after Vatican II and its effect on Catholic colleges and universities, and other aspects of post-secondary schools' campuses that contribute to Lasallian culture.